



# FIGHT FOR *ALL* ANIMALS

 THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES



# Sustainer Acquisition: Growing your Sustainer File

A photograph of three giraffes in a savanna setting. The giraffes are brown with white reticulated patterns. They are standing in front of a background of green trees and a blue sky with light clouds. The text is overlaid on the image.

# Today we're talking about...

Channels of acquisition for monthly givers

Benefits and challenges!

What's the best mix?

Open discussion and questions

# Overview: 2016- 2019

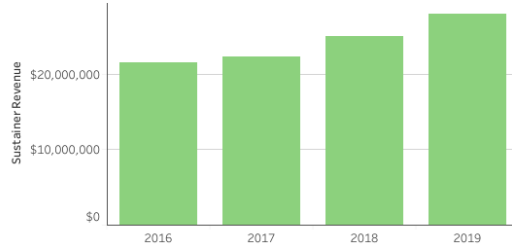


The Humane Society of the United States Sustainer Dashboard  
FY 2019, Q4 (data through 12/31/2019)

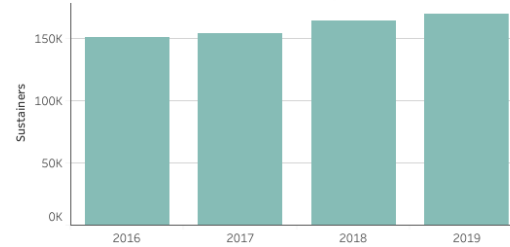


## Overall Sustainers and Sustainer Revenue

\$27,939,654 in sustainer revenue, up 11.66%

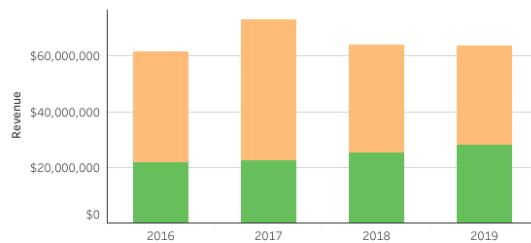


169,896 unique sustainers this year, up 3.57%

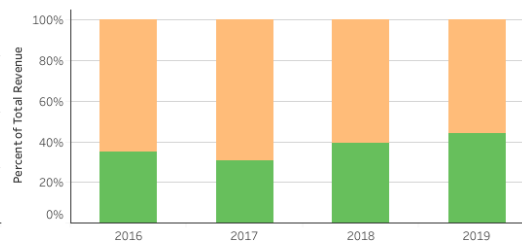


44% of revenue came from sustainers

## Total Sustainers and Non-Sustainer Revenue by Year



## Revenue Composition of Sustainer and Non-Sustainer



Non-recurring Rev Sustainer Rev

# Channel Mix: 2019

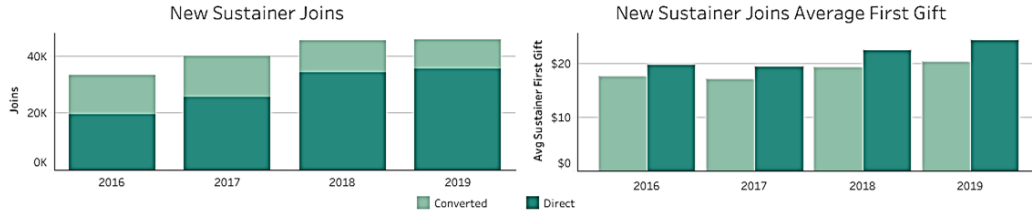


The Humane Society of the United States Sustainer Dashboard  
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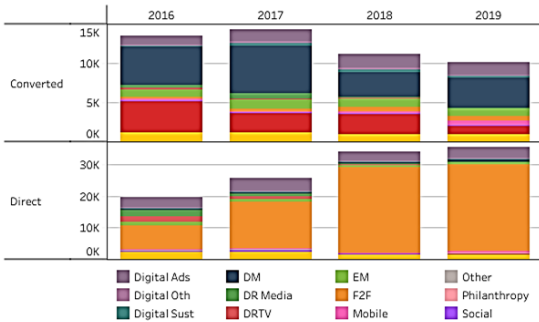


