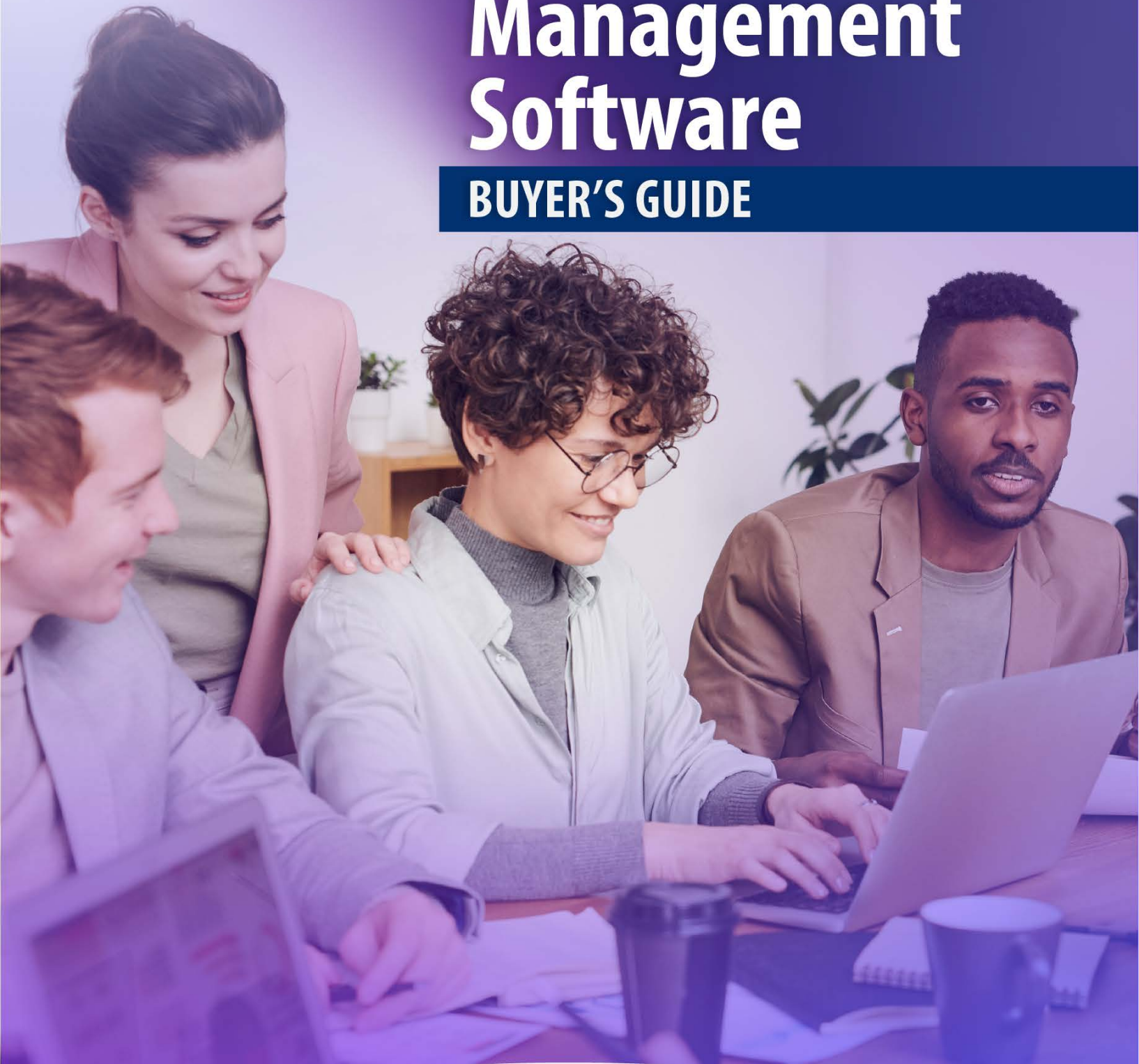


THE Volunteer Management Software

BUYER'S GUIDE



**A resource for
volunteer engagement leaders & nonprofits created by**



The Volunteer Management Software Buyer's Guide



The landscape of volunteer management is a complex web of tasks, responsibilities, and opportunities.



