

INFLUENCING DONOR DECISION-MAKING: AN EXAMINATION OF
SITUATIONAL DETERMINANTS THAT IMPACT DONATION

by

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Abstract

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Employing websites as a means of communication is becoming more widespread. This is especially true for nonprofit organizations, as websites have become a fundamental instrument in communicating with donors (Nonprofit Marketing Guide 2012). Because websites are an essential marketing tool for nonprofit organizations, understanding how online marketing communications or characteristics may influence donors becomes desirable. This dissertation contributes to the situational determinants literature by developing two essays that examine how online website characteristics impact individual donations.

Essay one elucidates how central (as reflected by web content) and peripheral (as reflected by web structure and entertainment) routes influence attitudes toward the website, and the downstream variables including donations of time and money.

Consistent with previous research related to Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty and Cacioppo 1981), the results reveal that both peripheral and central routes can affect individuals' donations, and that donations of money are affected more by the central route than by the peripheral route. However, contradictory to what the ELM would

predict, the results reveal that, in the low-involvement situation (i.e., for those who are lowly identified with the charity), individuals are more influenced by information formed through web content, as opposed to web structure and entertainment, whereas the reverse is true for the high-involvement situation.

Building on essay one, the second essay illuminates how cognitively-laden and affectively-laden website characteristics influence donation through the pathway of two dimensions of perceived intangibility, namely physical intangibility and generality. The results reveal that while cognitively-laden characteristics have a stronger influence on donation directly, and indirectly through generality, affectively-laden characteristics primarily influence donation via physical intangibility. Furthermore, for less experienced donors, cognitively-laden web characteristics have a stronger impact on donation. This essay sheds light on how cognitively-laden and affectively-laden website characteristics affect modes of decision-making.

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Chapter 1

How Donor Involvement Moderates the Influence of Website Characteristics on Donation

1.1. Introduction

Enabling an interface between limitless amounts of potential donors from all parts of the world, the Internet offers unique opportunities for nonprofits (Grunig 1992). Without compromising resources, that are often scarce, managers can reach a large audience with a well-designed website (Naude, Fronemen and Atwood 2004). Because websites are such an integral way to communicate with the public (Nonprofit Marketing Guide 2015), understanding how various facets influence donation becomes paramount.

The Internet changes how consumers behave because of greater availability of information (Varadarajan and Yadav 2002). Websites allow consumers to make inferences in regard to the quality of the service and evaluate risk (Zeithamal, Parasuraman and Malhotra 2002). By providing the right information to customers, the Internet is able to perform a powerful marketing function, which leads to reductions of perceived risk and increases in purchases (Thakor, Borsuk and Kalamas 2004).

Research on web characteristics is of great consequence to nonprofits because websites are one of the most important channels for communicating with donors (Nonprofit Marketing 2012). Online research investigations demonstrate that website characteristics influence purchase intentions (Richard 2005; Richard et al. 2010), and the motivation of an online consumer may dictate responses to various website characteristics (Babin and Darden 1995; Kaltcheva and Weitz 2006). One area that may influence how a donor responds to website characteristics is involvement. Involvement is

an important donor characteristic shown to influence donation (Lohmann 1992). This is important because level of involvement influences response to stimuli (i.e. web characteristics) (Andrews, Durvasula and Akhter 1990).

Uses and gratification theory offers a promising new insight into how website characteristics may influence high- versus low involvement donors. The theory attempts to understand the underlying psychological and social motivations for audience's use of a platform (Diddi and LaRose 2006; Lin 2002; Ruggiero 2000), an important assertion because audiences have more control over channels of communication than in the past. Previous studies have predicted that motivations to search for information may vary because of consumer involvement (Cacioppo and Petty 1983), and as Cacioppo and Petty's (1983) study shows, high involvement consumers are motivated by a need for in-depth search, while low-involvement consumer's decision-making needs are satisfied by heuristics cues.

The present research contends that donor involvement motivates utilization of nonprofit websites, which influences their response to web characteristics. While studies on purchasing behavior show that high-involvement consumers process via the central route, we predict, in terms of donor's usage of a nonprofit website, the reverse will be true. This is because high-involvement donors hold great amounts of information in regard to a particular nonprofit, therefore, the influence of peripheral cues becomes more influential on their decision to donate. Conversely, low-involvement donors utilize websites to fill gaps in knowledge, and thus, content becomes paramount as they may be unfamiliar with many aspects of the nonprofit.

