VolunteerMatch User Study

Findings from quantitative & qualitative opinion research
Conducted June to August 2006
for

VolunteerMatch
Where volunteering begins.
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Methodology

- Online survey among 2,316 volunteers who are registered with VolunteerMatch; conducted June 12 – July 6, 2006; margin of error = ±2.0 percentage points

- Online survey among 1,024 staff of nonprofit organizations that use VolunteerMatch; conducted June 9 – 27, 2006; margin of error = ±3.1 percentage points
Profile of VolunteerMatch Users
A Profile Of Nonprofits

Full-time paid staff
- 52% Five/fewer people
- 31% Six to 50 people
- 17% More than 50 people

Annual budget
- 47% $200K or less
- 29% $200K to $1 million
- 24% More $1 million
Nonprofits: Small Budgets, Many Volunteers

Annual budget

- $200K or less: 47%
- $200 to $1 million: 29%
- More than $1 million: 24%

Volunteer Program Size

- Less than 25: 28%
- 26 to 75: 25%
- 76 or more: 47%
Nonprofits: Serving a variety of cause areas

- Children & Youth: 17.1%
- Education & Literacy: 10.9%
- Health & Medicine: 7.8%
- Advocacy & Human Rights: 5.5%
- Arts & Culture: 5.1%
- Women: 4.2%
- Disabled: 4.4%
- Homeless & Housing: 3.9%
- Senior: 5.7%
- Environment: 3.6%
- Crisis Support: 3.8%
- Sports & Recreation: 3.2%
- Computers & Technology: 3.1%
- Animals: 2.9%
- Emergency & Safety: 2.4%
- International: 2.3%
- Employment: 2.0%
- Religion: 1.8%
- Board Development: 1.8%
- Hunger: 1.7%
- Race & Ethnicity: 1.3%
- Immigration & Refugees: 1.1%
- Gay, Lesbian, Bi, & Trans: 0.8%
- Politics: 0.7%
- Hurricane Relief: 0.2%
- Nonprofits: Serving a variety of cause areas

VolunteerMatch
Where volunteering begins.
### Nonprofits:
Most useful ways to find volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Web site</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet recruiting services</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live presentations to groups</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper ads</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local volunteer center</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with local corporations</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mail</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio/TV ads</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Profile of Volunteers

VolunteerMatch site users are:

- Mostly female (83% women, 17% men)
- Highly educated (70% have at least a college degree)
- Diverse in age (37% under age 30, 15% are over 55)
Volunteers:
Many are first-timers

80% Volunteered before using VolunteerMatch
20% Not volunteered before using VolunteerMatch
Reasons For Volunteering
Volunteering Is Very Important To Volunteers

Compared to other things you do in your life, how important to you is the volunteer work that you do?

- Highly important: 69%
- Very important: 50%
- Somewhat important: 29%
- Not very important: 2%
- One of the most important things in my life: 19%

Increases with age:
- Under age 30: 65%
- Age 30 to 39: 69%
- Age 40 to 54: 73%
- Age 55 to 64: 74%
- Age 65/older: 76%
“Making A Difference” Is Top Reason For Volunteering

Selected Most Important Reason for Volunteering

- Help others/make a difference: 46%
- Be involved in my community: 14%
- Contribute to cause I care about: 13%
- Use my skills in productive way: 8%
- Develop new skills, experience: 7%
- Give back to community: 7%
- Meet people, make friends: 4%
- Community service requirement: 1%
## Important Factors In A Volunteer Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Very important (9-10*)</th>
<th>Important (7-8*)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cause I care about</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fits my schedule</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand expectations</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can make a difference</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting/challenging</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearby/convenient</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses my skills/experience</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectually stimulating</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has orientation/training</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matches my career skills</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer with friends</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ratings on ten-point scale: 10 = essential factor, 1 = not at all important factor*
Important Factors Are Not Difficult To Satisfy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Factor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fits my schedule</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matches my career skills</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearby/convenient</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectually stimulating</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses my skills/experience</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can make a difference</td>
<td>26%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting/challenging</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand expectations</td>
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<td>Has orientation/training</td>
<td>22%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer with friends</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause I care about</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ratings on ten-point scale: 10 = very difficult to find, 1 = not at all difficult
### Volunteering Differences By Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under age 55</th>
<th>Age 55 to 64</th>
<th>Age 65/over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer at least once a week</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td><strong>43%</strong></td>
<td><strong>61%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer with none/only one organization</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td><strong>41%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer five/more hours each visit</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td><strong>25%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to volunteer more in the next few years</td>
<td><strong>59%</strong></td>
<td><strong>56%</strong></td>
<td><strong>43%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have postgraduate education</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td><strong>39%</strong></td>
<td><strong>43%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nonprofit Need for Volunteers
Volunteers Play An Important Role For Nonprofits

Among Nonprofit Staff

- Volunteers provide my organization with this to a great extent

| Capability to provide services we otherwise could not provide | 71% |
| Increase in quality of our services/programs | 65% |
| Cost savings to our organization | 64% |
| More detailed attention to people we serve | 60% |
| Increase in public support for our programs | 57% |
| Capability to improve management/operations of our organization | 30% |

92% of nonprofit staff say that volunteers are very important to their organization.
Nonprofits: The Crucial Role Of Volunteers

Estimated value of services your organization’s volunteers delivered to the community last year:

- More than $100,000: 28%
- $10,000 to $100,000: 47%
- $10,000 or less: 25%
The More Volunteers, The More Important Their Role Is Seen

For each benefit, % of nonprofit staff saying volunteers provide this to their organization to a great extent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Over 100</th>
<th>26 to 100</th>
<th>25/fewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capability to provide services we otherwise could not provide</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost savings to our organization</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in quality of our services/programs</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More detailed attention to people we serve</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in public support for our programs</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Smaller The Staff, The More Important Is Volunteers’ Role

