PRO-TIPS

4 THINGS NONPROFITS SHOULD DO WITH THEIR DONATION FORMS

KELL PARTNERS

Online donation pages are vitally important to an organization and here at KELL we have the opportunity to look at a ton of them and help our clients make them better. Not everyone has the desire to spend their spare time reading human interaction design guidelines, usage metrics and the latest internet research on where browser/mobile standards are heading.

Luckily for you, we're that nerdy and have distilled some of the results into a few simple things to keep in mind.

1

The most important thing on your donation page is the form. Put the filly bits on the Thank You page.

AVOID DISTRACTING THE USER

This may seem like a no-brainer, but it can often be tempting to overlook. When a visitor lands on your donation page the last thing you want to do is give them extra opportunities to go elsewhere. Things like a Twitter feed, latest posts from your blog, or other interactive elements whose general purpose is to get people to click on them should not be presented to the visitor until after they finished with the form.

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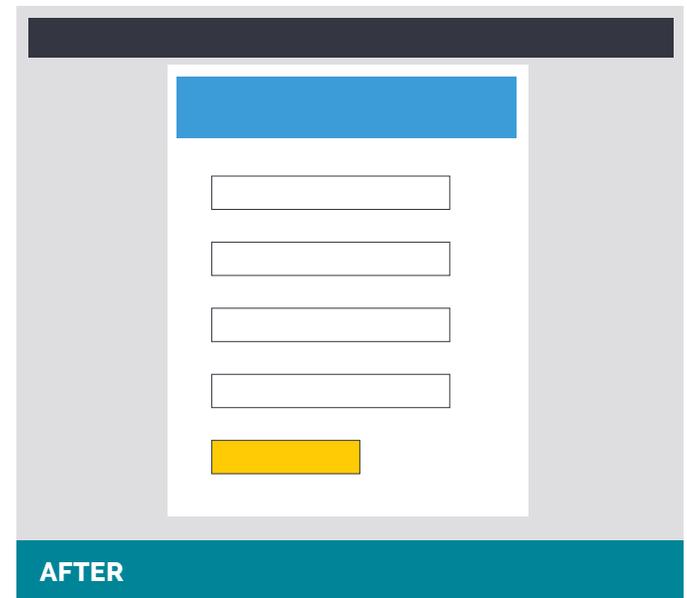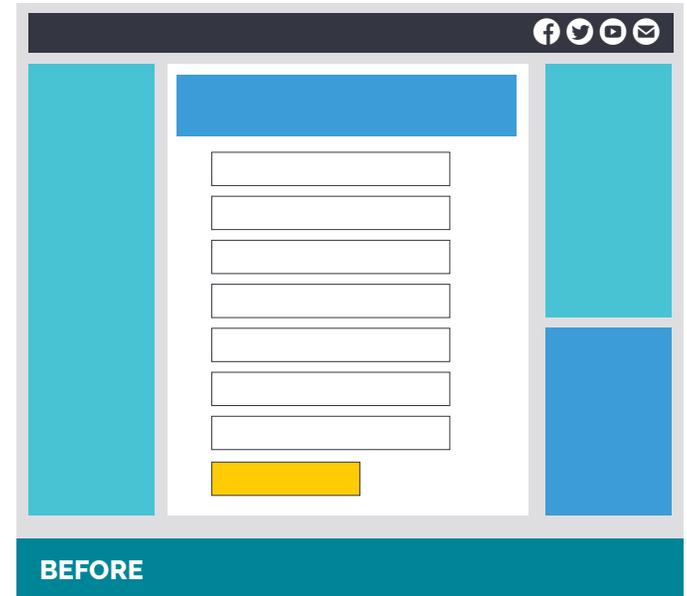
2

It's ok to make the user scroll down.

USE A SINGLE COLUMN

Multi-column layouts distract the user, especially on the web. "But what if the form is going to be long?" you say. Well, users are used to scrolling down the page. When the web was young and people's habits weren't so well trained, it used to be an issue. But we've essentially developed some standards of interaction. Expecting the user to be comfortable scrolling down is perfectly acceptable. Now imagine that you scroll down a screen and then have to scroll back to the top of the page to continue, just thinking about it feels awkward.

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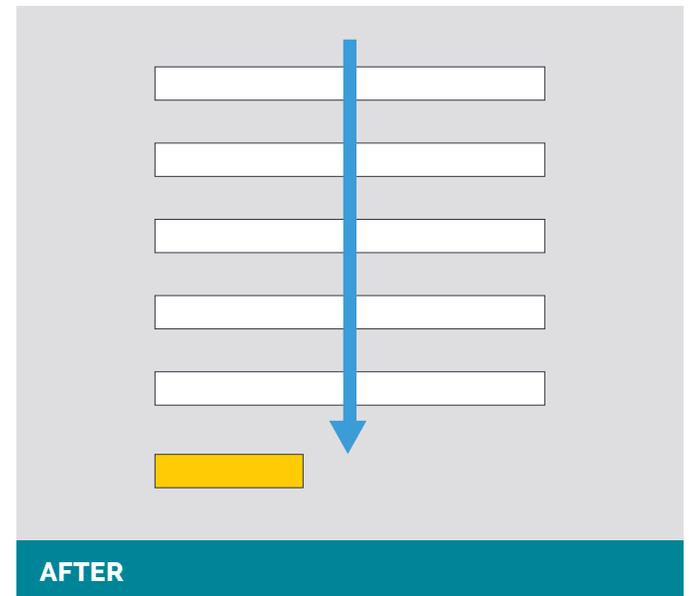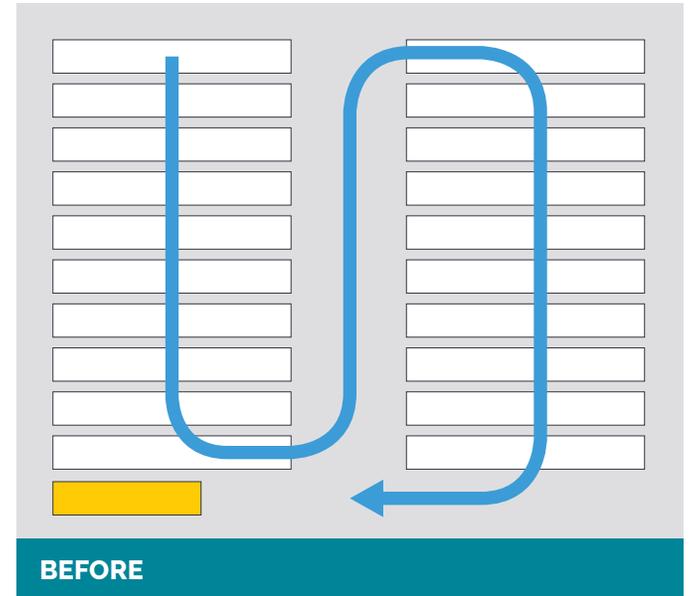
3