- Mix of direct acquisition vs. converted
- Avg. gifts higher on converted
- TM: largest source of converted
- F2F: largest source of direct acquired

New Sustainers



New Joins by Join Channel



Average First Gift by Join Channel

	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Converted</b>				
Digital Ads	\$19.90	\$18.63	\$24.78	\$21.48
Digital Oth	\$23.89	\$23.05	\$19.57	\$18.40
Digital Sust	\$14.75	\$15.92	\$29.74	\$17.73
DM	\$15.66	\$15.38	\$17.67	\$19.38
DRTV	\$19.94	\$18.48	\$18.52	\$25.00
EM	\$19.65	\$17.14	\$17.12	\$19.81
F2F	\$18.36	\$19.56	\$23.09	\$24.69
Mobile	\$17.28	\$14.55	\$14.44	\$14.98
Social	\$15.98	\$20.05	\$14.36	\$15.67
TM	\$32.06	\$12.56	\$13.56	\$15.42
Web	\$36.66	\$26.64	\$25.65	\$29.20
WM	\$18.28	\$24.38	\$12.27	\$15.40
<b>Direct</b>				
Digital Ads	\$20.11	\$18.91	\$18.22	\$17.45
Digital Oth	\$19.34	\$18.39	\$18.39	\$18.42
Digital Sust	\$18.60	\$18.50	\$20.52	\$20.92
DM	\$22.08	\$19.72	\$19.86	\$18.01
DRTV	\$17.54	\$17.95	\$17.40	\$14.50
EM	\$17.54	\$15.91	\$14.45	\$14.50
F2F	\$16.74	\$14.08	\$15.12	\$14.36
Mobile	\$16.96	\$16.59	\$15.42	\$17.66
Social	\$11.18	\$19.73	\$15.12	\$14.36
TM	\$20.94	\$20.65	\$19.74	\$20.03
Web	\$18.77	\$15.85	\$17.55	\$18.33

Average First Gift by Join Channel

		2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Converted</b>	Digital Ads	\$19.90	\$18.63	\$24.78	\$21.48
	Digital Oth	\$23.89	\$23.05	\$19.57	\$18.40
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	DM	\$22.08	\$19.72	\$19.86	\$18.01
	DRTV	\$17.54	\$17.95	\$17.40	\$14.50
	EM	\$17.54	\$15.91	\$14.45	\$14.50
	F2F	\$16.74	\$14.08	\$15.12	\$14.36
	Mobile	\$16.96	\$16.59	\$15.42	\$17.66

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Our path to growth...

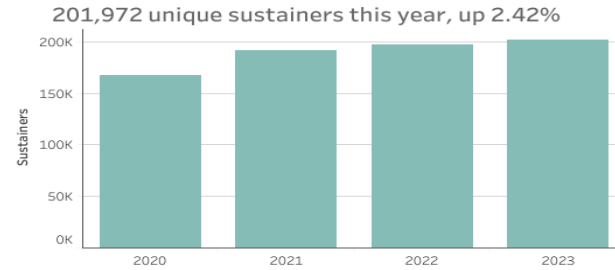
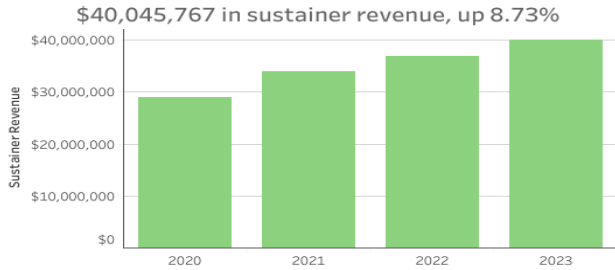
# Overview: 2020- current