Utilizing a structural equation model to empirically assess the impact of web characteristics on donation across lowly- and highly-involved donors, we contribute to the literature in the following ways. First, we contribute to the donation and dual processing literature by showing that, as opposed to for profit consumers, high-involvement donors are influenced more by peripheral website cues. On the other hand, central website cues have a greater impact on donation for low-involvement donors. We believe effect occurs because high involvement donors have different goals in regard to utilizing the nonprofit website as opposed to low involvement donors.

Because of the marked distinctions between time and money (Reed Aquino and Levy 2007; Saini and Monga 2008), the current research examines the simultaneous decision to give time and/or money. Our model assesses how central and peripheral website cues influence these decisions. Therefore, we contribute to the literature on time and money by showing how central and peripheral website cues positively influence decisions to give money, more so, than time. Recently, investigations on time and money have increased in the literature, therefore we believe our findings that website characteristics impact donations of time and money adds value to the current literature stream.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows, first, we discuss our conceptual background. Next, we develop and propose our hypothetical expectations. This is followed by data collection and methodology. Finally, we discuss results, theoretical contributions and managerial implications.

1.2. Conceptual Background

As figure one shows, our model centers its investigation on how website characteristics influence donations of time and money through the routes of website attitudes. The model (Mehrabian and Russell 1974; Robert and Rossiter 1982) is broken-down into three segments. Website characteristics belong in the first portion of the model because they are variables, which instill the need to process or stimulate an emotional response. Website attitude serves as the organisms leading to response, which is a donation of time or money.

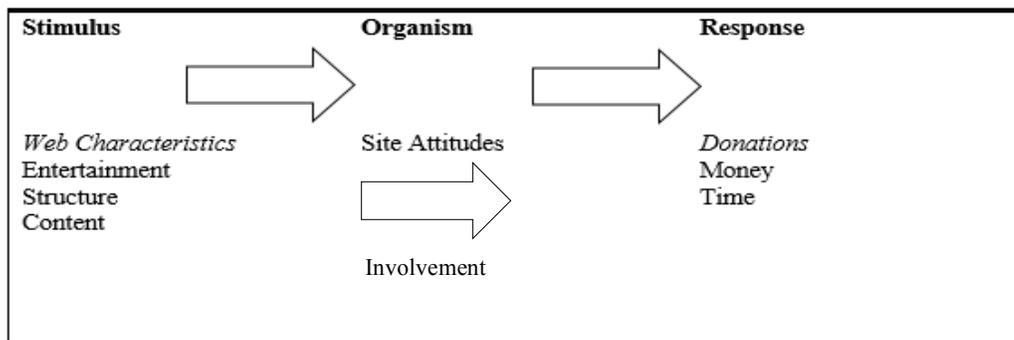


Figure 1-1 - Conceptual Model

1.2.1. Time and Money

Time and money are multifaceted constructs that serve as the dependent variable in our proposed model. One research stream on time and money argues they are vitally essential resources, each denoted by well-defined psychological characteristics (c.f. Reed Aquino and Levy 2007; Saini and Monga 2008). As an example, consider that time is not as fungible as money, and when lost tends to be more painful (Leclerc, Schmitt and Dube 1995). Additionally, because of the ambiguous nature of time, consumers are often less accountable for how their time is spent (Okada 2005). Moreover, in the donation domain, donors have considered giving time more reflective of one's self than money (Reed,

Aquino and Levy 2007). On the other hand, the value of money comes from the opportunity it affords (Lea and Webley 2006). Because of the aforementioned literature, the current research examines the simultaneous decision to give time and/or money.

1.2.2. Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model proposed by Petty et al. (1983) suggests that subjects process information via one of two routes. The first relies more heavily on searching for and processing detailed information. The second uses peripheral cues, such as color, size, or sound as means for decision-making. These routes will vary according to relevance to the consumer. The model predicts that while highly involved consumers spend more time searching for information in order to reach a decision, lowly involved consumers will rely on peripheral cues in order to reach a decision.

Information, content, structure and entertainment (Chen and Wells 1999) function as central and peripheral website cues. Central and peripheral website cues are important because they can fulfill informational needs, as well as influence overall attitudes. This is important because research (Chen and Wells; Montoya-Weiss, Voss and Grewal 2003) shows that when visiting a website, consumers are concerned with information, moving about the website and being entertained. Because of these findings, the present research investigates the influence of website content, website structure, and website entertainment on attitudes and donations of time and money.