Selecting the right volunteer management software is a strategic decision that significantly affects your organization's outcomes and community impact.



This guide serves to simplify the software decision-making process. You'll walk through a structured path toward the best possible volunteer management solution for your organization.



By following these simple steps, you'll not only find software that aligns with your specific needs but also see an improvement in how you manage and engage with your volunteers!

1

The Buyers Guide Quick Checklist

Ready to try out + take action on Volunteer Management Software for my organization - use this checklist now!

2

How to Determine When Your Organization's Volunteerism Needs Software

The most common reasons your organization needs to invest in volunteerism-focused software ... and the challenges of not choosing a solution at the right time.

3

Making the Case for Software that Supports Volunteerism

Researching Top Volunteer Management Software Solutions

1 The Buyers Guide Quick Checklist

Step 1: Understand Your Organizational Needs

Step 2: Create Your Feature List

Step 3: Read Reviews

Step 4: Create a Shortlist of Options

Step 5: Do Demos

Step 6: Make Your Decision

Step 7: Monitor and Measure Results



Step 1: Understand Your Organizational Needs

Quick Actions:

- ☐ Calculate your volunteer turnover rate.
- ☐ Evaluate your volunteer pool size.
- ☐ Review your existing systems and processes.
- ☐ Identify operational pain points software can resolve.



Understanding your nonprofit's unique challenges is the cornerstone of making an informed purchase. Are you dealing with high volunteer turnover? Do you have a complex system for assignments? Knowing these details upfront will guide your subsequent steps.

Calculate the volunteer turnover rate with this formula:

Volunteer # present **year / Volunteer # last year** **X 100 =**

*Consider how your programs, activities, and services may have changed year over year to account for nuance in this retention rate.

Step 2: Create Your Feature List

Quick Actions:

- ☐ Checklist of must-have features
- ☐ Checklist of good-to-have features
- ☐ Checklist of optional features

List your requirements based on the assessment from Step 1. Remember, not all software is created equal, and some may offer specialized functionalities tailored for nonprofits.

Must-Have Features

Good-to-Have Features

Optional Features



Step 3: Read User Reviews

Quick Actions:

- ☐ Consult reputable sites for software reviews.
- ☐ Pay attention to scalability, ease of use, and customer support.

Online reviews offer valuable insights into real-world performance. Reviews on sites like Capterra and G2 can provide a wealth of user-generated insights.

Step 4: Create a Shortlist of Options

Quick Actions:

- ☐ Match the software options with your feature list.
- ☐ Consider budget constraints.

After initial research, it's time to zero in on the options that satisfy your must-have features and fit your budget.

Top Options

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Step 5: Do Demos

Quick Actions:

- ☐ Schedule demos with your shortlisted vendors.
- ☐ Prepare a set of critical questions to ask during the demo.

After initial research, it's time to zero in on the options that satisfy your must-have features and fit your budget.

Step 6: Make Your Decision

Quick Actions:

- Align with internal stakeholders.
- Complete a cost-benefit analysis.

Ensure that your team is on board with the decision. Then, employ a decision-making framework to finalize your choice.