For each benefit, % of nonprofit staff saying volunteers provide this to their organization to a great extent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization’s staff size</th>
<th>Five/less</th>
<th>6 to 20</th>
<th>21 to 50</th>
<th>Over 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capability to provide services we otherwise could not provide</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in quality of our services/programs</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost savings to our organization</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in public support for our programs</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability to improve management/operations of our organization</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Top Challenges In Engaging Volunteers

Among Nonprofit Staff

- Finding volunteers; knowing where to look for volunteers: 53%
- People are too busy to volunteer: 51%
- Difficult to find people interested in volunteering: 46%
- Can’t find people with the right skills and experience: 32%
- People have unrealistic expectations about the work: 23%
- Hard to find people interested in our organization or mission: 23%
- Difficult to contact/get in touch with volunteers: 22%
- Difficult to find people who fit with our environment/culture: 12%
### Types of Volunteer Management

**Among Nonprofit Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>$100K/less</th>
<th>Over $1 M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular supervision and communication with volunteers</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular collection of info on volunteers’ hours/numbers</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written policies/job descriptions for volunteers</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures to match volunteers with fitting jobs</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer recognition activities, award ceremonies</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurements of volunteers’ impact</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training/professional development opportunities</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for paid staff in working with volunteers</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of Great Volunteers

“I would say it's their motivation and their attitude. Most of our volunteer opportunities are opportunities where you're in some way working with the public. You have to be friendly. You have to be able to do some customer service. You have to want to do it."

“Pretty much it’s a time commitment and a willingness to work with a diverse population . . . so as long as you’ve got an open mind, you're enthusiastic, and then of course being committed."

“[We want] a motivated, self-starting type of person who has a comfort level in dealing with this issue and who also can work with others."

“It's nice when they bring certain skill sets, but I think their attitude and their willingness to learn, flexibility, is really the number-one thing."
Nonprofits Use Volunteers For Many “Professional” Activities

Among Nonprofit Staff

- Event planning: 59%
- Fundraising/development: 58%
- Marketing/communications: 48%
- Strategic planning: 40%
- Operations/project mgmt: 34%
- Computer hardware/software: 30%
- Staff mgmt/team leadership: 29%
- Internet/e-commerce: 28%
- Accounting/finance: 28%
- Information technology: 27%
- Legal services: 25%
- HR/recruitment & training: 24%
- Grant proposal writing: 23%
- Counseling: 18%
- Medical/health services: 17%
Yet Difficulty in Finding Certain “Professional” Activities Among Nonprofit Staff

- **Grant proposal writing**: 64% difficult to find volunteers with the knowledge/skill, 23% use volunteers/staff.
- **Accounting/finance**: 45% difficult, 28% use.
- **Strategic planning**: 36% difficult, 40% use.
- **Fundraising/development**: 34% difficult, 58% use.
- **Marketing/communications**: 29% difficult, 48% use.
- **Event planning**: 23% difficult, 59% use.
## Difficulty Increases For Smallest Nonprofits

% of nonprofit staff rating each as a difficult activity (8-10 on ten-point scale) for which to recruit knowledgeable/skilled volunteers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nonprofits with five/less staff</th>
<th>Nonprofits with six/more staff</th>
<th>Nonprofits with five/less staff</th>
<th>Nonprofits with six/more staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant proposal writing</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting/finance</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising/development</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff management/team leadership</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal services</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer hardware/software</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Role Of VolunteerMatch
Impact of VolunteerMatch on nonprofits

- Has helped us reach out/recruit volunteers we wouldn’t have found: 84% (Strongly agree) + 30% (Somewhat agree)
- Makes it easier for us to find the right volunteers: 82% (Strongly agree) + 42% (Somewhat agree)
- Has helped us find the volunteers we need: 77% (Strongly agree) + 30% (Somewhat agree)
- Has allowed us to free up valuable resources: 67% (Strongly agree) + 23% (Somewhat agree)
Impact of VolunteerMatch on Volunteers

- Makes it easier to find opportunities I’m interested in: 49% Strongly agree, 38% Somewhat agree, 84% total.
- Am more likely to find satisfying volunteer relationship: 38% Strongly agree, 41% Somewhat agree, 80% total.
- Am more likely to volunteer: 41% Strongly agree, 38% Somewhat agree, 76% total.
Volunteers find opportunities through VolunteerMatch

Have you volunteered with an organization you found on VolunteerMatch?
If not, do you expect to in the next 12 months?

Yes, I have volunteered with an organization I found on VolunteerMatch

No, but expect to in the next 12 months
31%

No, have not
8%
High Satisfaction With Volunteers

Overall, how satisfied are you with VolunteerMatch?

- Very satisfied: 50%
- Somewhat satisfied: 37%
- 13%

87% say Satisfied with VolunteerMatch
High Satisfaction With Nonprofits

How satisfied are you with the VolunteerMatch service?

- Very satisfied: 52%
- Somewhat satisfied: 34%
- 14% satisfaction level

86% say Satisfied with VolunteerMatch
Nonprofit’s Say VolunteerMatch Most Useful

Which two or three of these Internet recruiting services have you found most useful?

All nonprofit staff

- VolunteerMatch.org: 68%
  - 33% of staff name only VolunteerMatch
- Local volunteer center’s Web site: 14%
- Craigslist.org: 13%
- Idealist.org: 10%
- 1-800-Volunteer.org: 6%
- VolunteerSolutions.org: 5%
- HandsOn Network: 3%
- ServeNet.org: 2%
VolunteerMatch User Study

Findings from quantitative & qualitative opinion research
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