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The Lapsed Donor Reactivation Kit

7 Plug-and-Play Email Templates to Win Back
Supporters and Boost Your Funding

Developed by Aha Apps

Proven Strategies to Strengthen Nonprofit Donor Relationships



Your "Leaky Bucket" Is Costing You More Than You Think

Dear Nonprofit Leader,

Does this sound familiar? You work tirelessly to bring in new donors, only to see last year's supporters quietly disappear. This "leaky bucket" is one of the most expensive and frustrating problems in fundraising.

The data is sobering:

19.6%

\$1.50

40.4%

First-time donors who made a second gift

Cost per dollar to acquire new donor

Retention rate for reactivated donors

That means over 80% of your new supporters
may be lapsing after one donation.

Compared to just \$0.20 per dollar for retaining
an existing one.

Significantly higher than the 27.9% retention
rate for newly acquired donors.

Winning back lapsed donors isn't just a "nice to have"—it's one of the most cost-effective strategies for sustainable growth.

But who has the time?

When your team is buried in manual work and juggling disconnected systems, you don't have hours to craft the perfect email sequence.

That's why we built this kit.

We've combined proven fundraising strategies with ready-to-use templates. Stop starting from a blank page. Just copy, paste, personalize, and start winning back the support you've been missing.

Before You Send: 3 Keys to Reactivation Success

Templates are powerful, but strategy makes them effective. Before you copy and paste, internalize these three core principles.

Segment Your List. (Don't "Batch and Blast"!)

Not all lapsed donors are the same. A donor who gave \$1,000 once three years ago needs a different message than someone who gave \$25 every month but stopped three months ago. The why they gave also matters.

How to do it: At a minimum, segment your lapsed donors by RFM (Recency, Frequency, Monetary).

- **Recency:** When did they last give? (e.g., 13-24 months, 25-36 months)
- **Frequency:** How many times did they give? (e.g., one-time, 2-5 times)
- **Monetary:** What was their average or largest gift amount?

A modern CRM is essential for this, allowing you to easily filter and find these groups.

Lead with Impact, Not Just Need.

Donors often lapse because they don't feel appreciated or can't see the tangible impact of their support. Your first message back shouldn't just be an ask; it should be a powerful reminder of what their past support helped achieve. Use "donor-centric language"—make them the hero of the story.

Offer More Than One Way to Re-engage.

If a donor's financial situation has changed, another monetary ask might push them further away. The goal is to rebuild the relationship. Offer alternative ways to engage, such as volunteering, attending an event, or advocating for your cause. This re-establishes their connection to your mission, often opening the door to future financial support.

7 Plug-and-Play Email Templates

Template 1: The "We Miss You" & Impact Update

Purpose: This is a warm, low-pressure email. It leads with gratitude and reminds them of the tangible impact they've had.

Subject: [Donor Name], you made this possible

Hi [Donor Name],

It's been a while, and we've missed you.

I was looking back at our records today and was reminded of your generous gift in [Year of last gift]. I hope you know what a difference that made.

Because of your support, we were able to [Insert 1-2 specific, tangible outcomes your nonprofit achieved, e.g., "provide 1,500 hot meals to our neighbors," "rescue 75 animals from shelters," "provide 200 hours of arts education to local children"].

Your kindness created real change, and we are so grateful.

We're still working hard on [Current challenge or goal]. If you'd like to see what we're up to, you can [Link to a recent blog post, annual report, or video].

Thank you again for everything,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

Template 2: The 1-Minute Feedback Survey

Purpose: To understand why donors lapse. This shows you're listening and gives you invaluable data to improve your retention strategies.

Subject: Can you spare 60 seconds? We're listening.

Hi [Donor Name],

Here at [Your Nonprofit Name], we're always trying to do better for our community and for supporters like you.

We've missed you lately, and I was hoping you might be open to sharing your honest feedback. Your perspective is incredibly important to us.

Would you be willing to take this 1-minute survey to let us know how we're doing?

[Link to Survey (e.g., Google Form, SurveyMonkey)]

Your insights will help us understand what we can do better to serve our mission and our supporters.

Thank you for your time,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

Template 3: The Non-Monetary Ask (Volunteer/Engage)

Purpose: To re-engage supporters who may not be ready to give financially. This is highly effective for those who are "mission-driven" but perhaps "money-constrained."

Subject: A different way to support [Your Cause]

Hi [Donor Name],

Your past support for [Your Nonprofit Name] showed us you have a real passion for [Your Cause].

I know that giving financially isn't always possible, but your time and talent are just as valuable. We're currently looking for dedicated people to help with [Upcoming event, volunteer need, or advocacy campaign].

[Insert 1-2 sentences describing the volunteer role or event, e.g., "We're hosting our Annual Spring Gala on [Date] and need help with registration," or "We're looking for mentors to read to children one hour a week."]