Step 7: Monitor and Measure Results

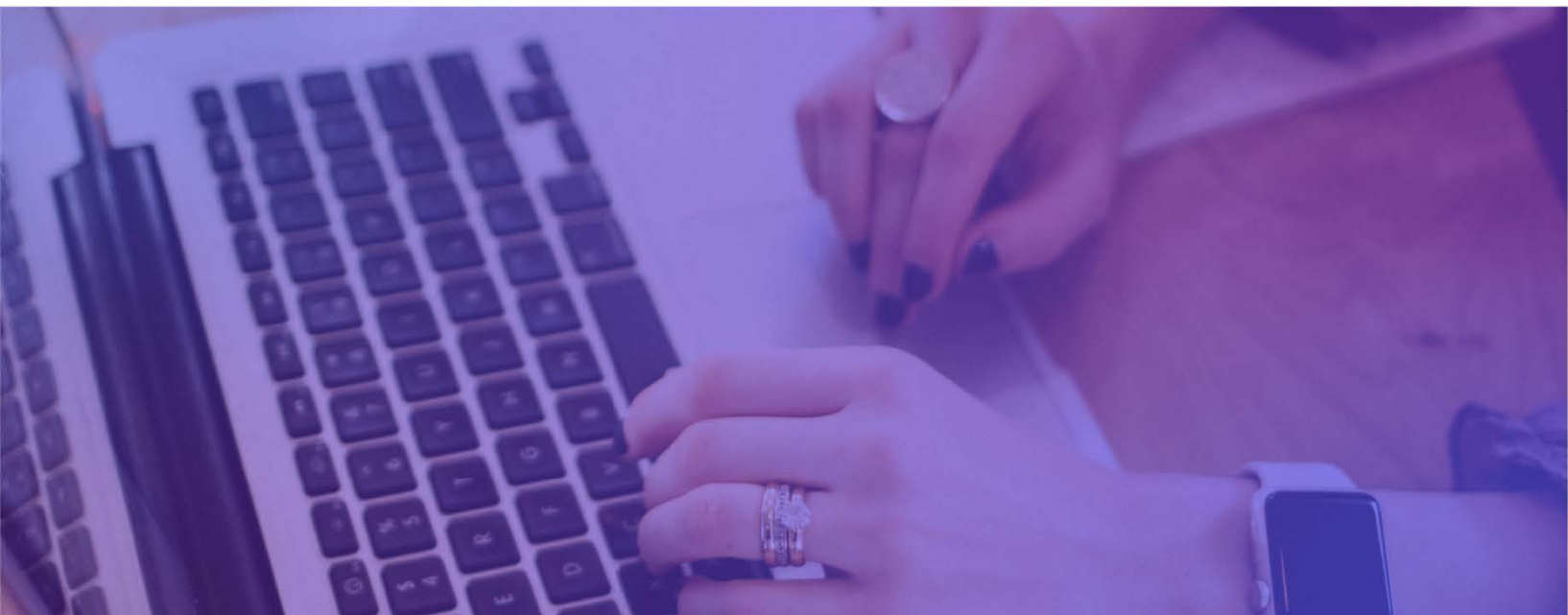
Quick Actions:

- Track KPIs such as volunteer retention rates and task completion rates.
- Schedule quarterly evaluations.

After implementation, keeping tabs on the software's performance is crucial. Set KPIs to indicate whether the software meets your organization's needs effectively.

Once fully integrated, your software should be able to show your volunteer base growing and engaged.

Ready to make a case for Volunteerism-focused software?
Head here to find the right one for your organization >>>>>



2 How to Determine When Your Organization Needs Volunteerism-Focused Software

If you're in a place where choosing volunteer management software is on your mind, chances are you've required a solution for quite some time.

Here are the top 6 areas where volunteer leaders are losing time in the day-to-day tasks of managing their volunteer base. Analyzing your volunteer management processes in these areas will indicate your organization's readiness for volunteer software.

Step 1: Evaluate the State of Your Volunteer Data

Step 2: Identify Repetitive Tasks

Step 3: Gauge Volunteer Experience of Sign-Up

Step 4: Analyze Volunteer Hours Tracking

Step 5: Think Through Volunteer Communications

Step 6: Examine Reporting Needs



Evaluate the State of Your Volunteer Data

Assessing your volunteer data using this checklist will help determine if your organization needs volunteer management software. Ensuring that your organization has accurate, relevant, and secure information to effectively manage and engage volunteers is key to thriving volunteerism. functionalities tailored for nonprofits.

Data Accuracy

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are volunteer details, such as contact information and skills, accurate and up-to-date?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Have you verified the information recently?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is the maintenance + verification of this information done manually?

Data Completeness

- YES ☐ NO ☐ Is all essential information collected for each volunteer, including contact details, emergency contacts, and relevant skills?
- YES ☐ NO ☐ Are requested updates managed manually?

Data Consistency

- YES ☐ NO ☐ Are there any inconsistencies in the way data is formatted or entered?
- YES ☐ NO ☐ Do all volunteers follow a standardized format for providing information?
- YES ☐ NO ☐ Do volunteer leaders follow a standardized format for maintaining consistency?

Data Relevance

- YES ☐ NO ☐ Does the data you have still align with the current needs of your organization?
- YES ☐ NO ☐ Are there any outdated or irrelevant entries?
- YES ☐ NO ☐ If data is outdated or irrelevant, how are those changes currently made?