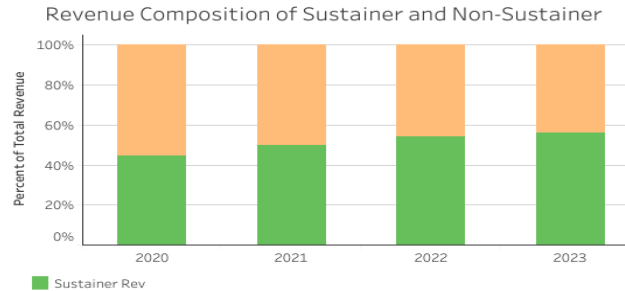
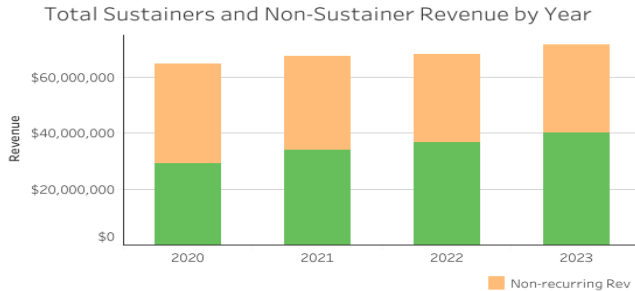
The Humane Society of the United States Sustainer Dashboard  
FY 2023, Q2 (data through 6/30/2023)



## Overall Sustainers and Sustainer Revenue



## 56% of revenue came from sustainers



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# Channel Mix: present

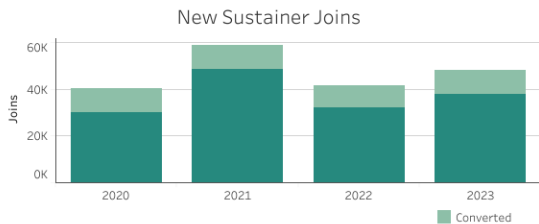


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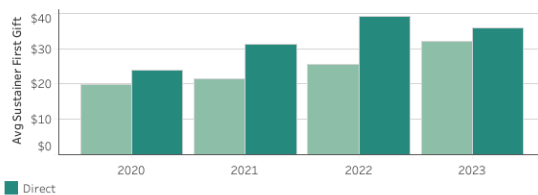


- Direct Acquisition outpaces converted
- Direct also seeing gains in avg. gifts
- Avg. gifts have increased across all channels
- F2F still highest proportion of new joins

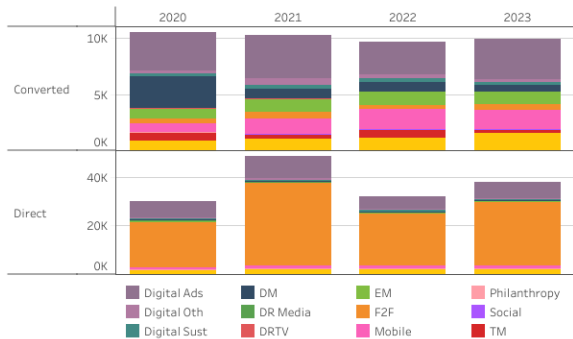
New Sustainers



New Sustainer Joins Average First Gift



New Joins by Join Channel



Average First Gift by Join Channel

	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Converted</b>				
Digital Ads	\$19.60	\$18.82	\$26.70	\$32.98
Digital Oth	\$19.44	\$20.28	\$26.70	\$30.11
Digital Sust	\$17.09	\$19.51	\$23.26	\$23.30
DM	\$19.40	\$18.66	\$22.64	\$22.43
DRTV	\$25.00	\$8.00		
EM	\$19.48	\$16.95	\$21.38	\$20.97
F2F	\$23.84	\$48.50	\$63.21	\$53.65
Mobile	\$15.13	\$15.70	\$17.06	\$19.29
Social	\$15.13	\$17.77	\$23.64	\$23.64
TM	\$16.01	\$14.59	\$16.27	\$16.71
Web	\$30.66	\$35.77	\$39.12	\$53.86
WM	\$15.33	\$23.79	\$17.50	\$10.33
<b>Direct</b>				
Digital Ads	\$17.83	\$16.61	\$20.51	\$26.08
Digital Oth	\$19.54	\$21.14	\$20.58	\$29.77
Digital Sust	\$19.61	\$37.32	\$19.20	\$21.51
DM	\$19.24	\$20.53	\$21.42	\$24.27
DRTV	\$16.33			
EM	\$17.30	\$15.21	\$16.98	\$20.18
F2F	\$27.22	\$36.70	\$48.44	\$40.29
Mobile	\$14.03	\$14.28	\$15.39	\$16.96
Social	\$15.04	\$15.67	\$18.03	\$24.22
TM	\$17.29	\$20.00	\$27.77	\$23.78
Web	\$20.73	\$23.45	\$27.77	\$32.78
WM	\$23.60	\$26.40	\$27.41	\$14.63