1.2.3. Uses and Gratification Theory

Uses and gratification theory examines which psychological and social factors motivate a particular use of media (Diddi and LaRose 2006; Lin 2002; Ruggiero 2000). With the addition of new media, such as websites, social media and others, a donor's

need to utilize a particular channel may vary from what previous research has predicted. In choosing a particular media, donors consider the benefits afforded by the choice of the channel and these choices are often based on whether the behavior is goal-directed or experiential (Armstrong and McAdams 2009). Research from the goal behavior literature suggests that when consumers have sufficient prior knowledge, they exhibit a sense of urgency in accomplishing their goals (Spence and Brucks 1997) and limit their search for information (Bettman and Park 1980). Alternatively, when prior knowledge is limited, as in the case of low-involvement, consumers engage in more extensive information search (Mandel and Johnson 2002). These behaviors interact with the characteristics of the channel and may shape donor response to a particular stimuli (Andrews, Survasula and Akhter 1990). Therefore, the current research investigates involvement as a moderating effect on website characteristics and donation.

1.3. Hypothesis Development

Figure two below shows the proposed model and the expected hypothesized relationships.

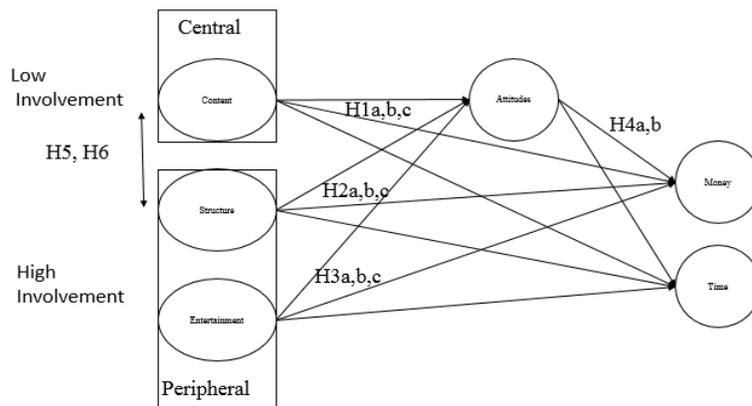


Figure 1-2 - Hypothetical Model

1.3.1. Central Website Cues

Website content will have a positive impact on website attitudes and donation. Website content is a central cue and is positively related to attitudes and intentions. Website content is important because it addresses the recency and usefulness of the information presented (Richard et al. 2010). When specific, up-to-date details are provided, consumer's perceptions of the website are positively influenced (Huizingh 2000; Johnson and Misic 1999). Additionally, current content is critical in an online environment, as not only is it likely to influence time visiting the site, but also likely to influence attitudes towards the organization (Richard et al. 2010). For the current research, we assert that content provides donors and potential donors with beneficial information about the organization and the beneficiaries. Current, up-to-date information should influence attitudes toward the website. Additionally, because donors or potential donors have the most recent information in regard to the organization and their beneficiaries, the likelihood of a personal connection is likely to increase as well. Furthermore, having learned much in regard to the nonprofit, and sensing the value of their contribution, monetary contributions should increase as well. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Website content will positively influence (a) attitudes and donations of (b) money and (c) time.

1.3.2. Peripheral Website Cues

Website structure will influence website attitudes and donation. Structure is a peripheral cue in an online environment. For online consumers, structure corresponds to store layout (Richard et al. 2010). Because leaving a website can be accomplished

quickly and with little cost, understanding how structure can induce longer visits is crucial. Multiple navigational structures have been reported in the literature (Huizingh 2000), the majority of which utilize a simple structure, a tree or a tree with a back to home button. Structure allows for easy access to information (Poruban 2002), and when navigational cues are effortless to learn, greater cognitive capacity is available for processing other types of information (Richard et al. 2010). Moreover, if the structure of the site is not efficient or to the liking of a potential donor, they may become frustrated and leave the site, leading to poor perceptions of the organization (Menon and Kahn 2002). On the other hand, when structures are easy to learn and efficient, potential donors will have better attitudes toward the site and perceptions of organizational quality will also be influenced. As both attitudes toward the site and perceptions of quality are influenced, both donations of time and money should increase as well. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Website structure will positively influence (a) attitudes and donations of (b) money and (c) time.

Cues that are humorous, visual or attractive are peripheral (Cho 1999). Website entertainment serves as a peripheral cue in an online environment. Entertainment is an essential component of a website (Eighmey 1997) and we assert that website entertainment will stimulate positive attitudes and increases in donation. Entertainment can be reflected through color, pictures, video and even interactivity (Richard et al. 2010) and previous research has shown that when consumers consider an ad entertaining, they hold favorable attitudes toward the brand (Stern 1993). Further, website entertainment enhances the visitors experience on the site, such as through an emotional release

(Ducoffe 1996) and can offer an incentive for visitors to remain on the site for extended periods of time (Cai and Xu 2007). Because of these findings, we surmise that website entertainment can stimulate positive attitudes toward the site, as well as, allow the potential donor to personally connect and realize the difference their money makes to the organization. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Website entertainment will positively influence (a) attitudes and donations of (b) money and (c) time.