Data Security

- YES ☐ NO ☐ Is volunteer data stored securely to protect sensitive information?
- YES ☐ NO ☐ Have you implemented proper access controls to ensure data?

Data Compliance

- YES ☐ NO ☐ Are you compliant with data protection and privacy regulations?
- YES ☐ NO ☐ Have volunteers given consent for the use of their data as per legal requirements?

Technology Infrastructure

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is your current technology infrastructure capable of handling and safeguarding volunteer data?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are there any updates or improvements needed in your data management systems?



If you find yourself answering 'no', feeling unsure, or recognizing the lack of security or consistency in your volunteer database, it's time to turn towards a volunteer software solution.

Identify Repetitive Tasks

Check Communication Channels

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are you manually organizing and responding to volunteer inquiries through one-to-one email chains?

Update Volunteer Schedules

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Do you manually update and distribute volunteer schedules without the use of scheduling software?

Coordinate Volunteer Shifts

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are you manually assigning tasks and coordinating shifts without the aid of volunteer management software?

Check-In/Out Process

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Do you rely on manual methods for tracking volunteer attendance without the use of check-in/out software?

Communicate Changes

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are you manually communicating changes and updates to individual volunteers without utilizing messaging features in software?

Record Keeping

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are you manually recording volunteer hours, activities, and achievements without the automation provided by volunteer?

Review Volunteer Applications + Background Checks

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are you manually screening and reviewing new volunteer applications without the support of application tracking features or digital background check services in software?

Recognition and Appreciation

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are you able to keep up with recognizing volunteer service milestones based on hours served?

Update Volunteer Database

YES ☐ NO ☐ Do you manually maintain and update the volunteer records without utilizing software for a centralized database (ie using spreadsheets)?



What are your responses revealing about your day-to-day management tasks? Are you ready for some help with these repetitive regularly occurring to-dos?

Regularly managing these tasks with a cohesive volunteer technology system will contribute to the smooth operation of your volunteer department and foster a positive volunteer experience within the organization.

Gauge Volunteer Experience of Sign-Up

Evaluate your current volunteer sign-up experience using these questions:

YES ☐ NO ☐ Do you use an online platform or website that provides a user-friendly interface for volunteer registration?

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are you using a mobile-friendly online sign-up form for volunteers who prefer using smartphones or tablets?

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Does the sign-up process include an option for volunteers to indicate their skills, interests, or preferences?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a confirmation message or email sent to volunteers upon successful sign-up?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Does the sign-up process include an option for volunteers to consent to the organization's terms and policies?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are there visuals or multimedia elements that enhance the volunteer sign-up experience, such as videos or images of volunteer activities?



Identify where your organization will benefit most from the streamlined approach of volunteer software for sign up. If you found yourself answering 'no' to any of these questions it's most likely time to bring your volunteer sign up experience up to date with a tech solution.

Analyze Volunteer Hours Tracking

Evaluating the volunteer hours tracking process using these questions can help volunteer managers ensure accuracy, efficiency, and satisfaction in the tracking and reporting of volunteer contributions.

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a standardized system in place for volunteers to log their hours easily?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are volunteers provided with clear instructions on how to record and submit their volunteer hours?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Does the organization use a digital platform or software for volunteer hours tracking?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is the volunteer hours tracking system easily accessible to all volunteers?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are there options for volunteers to track hours in real-time, or is it a retrospective process?

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Does the tracking system allow volunteers to categorize their hours based on different activities or projects?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a process in place to verify and approve volunteer hours by supervisors or coordinators?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Does the volunteer hours tracking system provide a summary or report of total hours contributed by each volunteer?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is the organization able to generate reports on overall volunteer hours for a specific time period or project?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Does the tracking system allow for easy integration with other volunteer management tools or databases?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is the volunteer hours tracking process aligned with any external reporting requirements or standards?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a system in place to acknowledge and recognize volunteers based on their accumulated hours?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Does the organization regularly review and analyze volunteer hours data for insights and improvements?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is the volunteer hours tracking process transparent, and do volunteers have access to their own recorded hours?



