

Online Donation Processing Vendor Selection

Questions to Ask

1. Can our organization match the giving page to the look and feel of our site?
2. Can our org set up multiple giving pages (regular gifts, renewal gifts, special appeals?)
3. Can our org edit and control the content of the donor giving page, the acknowledgement screen and the acknowledgement email?
4. Does the system allow us to set up:
 - Recurring gifts?
 - Suggested donation amounts?
 - Premiums (incentives) for gifts?
 - Custom questions on the Donate page?
 - Memorial or honorary gifts?
5. Are gifts acknowledged with a:
 - Landing page thank-you after the gift has been given
 - An immediate email acknowledgement?
6. What kind of reporting options are available to our org? Can data be downloaded 24/7?
7. What transactional information will appear on the donor's credit card statement?, ie. What will the donor see on their credit card statement as the name they donated to?
8. Is there a set up fee? If so, what is the cost?
9. Do you charge a transaction fee? How much?
10. Is there a monthly fee? How much?
11. Do we need a payment gateway?
If yes, do not use this vendor
Payment gateways are used to communicate financial data to banks and are employed in tandem with a merchant account to build your own donation site (you will need a programmer to help build this). A payment gateway should not be needed for a full-service online processing vendor. Payment gateways (PayQuake, Authorize.net, WorldPay) are only appropriate if you are building your own online donation processing system.
12. Do we need a merchant account?
 - Advantages: Your org's name will appear on donor's credit cards, your org will receive payments directly into your bank account
 - Disadvantages: You will need a separate internet merchant; your org will be responsible for managing fraudulent charges.
13. If not a merchant account, on what schedule are donation checks sent to our org (or deposited directly into your Visa/Mastercard Interent merchant account?)
14. What is your digital certificate and how do ensure that donations are encrypted and secure?