If you'd be interested in learning more about our volunteer opportunities, you can see all our current needs here: [Link to Volunteer Page]

We'd love to have you back as part of the team!

Best,

[Your Name]

[Your Title / Volunteer Coordinator]

Template 4: The Urgent, Specific Need

Purpose: To create a new, compelling reason to give. This isn't a general "support us" email; it's a specific, time-sensitive, and tangible project.

Subject: A special [Project/Campaign Name] update

Hi [Donor Name],

I'm reaching out to a select group of our past supporters, like you, because of an urgent challenge—and an incredible opportunity.

Right now, we are working to [Describe the urgent project, e.g., "raise \$5,000 to repair our shelter's roof before the winter," "stock our food pantry for the summer when school lunches aren't available"].

This is a critical need, and 100% of your gift will go directly to this project.

Your past gift of [Last Gift Amount] helped us [Brief impact reminder]. We're hoping you'll consider renewing your support to help us meet this new challenge.

You can make a special gift here: [Link to Specific Donation Page]

Thank you for considering,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

Template 5: The "Welcome Back" Matching Offer

Purpose: Uses urgency and leverage (a matching gift) to inspire a lapsed donor to return. This makes their gift feel doubly powerful.

Subject: Your gift can be DOUBLED today

Hi [Donor Name],

I have some exciting news!

A generous board member has offered a [\$X,XXX] Match Challenge to help us welcome back past supporters like you.

For a limited time, any gift you make to [Your Nonprofit Name] will be matched, dollar-for-dollar, up to [\$X,XXX].

We haven't heard from you in a while, and we thought this would be the perfect time to show you how much your support means to us. A gift of \$50 becomes \$100. A gift of \$100 becomes \$200 for [Your Cause].

Will you help us take full advantage of this match and double your impact today?

[Link to Donation Page with Match Language]

Thank you for making twice the difference!

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

Template 6: The Personal Check-In (From Leadership)

Purpose: This ultra-personal, plain-text email cuts through the noise. It feels like a 1-to-1 message, not a marketing blast, and is perfect for mid-level or major lapsed donors.

Subject: Checking in

Hi [Donor Name],

I was thinking about you today and wanted to reach out personally.

I'm [Your Name], the [Your Title] at [Your Nonprofit Name]. I know you've been a valued supporter in the past, and I just wanted to check in and say thank you.

We're busy preparing for [a new initiative/upcoming season], and your past generosity is what makes all our work possible.

I hope all is well with you.

Best,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Your Phone Number (Optional, for high-touch)]

Template 7: The "Permission to Say Goodbye" (Last Chance)

Purpose: This is for donors who have been lapsed for 2+ years and haven't responded to other emails. It cleans your list (improving deliverability) and, paradoxically, often gets a high response rate from people who just "forgot."

Subject: Is this goodbye?

Hi [Donor Name],

We're updating our email lists and noticed we haven't heard from you in a while. We know inboxes get crowded, and we only want to send updates to people who find them valuable.

If you'd like to stay in the loop on how we're [Your Mission, e.g., "fighting hunger in our community"], you don't need to do a thing.

But if you'd prefer to unsubscribe, please feel free to use the link below. We'll be sad to see you go, but we completely understand.

No matter what, we are deeply grateful for the support you've given us in the past. It made a real difference.

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

Stop Working for Your Data. Make Your Data Work for You.

These templates are a great start. But let's be honest—the real challenge isn't just what to write.

It's...

- Knowing who is lapsed in the first place without spending hours in spreadsheets.
- Finding the donors who gave last year but not this year (LYBUNT).
- Realizing that a "lapsed donor" is also one of your most active volunteers.
- Tracking who opened which email, who clicked, and who needs a personal follow-up call.
- Automating these emails so you can build relationships while you sleep.

If your data is siloed across different systems for donors, volunteers, and events, you're fundraising with one hand tied behind your back.

Aha Impact was built to solve this.

See How It Works with a 14-Day Trial

We built Aha Impact on the world's most powerful platform (Microsoft Dynamics 365) specifically for growing nonprofits who are tired of being punished for their growth.

See Everything in One Place

Manage donors, volunteers, and events in one unified CRM. Identify your non-donor volunteers and turn them into your most passionate supporters.

Never Pay for Growth

Our pricing is per-user, not per-record. Add 100 or 100,000 new supporters, and your bill won't change.

Automate Your Follow-ups

Use predefined reports, dashboards, and automated tasks to engage donors at the right time, every time.

Switch Without the Fear

We offer Zero-Cost Migration and can get your team launched in as little as 5 days.

See How It Works with a 14-Day Trial.

Stop juggling systems. Stop wrestling with data. Stop letting donors slip away.

Start your 14-day trial of Aha Impact today and see how easy it can be to turn lapsed donors into lifelong supporters.

Ready to Win Back Your Donors?

Scan the QR code below to book your free 20-minute Discovery Call and see how Aha Impact can help you re-engage your supporters.

Let's get started today!