If the answers to one or more of these questions are 'no', it's time to look into a cohesive volunteer management system that integrates registration, check in/check out, and volunteer hours tracking.

Think Through Volunteer Communications

Onboarding and Orientation

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a clear and welcoming communication process for introducing new volunteers to the organization?

Task Assignments and Scheduling

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are volunteer tasks, roles, and schedules communicated clearly and in a timely manner?

Volunteer Engagement

YES ☐ NO ☐ Can you easily track volunteer activity and engagement through your data?

Communication Effectiveness

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are there any gaps or issues in communication that need to be addressed?

Training and Development

YES ☐ NO ☐ Do volunteers receive information about available training opportunities for skill enhancement?

Regular Updates and Announcements

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are volunteers regularly informed about organizational news, events, and achievements?

Feedback and Recognition

YES ☐ NO ☐ Do volunteers receive timely recognition and appreciation for their contributions?

Technology and Communication Platforms

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are effective communication tools and platforms used?

Impact of Volunteer Work

YES ☐ NO ☐ Is the broader impact of volunteers' work communicated effectively?

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are success stories and testimonials shared to highlight the significance of volunteers' contributions?

Personalized Communication

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is personalization used to acknowledge and celebrate milestones or achievements?



By assessing your processes against these yes or no questions, you can identify areas of that may need the power of software's automations to improve efficiency of volunteer communications.

Examine Reporting Needs

Documentation and Reporting

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a standardized way of documenting volunteer activities and achievements?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Can you generate reports to assess the overall impact of volunteer contributions?

Volunteer Hours Tracking

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are volunteer hours systematically tracked and recorded?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a digital system in place to streamline volunteer hours tracking?

Impact Assessment

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a process for assessing and reporting on the overall impact of volunteer contributions?

Retention and Attrition Rates

- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Is there a reporting mechanism for tracking volunteer retention rates?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are reports used to analyze reasons for volunteer attrition and inform retention strategies?
- YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ Are you able to sort through active vs. inactive volunteers?

Budget and Resource Utilization

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are reports used to optimize resource allocation and budget planning?

Project-specific Reporting

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are there specific reports generated for individual volunteer projects or initiatives?

YES ☐ NO ☐ Is project-specific reporting used to refine and improve future projects?

Technology Infrastructure Assessment

YES ☐ NO ☐ Is the current technology infrastructure assessed for its effectiveness in supporting reporting needs?

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are there efforts to upgrade or optimize technology tools for better reporting capabilities?

Continuous Improvement Reporting

YES ☐ NO ☐ Are these reports actively used to implement changes and enhancements?



By assessing their processes against these yes or no questions, volunteer leaders can identify areas where their reporting practices may be strengthened and determine whether the tools they are currently using are the most effective for their needs.

The top reasons organizations choose volunteer management software often arise out of a great need to automate manual management tasks and streamline volunteer experiences.

Is your bandwidth shrinking due to one or more of these common areas of volunteer management?

Then your very next step is determining the ideal volunteer technology solution for your organization.

Jump to the Buyer's Guide Quick Checklist!

3 Making the Case for Software that Supports Volunteerism

Researching Top Volunteer Management Software Solutions



Volunteer management software streamlines and enhances the entire volunteer experience, from recruitment to retention, ensuring organizations can efficiently mobilize their volunteer base.

