A third of donors can’t remember name of charity they last donated to online according to new report

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More than a third (37%) of UK donors cannot remember the name of the charity they most recently gave to online, according to new research conducted by Enthuse, the donations fundraising and events platform.

The report, called *Donor Pulse*, uncovers changing habits and attitudes towards charities, fundraising and donating during and after lockdown. The research shows that Gen Z (18-24 year olds) were the most generous with 84% making a donation during lockdown. Though it is concerning to see that Gen Z was also the age group least likely to remember who they had donated to online, with 56% unable to recollect the charity’s name.

The new quarterly study tracks donors and supporters’ attitudes to fundraising and giving. It examines changes in behaviour, and how this is altering both physically and digitally in reaction to the pandemic. It also covers people’s priorities for giving and the ongoing impact of Covid.

Despite the current challenging circumstances for the third sector, the report provides some positives on how the public is behaving towards and thinking about charities. During lockdown, 59% of the public made a donation to charity, with just under a third (32%) stating they made donations to multiple charities. This was also reflected in the public’s view of charities with a net change of 24% feeling more positively towards them.

This positive feeling was also shown in the inclination for future giving, with 12% of respondents saying they were more likely to donate in the next three months, rising to 50% for 18-24 year olds. Part of the reason behind this may be the government’s approach to helping the sector and the level of financial support offered. Two in five people stated the reason they were likely to give more was down to helping organisations that they felt had not been supported by the government.

The pandemic has also had an impact on who supporters are giving to. While NHS Together received considerable donations with one in three stating they had given to public health charities, there were other success stories too. Just under one in five said they had donated to foodbanks and homelessness charities, and one in eight said they had given to local causes. One area facing challenges is overseas appeals. While over lockdown, 1 in 10 people made a donation to international charities, Covid seems to have negatively impacted the willingness to give with a negative net position of -8% in willingness to donate in future, as people focus closer to home.

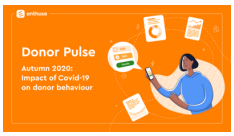
There is no doubt that the pandemic has also rapidly spurred the need for charities to have digital fundraising capabilities. The research found that 79% of Gen Z who donated during lockdown did so online, and this isn't limited to a younger audience, as similarly 44% of donations during lockdown by 65-80 year olds were digital.

With digital donations becoming so critical, the importance of a charity’s online brand is growing. This is particularly important for younger age groups with the inability to recall the name of a charity they had donated to highly correlated to age. 56% of 18-24 year olds can’t remember the name of the charity they donated to online over lockdown, and 25-54 year olds didn’t fare much better with 40% unable to recall the name. Only 55-64 year olds (67%) and 65-80 year olds (80%) showed strong recall.

Commenting on the research, Chester Mojay-Sinclare, Enthuse Founder and CEO, said: “The inability of a third of donors to remember the name of the charity they last donated to presents a significant issue for the third sector. In part at least this seems to be down to the use of dominant online consumer giving platforms which put their brand ahead of the charities, with about half of digital donations going via these third parties. With uncertain times ahead, charities have to look at how they put their brand front and centre of fundraising.”

More than one in 10 people (12%) used lockdown to try out a virtual fundraiser, and nearly half (47%) said they would be interested in taking part in one in the future. The top reason cited by more than a quarter (27%) of participants for having taken part was the ability to connect with people they couldn’t see right now. While lockdown has currently eased, charities should consider this when planning future events and how hybrid activities mixing physical and virtual events could help to connect their supporters with friends.

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