Average First Gift by Join Channel

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<b>Converted</b>	Digital Ads	\$19.60	\$18.82	\$26.00	\$32.98
	Digital Oth	\$19.44	\$20.28	\$25.16	\$30.11
	Digital Sust	\$17.09	\$19.51	\$24.28	\$23.30
	DM	\$19.40	\$18.66	\$22.64	\$22.43
	DRTV	\$25.00	\$8.00		
	EM	\$19.48	\$16.95	\$21.38	\$20.97
	F2F	\$23.84	\$48.50	\$63.21	\$53.65
	Mobile	\$15.13	\$15.70	\$17.06	\$19.29
	Social	\$15.13	\$17.77	\$23.64	\$23.64
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	Digital Oth	\$19.54	\$21.14	\$20.58	\$29.77
	Digital Sust	\$19.61	\$37.32	\$19.29	\$21.51
	DM	\$19.24	\$20.53	\$21.42	\$24.27
	DRTV	\$16.33			
	EM	\$17.30	\$15.21	\$16.98	\$20.18
	F2F	\$27.22	\$36.70	\$48.44	\$40.29
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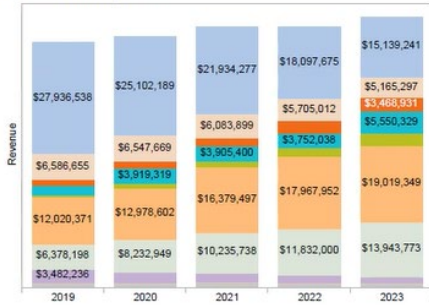
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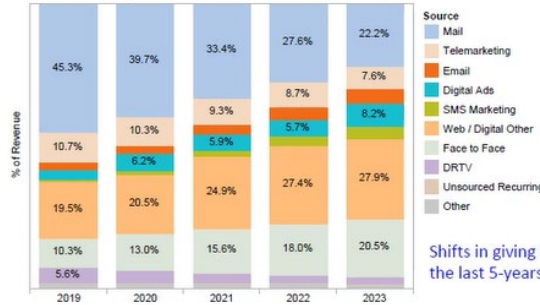
# Overview: trends by gift source

## Revenue and Gift Trends by Gift Source

Revenue Trend by Source



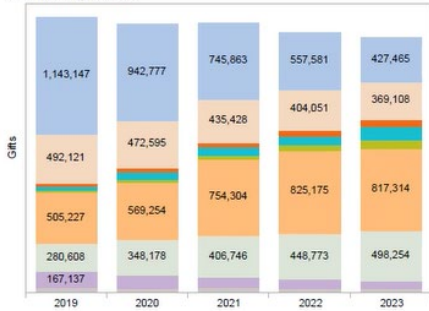
Share of Revenue by Source



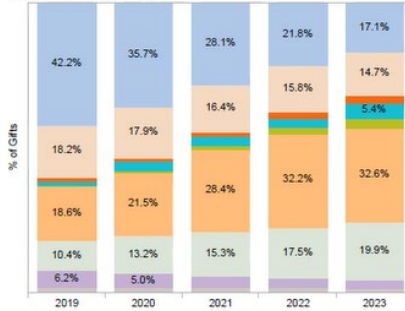
Source  
 Mail  
 Telemarketing  
 Email  
 Digital Ads  
 SMS Marketing  
 Web / Digital Other  
 Face to Face  
 DRTV  
 Unsources Recurring  
 Other

Shifts in giving by source over the last 5-years.