1.3.3. Attitude Toward the Website

Attitude toward the site will influence donation. Advertising research shows that attitude toward an ad, influenced subsequent attitude toward the product and purchase intentions (Brown and Stayman 1992; Dens and De Pelsmacker 2010). Because websites reflect characteristics similar to traditional advertising, the effects should be indistinguishable (Jee and Lee 2002). For a website to be effective, the junction of entertainment, organization and information becomes essential (Eighmey 1997), and attitude toward the site remains a reliable measure of future intention (Richard and Chandra 2005; Hausman and Siekpe 2009). Additionally, the ELM predicts that attitude change is influenced both by inspection of attitude-relevant information and relative factors (Petty and Cacioppo 1981; 1986). Thus, we surmise, as previously stated, that content, structure and entertainment will positively influence website attitudes. Moreover, website attitudes will influence attitude toward the organization and their beneficiaries. As these are impacted, it would be expected that website attitudes influence subsequent donations of time and money. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Website attitudes will positively influence donations of (a) money and (b) time.

1.3.4. Moderating Role of Donor Involvement

We conceptualize involvement as a strong attachment between the donor and the organization (Michaelidou and Dibb 2008). When consumers are highly-involved with an organization, they become motivated to search for information and engage in wide-ranging exploration to make decisions (Bettman 1979; Bloch and Richins 1983). In contrast, under conditions of low-involvement, there is a greater reliance on minimal cues in order to make decisions. (Engel and Blackwell 1982; Hawkins et al. 1986). However, in the donation domain, Lohmann (1992) posited that membership in a network, society, or community is sufficient for donation. These findings suggest that an in-depth search for information may not be required for a highly-involved donor to give. Further evidence supporting this assertion comes from research that revealed that identity alone is sufficient to elicit donation (Shang, Reed and Croson 2008). Research from the goal behavior literature may also aid in understanding what to expect from high- versus low-involvement donors and information search while utilizing a website. As previously stated, when consumers have sufficient prior knowledge, as in the case of highly-involved donors, they exhibit an increased sense of urgency in attainment of their goals (Spence and Brucks 1997). Because of the increased urgency for goal attainment, their information search becomes limited (Bettman and Park 1980). On the other hand, when prior knowledge is reduced, as in the case of lowly-involved donors, consumers tend to engage in extensive information search (Mandel and Johnson 2002). Because involvement alone may be sufficient for donation, and involvement may signal levels of

prior knowledge a donor holds, the implication becomes that when utilizing a website, high-involvement donors become concerned with urgency and efficiency. Alternatively, low-involvement donors, who may not have sufficient prior knowledge for decision-making, will engage in greater search for information. Coupling these findings with motivations juxtaposed from uses and gratification theory (Diddi and LaRose 2006; Lin 2002; Ruggiero 2000), we suggest that high-involvement donors primarily utilize the website out of an increased sense of urgency to donate. This implies that peripheral website cues will become more influential in regards to goal accomplishment for highly-involved donors. On the contrary, lowly-involved donors may need to search for additional information because their prior knowledge is limited. This infers a greater need for processing central website cues. Thus, contrary to previous research, it is expected that for donors or potential donors who are highly-involved with a nonprofit, peripheral website cues will be more instrumental. Conversely, for donors or potential donors who are lowly-involved with a nonprofit, central website cues will be of the utmost importance. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H5: For lowly-involved consumers, central website cues will be more influential in regard to donations.

H6: For highly-involved donors, peripheral website cues will be more influential in regard to donation.

1.4. Research Methodology

Questionnaires containing items were administered to students from a large university in the southwest United States. The research was conducted in a lab, where following procedures from similar studies (Richard 2005), subjects browsed a nonprofit

website. Websites were chosen based on size and familiarity (see Webb et al. 2000). Additionally, websites were pretested with PhD students in order to confirm familiarity, along with common breadth and scope. After surfing the website for 8-10 minutes, subjects responded to the questionnaire. Subjects who did not spend at least 15 minutes total on the survey were removed, leaving a sample of 478. The subjects ranged from 18-58 (mean = 23.41) years of age, and 54 % of the respondents were men. The sample is similar to previous studies on donation (Liu and Aaker 2008).

