

# 7 reasons to make sustained giving a priority in performing arts

6 MIN READ



No matter how popular, few (if any) performing arts organizations survive on ticket sales alone. Even luminary venues like the [Classic Stage Company](#) (CSC), a leading Off-Broadway theater, generate only half of their annual budgetary needs in this way.

The show must go on, but in many cases it wouldn't even reach the rehearsal stage were it not for the generous support of donors and other benefactors.

Of course, attracting donors is one thing. Attracting long-term supporters, quite another.

But there's good news! According to the [2018 Global Trends in Giving Report](#), 45% of donors are enrolled in a monthly giving program. This means spending time to attract sustained givers is time well spent.

If your organization is not fully leveraging recurring giving, here are seven reasons why you should pay more attention to this gift that really does keep on giving. It could be just the ticket your organization needs to achieve even greater success.

## 7 Benefits of Sustained Giving

### 1. Reduces uncertainty

Sustained giving provides steady, reliable revenue – and this more predictable cash flow is less susceptible to economic fluctuations. Think of it as a cushion or security blanket that can help get your organization through even the toughest times.

### 2. Easy for donors

With the popularity of Amazon Prime, Spotify, Netflix and cloud-based subscription software, consumers are already well accustomed to the 'pay and forget' concept. Just like they do with their favorite services, they are now more inclined to subscribe to their favorite causes.

Increasingly, fundraisers in performing arts are capitalizing on this model with a growing number of patrons now responding with monthly or quarterly donations.

If you haven't already added this option to your online donation page, as CSC has done, you could be missing out. CSC even offers donors the ability to select if – and when – they want their regular donations to end.

### **3. Increases revenue**

Competition for donors has never been more intense. At the end of the day, it's all about increasing your revenue, right?

While every performing arts organization truly appreciates one-time gifts, it has been shown that sustained givers not only donate more often – they give more too.

According to [Network for Good](#), the average recurring donor will give 42% more in one year than those who give one-time gifts. By turning your occasional donors into recurring givers, you can increase your annual revenue this year and in the years to come.

### **4. Changes attitudes**

Some people who think about giving to a worthy cause don't follow through because their \$10 gift feels like a drop in the bucket that won't make much difference. But, by making that same donation every month, they've suddenly supercharged their giving power!

If you show donors how their sustained giving is making a real difference, they'll be more inclined to do so. Otherwise, they may not give at all.

Finding ways to keep donors updated on the progress you're making is a great way to build trust too. For example, once a stage restoration project reaches its goal, send an email with photos or a video to showcase the work and the benefit it is providing to the community.

### **5. Attracts long-term supporters**

Research shows monthly giving programs typically enjoy retention rates over 80% after one year and 95% after five years.

Young people with limited budgets may be less inclined to donate a part of their hard-earned salaries, especially as they continue to pay down student debt.

However, according to the [Millennial Impact Report](#), 52 percent of this highly engaged generation is interested in monthly giving. Show Millennials how their recurring gift can help change things for the better and you could have a committed sustained giver for decades to come.

### **6. Decreases cost to attract donors**

As you attract new donors, leveraging automation to process their monthly gifts saves both time and money.

Using [AudienceView Unlimited](#), the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (SPCO) runs a successful sustained giving program that has decreased fundraising costs and accounts for [more than \\$200,000 in contributed annual revenue](#).

The SPCO team also uses past purchase and donation history to identify prospective future donors.

## 7. Builds solid relationships

While funds raised through an effective sustained giving program is undoubtedly an important goal, research reveals that recurring donors are more likely to help in other ways, which can help increase your volunteer base too.

Bottom line? Recurring giving may be just what you need to help put – or keep – your organization on the path to a more sustainable future.

Want to learn how to implement sustained giving programs for your organization? [Contact us](#) here and we'll show you how you can increase your donation revenue.