Gift Trend by Source



Share of Gifts by Source



- A slightly different view
- Shifts in the trend lines of our channel mix



The great, the challenges,  
and cautionary tales

# Face to face

## Benefits

- Ability to scale up quickly
- Higher average gifts
- LTV is high for long term retained
- Data collection: high percentages of emails and SMS
- ROI in under 3 years (compared to DRTV)
- Brand awareness and exposure

## Challenges

- High cost to acquire
- High risk to the brand: canvasser training is key!
- Retention is a very real concern
- “Buyer’s remorse”
- Credit card processing
- Incorrect information or outdated information
- Canvasser safety
- HSUS unique challenges

## Cautionary Tales

- Sometimes you won’t have buy-in from higher ups and you will have to make the case for your program
- Weather! What happens if you move south for the winter and that’s the only place it snows?

# Telemarketing

## Benefits

- Very flexible in start and stop
  - Data collection
  - Myriad uses:
    - ✓ Conversion
    - ✓ Acquisition
    - ✓ Reinstatement
  - Human conversation! You can tell your story better through script
  - Low cost to acquire/convert
  - High retention: 80% at month
- 13

## Challenges

- Diminishing utility in the market
- Restrictive laws can hinder who you can call and when
- Calling cell phones can also be a problem
- Data hygiene is a challenge
- Lower response to phone calls because of bad actors in the marketplace

## Cautionary Tales

- The phone calls will always drive high numbers of complaints!
- Sometimes your caller will say things you don't want them to say—or they get upset with the person at the other end. Make sure you have recordings

# Digital Ads

## Benefits

- Ability to scale up quickly
- High volume is possible
- High average gifts
- You are in control of turning on and turning off
- Control over where your ads air
- Excellent channel for conversion
- Above average retention

## Challenges

- Unspoken agreements with search: we agree not to use each other's high value search terms
- Lead generation can be expensive
- Trying to tell your whole story in <10 seconds
- Measuring brand impact
- Attribution

## Cautionary Tales

- Set your max spend per day with Meta because if you don't...
- You might end up spending your whole budget in 24 hours (or so I've heard)

# Direct Response Media

## Benefits

- Able to get large numbers of monthly donors
- National campaigns or regional
- Streaming/CTV are low cost
- Higher average gifts
- LTV is high for long term retained
- ROI can be within 3 years
- Omnichannel approach with digital and mail
- Streaming, CTV, Linear TV, and digital ads

## Challenges

- High cost to acquire (DRTV)
- Media costs will eat up your budget
- Retention is a very real concern
- High number of one times—which can also offset expense
- “Buyer’s remorse”
- Credit card processing
- HOW to tell your story?
- Attribution

## Cautionary Tales

- If you have a media scandal, DRTV/media can be the thing that increases your exposure
- Using a celebrity to tell your story can be a challenge: what if your target audience doesn’t know them?

# SMS

## Benefits

- Excellent for conversion and lapsed reactivation
- Cost to acquire is low
- Retention is very good
- Scalable!
- Average gifts are solid
- Retention is solid

## Challenges

- Opt in info: data hygiene is key
- Householding (SMS and Email)
- Legal tangles
- Balance of ask and advocacy/engagement between asks
- Platform for deployment
- Telling your story

## Cautionary Tales

- You must always keep the laws around texting at top of mind: for example, it's not quite legal to purchase lists for SMS because you don't have permission to contact those people

# What's a good mix?





# What's a good mix?

## Think about...

- What's your budget?
- What is your appetite for risk?
- Will you be handling in house or will you outsource to a consultant?
- What is the level of staff expertise?
- What are your back end processes?
- How flexible are you with change?
- What happens if you fail?

Marketing  
channel mix  
works but  
depends on  
your  
comfort  
level!

## Challenges

- Crosschannel collaboration
- What story do you want to tell?
- What is your crisis action plan?
- Staff time and staff expertise
- Measuring brand impact vs. money raised
- Flexibility to shift budget around different channels to take advantage of opportunities

A photograph of three raccoons climbing a tree trunk. One raccoon is at the top right, another is in the middle left, and a third is partially visible at the bottom center. The background is a blurred green forest. The text "Questions and Open Discussion" is overlaid in white serif font at the bottom of the image.

Questions and Open  
Discussion

A black cat with bright yellow-green eyes is the central focus, sitting on a light-colored carpet and looking directly at the camera. In the background, a bright orange pumpkin and a yellow banana are visible but out of focus. The entire image is framed by a solid blue border.

# Thank You!

Joanne Wilson

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