1.4.1. Measure Development

Tables one and two below provide correlations, reliabilities and results from an exploratory factor analysis. An exploratory factor analysis was performed in order to assess the underlying structure of each construct of interest. Reliabilities of each construct were assessed using cronbach's alpha.

The three-item measure for website content was adapted from Bell and Tang (1998). Sample items included "the information on the website is up-to-date," "the information on the website is accurate," "the information on the website about beneficiaries is complete." The scale's reliability was .834.

The three-item measure for entertainment was adapted from Chen and Wells (1999). The sample items included "the website is exciting," "the website is imaginative," and "the website is entertaining." The scale's reliability was .751.

The four-item measure for website structure was adapted from Bell and Tang (1998). The sample items included "the structure of the website is well-organized," "the website allows for a great overview of the structure," "the website is easy to access," and "the website is easy to use." The scale's reliability .859.

A three-item measure for website attitudes was adapted from Chen and Wells (1999). The sample items included “I am satisfied with the service provided by this website,” “compared with other website, I would rate this as one of the best,” and “I would like to visit this website again in the future.” The scale’s reliability was .819.

The measurement for money was derived by asking subjects to hypothetically estimate how much they would donate out of 100 dollars to the nonprofit in the next months. For time, we asked how much out of 10 hours they would be willing to donate in the next month.

Table 1-1 - Means and Correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Entertainment	2.29	0.71	1					
Structure	3.22	0.65	0.28***	1				
Content	5.67	0.92	0.36***	0.43***	1			
Attitude	4.8	1.26	0.36***	0.30***	0.42***	1		
Money	3.64	1.2	0.13***	0.16***	0.20***	0.33***	1	
Time	2.3	1.2	0.02	0.04	0.002	-0.02	-0.03	1

Table 1-2 - Items and Loadings

Items	Loadings
Website Entertainment	Alpha=.751
<i>The website is exciting.</i>	.66
<i>The website is imaginative.</i>	.73
<i>The website is entertaining.</i>	.74
Website Structure	Alpha=.859
<i>The structure of the website is well-organized.</i>	.74
<i>The website allows for a great overview of the structure.</i>	.76
<i>The website is easy to access.</i>	.83
<i>The website is easy to use.</i>	.79

Table 1-2 Continued

Website Content	Alpha=.834
<i>The information on the website is accurate.</i>	.85
<i>The information on the website is up-to-date.</i>	.88
<i>The information about beneficiaries on the website is complete.</i>	.65
Website Attitudes	Alpha=.819
<i>I would like to visit this website again in the future.</i>	.79
<i>I feel surfing this website is a good way for me to spend my time.</i>	.74
<i>Compared with other websites. I would rate this one as one of the best.</i>	.80

1.5. Analysis and Results

1.5.1. Measurement Model

Table three below provides evidence of convergent and discriminant validity. The measurement model was assessed and the model fit was acceptable with a $\chi^2=222.965$, $df=106$, $NFI=.938$, $CFI=.966$ and $RMSEA=.048$. All estimates were acceptable. Next, following Fornell and Larcker (1981), convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated. To verify convergent validity, the average variance extracted should be greater than .5 and to show discriminant validity, the squared multiple correlations should be smaller than the average variance extracted. The conditions were sufficient for all constructs.

Table 1-3 - Convergent and Discriminant Validity

Correlations Squared	Entertainment	Structure	Content	Attitude
Entertainment	0.51			
Structure	0.12	0.61		
Content	0.15	0.23	0.75	

Table 1-3 Continued

Attitude	0.19	0.13	0.17	0.61
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1.5.2. The Structural Model

Table four below provides the results from the structural model. We assessed the structural equation model utilizing AMOS 22. This fit of the model was acceptable with a $\chi^2=284.580$, $df=107$, $NFI=.921$, $CFI=.948$ and $RMSEA=.059$. Controls included age, finances, gender and prior knowledge about the organization. Each pathway in the hypothesized model was then assessed. Website content had a significant ($\beta=.228$, $p<.001$) influence on website attitudes, on money ($\beta=.207$, $p<.001$), but not on time. This lends support to H1(a) and H1(b), but not H1(c). Website structure had a significant ($\beta=.164$, $p<.05$) impact on website attitudes, but not money or time. This findings lend support for H2(a), but not H2(b) or H2(c). Website entertainment had a significant ($\beta=.276$, $p<.001$) effect on website attitudes, but not on money or time: lending support to H3(a) only. Website attitudes had a significant influence on money ($\beta=.412$, $p<.001$) and time ($\beta=.229$, $p<.001$), lending support to H4(a) and H4(b).