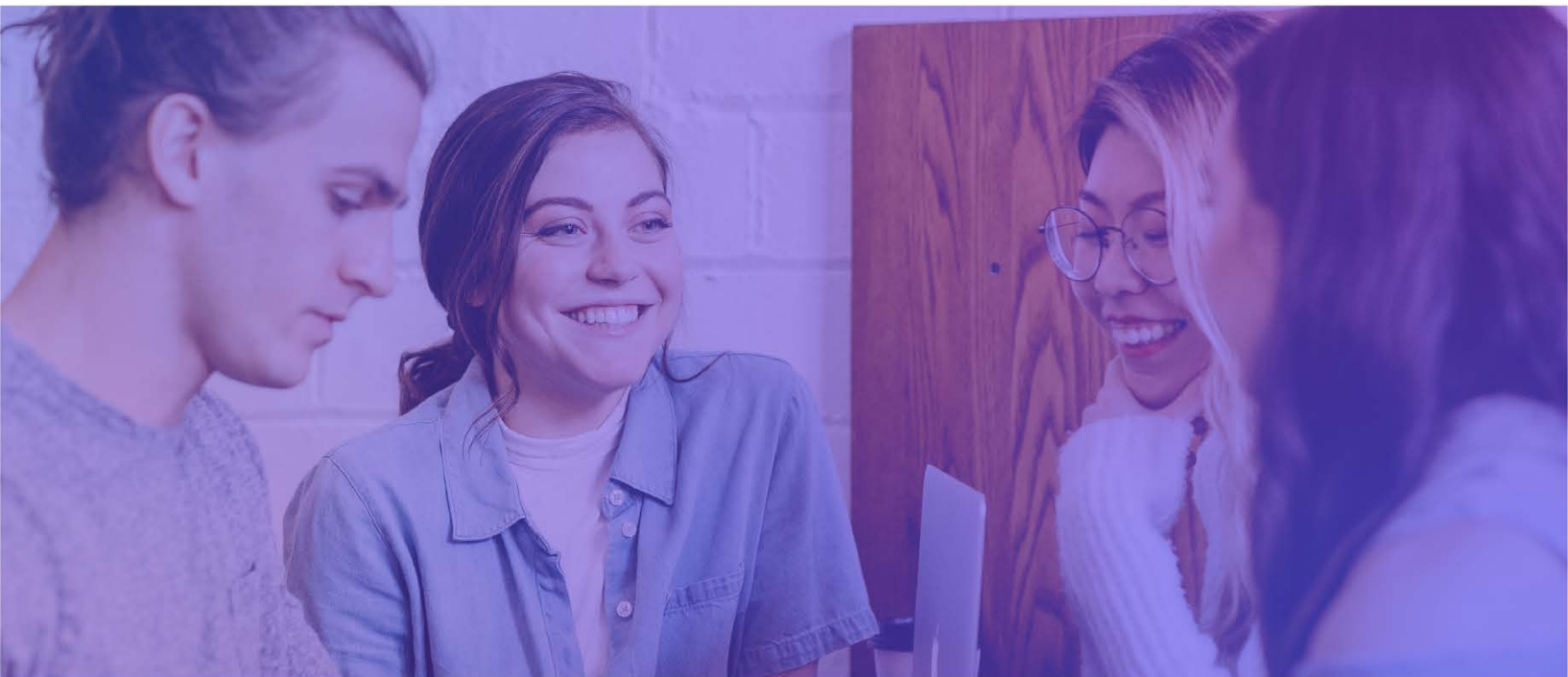


By centralizing communication, simplifying scheduling, and automating administrative tasks; volunteer-focused technology frees up valuable time and resources for focusing on your organization's core mission.



Volunteer management software helps organizations foster better coordination and engagement, maximize impact, and establish a robust foundation for long-term community involvement and support.

Now that you know the importance of volunteerism-focused software, let us help you choose the right one >>>>>



The Best Volunteer Management Solutions for Everyone

Discover Get Connected Volunteer Management Solutions

Get Connected offers a family of volunteerism-focused software that meets the needs of every organization, program size, and budget.

When determining your organization's need for volunteer technology and working your way through your Buyer's Guide Quick Checklist - make sure to talk with the helpful team at Get Connected.



VOLUNTEER APP

Volunteers can check-in to opportunities and track hours with an intuitive mobile app.



HOURS TRACKING

Accurately track every volunteer hour with automated tools and pre-built reports.



SCHEDULING

Fill every shift by centralizing all of your scheduling needs.



EVENT MANAGEMENT

Promote events and track RSVPs with custom landing pages.

Available as an add-on.



VOLUNTEER CHECK-IN

Collect hours data with a check-in kiosk, mobile app, and automated reminders.



GROUPS & TEAMS

Boost impact with streamlined group and team management tools.

More than 50,000 organizations are thriving with Get Connected!



Request a demo by heading to our website

www.galaxydigital.com/request-free-demo

or sending us an email at info@galaxydigital.com



Contact us INFO@GALAXYDIGITAL.COM // 828.575.5300 // WWW.GALAXYDIGITAL.COM