



# The Art of Thank You Letters



**DonorSnap**  
Donor Management Made Easy

# Agenda

- The value of a good acknowledgment
- Acknowledgment letter best practices
- Customizing and personalizing letters
- What to include in your thank you letters
- Dos and Don'ts
- Thanking Monthly Donors
- Thanking Online Donations



# The Value of Thank You

- One of the most important elements of donors stewardship
- Can make or break donor retention
- Have the opportunity to generate the next steps



# TY Letter Best Practices

- Update your thank you letters yearly
  - Write at same time as appeal
- Send them out ASAP (48 hours if possible)
- Customize and personalize the letters
- Show impact
- Make letters donor-centric
- Don't include an ask



# Customizing and Personalizing

- Donors value a personalized experience
- Reference giving history
  - "Since 2016 you have supported our cause"
- Have a template library for different gifts/thank yous
  - [Use Batch Codes](#)
- Good data entry is key



# What to Include?

- Include a powerful story & impact of gift
- Notify you received a gift and are grateful
- Specifics of where the gift was directed
- Donation details: amount, date, appeal, campaign
- IRS requirements if applicable
- A real signature
- Logo/mission statement/branding
- A good PS



# Powerful Story

**THANK YOU LYNNE!**

## **YOU'VE JUST CHANGED LIVES.**

This is Helen Apio. She used to walk a mile and a half to a neighboring village to get water. The walk was long, and the wait was even longer once she got there. Helen's village didn't have a well.

When she brought the water home, she'd say to herself, "How should I use this water today? Should I water my garden so we can grow food? Should I wash my kids' uniforms? Should I use it to cook? Should we drink this water?" With two children, one husband and 10 gallons, Helen never had enough water.

We saw the shame in her eyes when she described how her two kids were often sent home from school because their uniforms were dirty.

But a few years ago, people did exactly what you did today -- they donated. And because of those donations, Helen's village got a well. **Now, Helen has all the water she needs.**



# Thank you Don'ts

Dear Name:

On behalf of the X [REDACTED], thank you for supporting NAME OF EVENT on DATE OF EVENT. With your generous giving, the event raised more than \$X for Children's uncompensated care, which ensures every child is cared for regardless of a family's ability to pay.

Children's Hospital, the only regional medical center devoted to pediatric care in the Northwest, has spent a century caring for patients and their families. It is proud to provide excellent and compassionate care to all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. As Children's enters its second century, the hospital renews its commitment to its mission: to prevent, treat and eliminate pediatric disease.

The hospital could not do what it does without the generous support of a caring community. Thank you again for your thoughtful gift to Children's Hospital and the X Guild.

Most sincerely,

Name

X Guild

[REDACTED] on

Your donation of \$X is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the law. No goods or services were provided in return for your donation. This letter will serve as your receipt.

[REDACTED]

- ✗ Dry opening and impersonal
- ✗ Not making the letter donor-centric
- ✗ Not from an actual person
- ✗ Does not tell how they will use the donation



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# Thank you Dos

Dear Name,

Today, Emily's parents can breathe a little easier. Not only has she returned home from her stay at Children's Hospital, but they do not have looming medical bills to worry about. They are spending time together as a family thanks to your generous support.

We were delighted to receive your unrestricted gift of \$200 on 2/25/2022. This generous gift will go directly to supporting families like Emily's so they can focus on the important task of being together. Your gift has helped lift a burden that no family should have to bear.

Because your gift was unrestricted it will go directly to the areas of most need in our organization. These change from time to time, but right now your donation will go directly to support the medical costs of children in the cancer ward. You are the hero in all of these children's stories.

Thank you for being an important part of our mission that ensures every child is cared for regardless of a family's ability to pay.

With Gratitude,

Executive Director Name

PS: We hope to see you on April 30<sup>th</sup> for our donor appreciation picnic!



Warm

Hopeful

Donor Centric

Use of PS space



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# Thanking Recurring Donors

- Have an initial thank you letter for when they first sign up
  - This can include a welcome packet (will they have special access to things as a monthly donor)
  - Let them know what to expect (monthly receipts or year-end tax statement or both?)
- Find ways to get personal every so often
  - Handwritten notes
  - Special events
  - Newsletter



# Online Donation Thank Yous

- Make sure online donors get an immediate thank you
  - Confirmation Page
  - Confirmation Email
  - Acknowledgment letter ~ Print/Email



# Final Thoughts

- Acknowledgment letters are an invaluable part of your donor stewardship process
- Thank you letters should be personalized and updated often
- Avoid dry language that feels impersonal
- Personalize your letters by adding as much detail as possible
- Always measure and test!