Table 1-4 - Structural Path Estimates

Structural Path	Estimate
Web Content → Web Attitudes	.22***
Web Content → Money	.19***
Web Content → Time	.06
Web Structure → Web Attitudes	.15***
Web Structure → Money	-.01
Web Structure → Time	.06
Web Entertainment → Web Attitudes	.30***
Web Entertainment → Money	-.09
Web Entertainment → Time	-.03
Web Attitudes → Money	.41***
Web Attitudes → Time	.22***

Figure three below shows the results in the hypothesized model. The results from the main model show that website content, structure and entertainment influence donations of time and money both directly and through website attitudes.

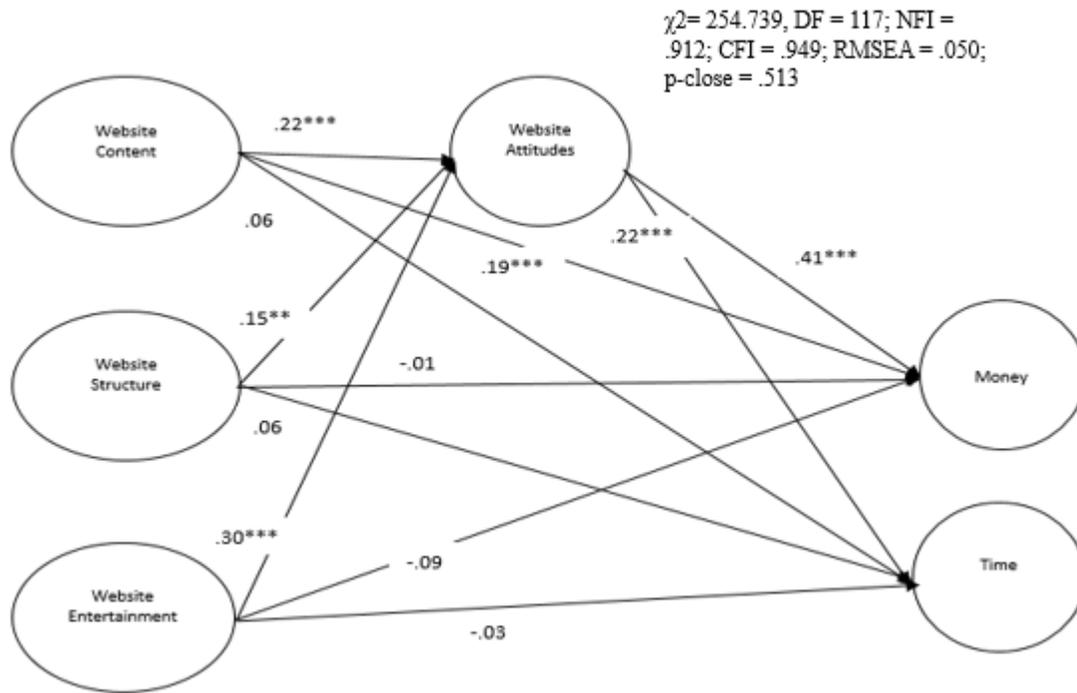


Figure 1-3 - The Structural Model Results

1.5.3. Testing for Multigroup Invariance

Table five below provides the results of tests of invariance. A multigroup analysis was performed to assess the influence of involvement on the proposed model. To perform the analysis, a median split was performed and the groups were dummy coded. Following the approach by Hair et al. (2006), we introduced measurement level constraints to test the equality of high and low involvement simultaneously. After measurement invariance was assessed, structural level constraints were implied in order to test H5 and H6. Model 1 tested configural invariance and freely estimated between the

two groups. Model 2 tested metric invariance, while the factor loadings were restricted, the factor covariance and error variance were estimated without restriction, model 3 tested for scalar invariance allowing group means to be compared and model 4 tested factor covariance, allowing covariances to be compared. The results from a χ^2 between the configural model and models 2, model 3 and model 4, showed that model 3 and model 4 were significantly different from our baseline model. Additionally, the nested model test between models 3 and 4 was significantly different. These tests provide evidence that groups were somewhat different at the model level. In the next step, a path analysis was performed.