Stick to basic HTML for your form and keep it functional on mobile devices, even if you're not optimized for it.

BE MOBILE FRIENDLY

Even if you don't have a responsive form that is fully optimized for being viewed on a 3 inch screen, keep it legible. What that means is don't use flash or other magic non-standard widgets that may not work well on a phone. Things like sliders or custom coded dropdown widgets should be avoided. Finally avoid relying on being able to hover over your menu to display dropdown navigation.
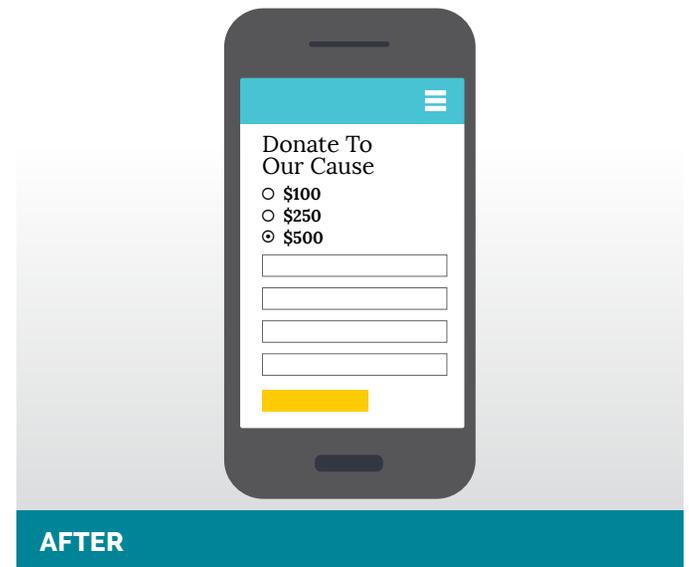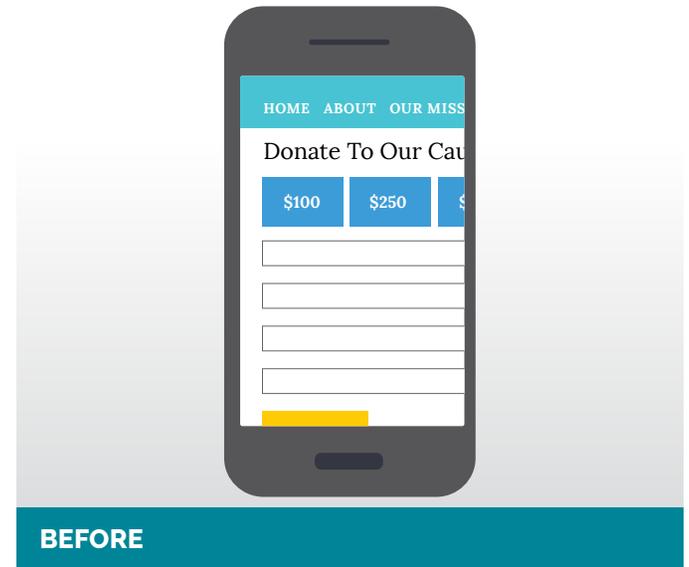
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Keep it short, everything you ask for increases abandonment.

KEEP IT SHORT AND SWEET

This is one of those things that's a bit of a double edged sword. The longer the form is, the greater the chance of abandonment. When a visitor opens a page and sees that there's a ton of information that they need to enter to complete the form, the immediate gut reaction can often be a sense of being overwhelmed and the user will just simply close the browser. This is doubled if you ask for information that the user isn't prepared to answer.

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Keep it short, everything you ask for increases abandonment.

So what can you do to fix lengthy forms? Well a couple things:

- Collapse optional groups. Things like honor and memorial fields can be collapsed and hidden from view until the visitor decides that they want to use them.

- Make is easy to fill out extra information. For example give the user a chance to copy the mailing information to the billing information if they're the same.

- Pre-populate fields. Do as much as you can to pre-populate fields with the expected answers.

- Determine if it's necessary. Evaluate what you're asking for and see if it's truly worth losing a gift over. If it isn't, then consider leaving it off the form.

About KELL Partners

KELL Partners is an Austin-based consulting firm that is focused on helping nonprofits implement and optimize their use of Salesforce.com™. KELL has worked with more than 800 nonprofits since they started in 2009.

Services offered by KELL include technical consulting, support, training, custom development and data manipulation. For more information, visit www.kellpartners.com.