Table 1-5 - Tests of Invariance

Configural--	154	227.542	.000	.922
	ΔDF	$\Delta \chi^2$	p	ΔNFI
Metric	9	11.273	.257	.004
Scalar	24	49.940	.001	.017
Factor Covariance	45	172.210	.000	.059
<i>Assuming metric model correct</i>				
Scalar	15	38.667	.001	.013
Factor Covariance	36	160.937	.000	.055
<i>Assuming scalar model correct</i>				
Factor Covariance	21	122.270	.000	.042

One at a time, each pathway was constrained and then with that pathway constrained, the model was recalculated and the new chi-square was compared to the unconstrained chi-square confidence intervals at 90, 95, and 99 percentiles. The path estimates of significant links are listed below.

Results from the path analysis showed that the estimate from content to attitude was significantly higher in the lowly-involved group than that of the highly involved group ($\beta_{\text{low-involvement}} = .32$, vs. $\beta_{\text{high-involvement}} = .14$, $p < .001$). The estimate from content to

money was significantly lower in the lowly-involved group than that of the highly-involved group ($\beta_{\text{low-involvement}} = .01$, vs. $\beta_{\text{high-involvement}} = .21$, $p < .001$). The path analysis showed that link from structure to attitude was significantly lower in the lowly-involved group than that of the highly-involved group ($\beta_{\text{low-involvement}} = .16$, vs. $\beta_{\text{high-involvement}} = .18$, $p < .001$). Results from the path analysis showed that the estimate from entertainment to attitude was significantly lower in the lowly-involved group than that of the highly-involved group ($\beta_{\text{low-involvement}} = .18$, vs. $\beta_{\text{high-involvement}} = .36$, $p < .001$).

Figure four below provides a pictorial representation of the results from the multigroup analysis. Consistent with H5 and H6, the results indicate, as predicted, that for donors or potential donors with low-involvement, central processing of information becomes more important. On the other hand, high-involvement donors or potential donors rely more on peripheral cues when considering donation.

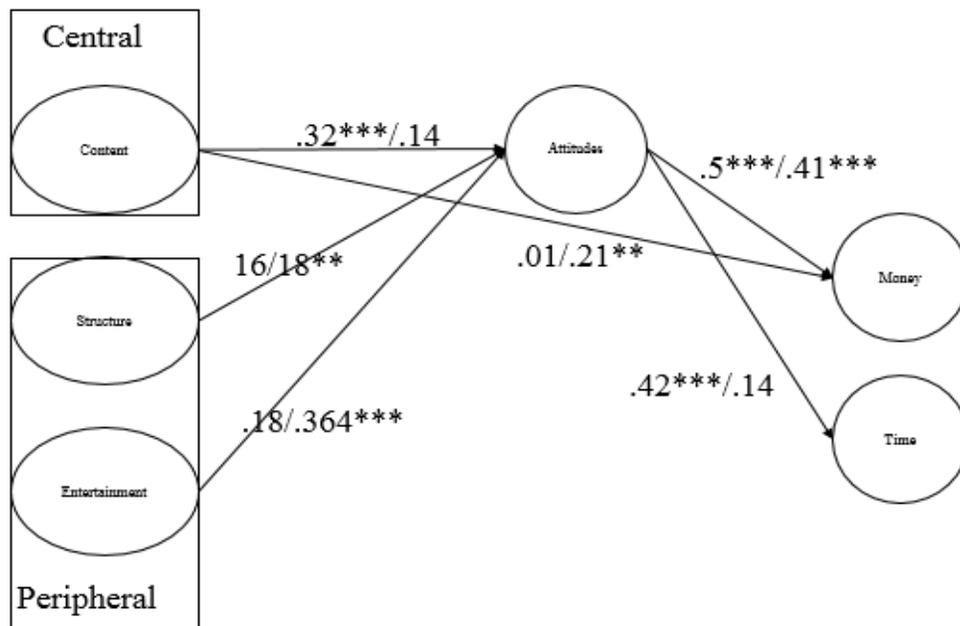


Figure 1-4 - Multigroup Path Analysis

1.6. General Discussion

Understanding the motivation and goals of donors and potential donors is important. For donors that are highly involved with the nonprofit, website structure and entertainment becomes essential. For low-involvement donors, website content appears most influential in regard to donation. This means managers can design their website in accordance with who they are trying or who they expect to reach in terms of donation. If the nonprofit website only serves as a means for collecting money, then the structure, colors, vividness, including videos etc. become paramount for the channel to be successful. Conversely, if nonprofit managers believe their website is key to attracting new donors or potential donors, who may not know a lot about what they do and who they serve, content becomes king. One important note, regardless of central or peripheral website cues, a differential influence on time versus money did not exist.

1.6.1. Theoretical Contributions

Theoretically, the present research contributes to several literature streams. Our first contribution reveals how donor motivation to utilize a particular media channel, and their goals within the channel, interact with donor characteristics to drive whether central or peripheral website characteristics influence donation.

Next, we contribute by demonstrating that low-, as opposed to high-involvement donors, are more influenced by central website cues: a finding counter to what previous literature has predicted.

Finally, we contribute, as our findings show the results are stronger for money as opposed to time.

1.6.2. Managerial Contributions

We contribute managerially by revealing the importance of knowing the audience who visits or may visit your website. In this manner, managers can tailor website characteristics to serve, based on the characteristics of their donors or potential donors. In doing so, donations of time and money should both be impacted positively.

More specifically, our research indicates that websites may be better suited for capturing donations of money as opposed to time. Managers should be aware that potential donors browsing the website are more likely to browse the website to donate money as opposed to time. Therefore, if managers need volunteers, other platforms may be better suited for generating donations of time.

Finally, for low-involvement donors, with limited prior knowledge, central website cues become very impactful in their decision to give time or money. For high-involvement donors, central and peripheral website cues are relevant towards their goal completion. Therefore, managers should design websites understanding that content or information is king. However, managers should be aware that peripheral website cues, if inefficient or ineffective, may cause donors to leave without donating.

1.7. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The present research has several limitations, first, students were respondents. Future research should examine the proposed relationships utilizing respondents with actual income and responsibilities. Next, the studies were conducted in a lab as opposed to utilizing actual donors. Future research should investigate the proposed model with actual nonprofit donors. Finally, the current research examined hypothetical donations in

terms of time and money. Future research should match actual behavior data with the findings from the proposed model.

Chapter 2

How Cognitively-laden and Affectively-laden Website Characteristics Influence Donation: The Central Role of Intangibility

2.1. Introduction

Presently, seventy-two percent of donations to nonprofits comes from individuals (Global Giving USA 2014) and when making a decision to donate, individual uncertainty often influences how a donor feels about giving to a nonprofit (Sargeant, West, and Ford 2001; Yavas, Riecken, and Babakus 1993). Past evidence has shown that donors have good reason to feel uncertain. For example, an infamous case in the United States involved the National Kids Foundation raising four million dollars between 1948 and 1963. Unfortunately, and unbeknownst to the donors, almost all of the funds were spent on administrative costs (Cutlip 1980). Given that most donations come from individuals, developing strategies to decrease uncertainty becomes paramount.

The aforementioned literature begs the question; how can nonprofits reduce uncertainty? One way for nonprofits to reduce uncertainty may be by reducing perceptions of intangibility. In fact, the literature on intangibility offers promising insights for reducing uncertainty involving donation. Investigations on intangibility discovered it was multi-dimensional, comprising physical intangibility and generality (Breivik, Troye and Olsson 1998). When perceptions of intangibility decrease, perceptions of risk (Laroche et al. 2004), the uncertainty and consequences of the decision (Bauer 1960), decreased as well.

If reductions in perceptions of intangibility offer promise in increasing donation, then how are nonprofits best suited for such reductions? Currently, websites are the primary channel that nonprofits utilize to communicate with individuals. In fact, when surveyed in regard to marketing communication, sixty-eight percent of nonprofits stated websites were the most important marketing channel (Nonprofit Marketing Guide 2012). Websites are important because the way organizations communicate has shifted from face-to-face to online (Wilkinson 2015). For nonprofits, websites need to provide clear understanding of who they are as an organization, because when individuals have a clear understanding of the organization, they should be more certain their donations will be used appropriately. This literature stream is of consequence to the current study because intangibility plays an integral role in website communications. Recent work by Mazaheri et al. (2014) shows that website characteristics positively influence perceptions of intangibility, which leads to positive attitudes towards services and intent. Additionally, literature on website characteristics also shows their influence in regards to uncertainty and decision-making (Richard 2005; Hausman and Siekpe 2009; Mazaheri et al. 2014). Websites allow individuals to make effective judgements because potential consumers utilize websites to gain experience and gather information (Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Malholtra 2002).

Translating the online consumer research findings to the donation domain, the present research contends that as perceptions of intangibility decrease, donation intention will increase. This occurs because as perceptions of intangibility decrease, uncertainty follows. Furthermore, because of the importance of websites to nonprofits and their potential to tangibilize the intangible (Eggert 2006), a notion we coin as the identifiable

charity effect, the current research contends that website characteristics act as antecedents to perceptions of intangibility, which in turn, also influences donation intention.

The current research conceptualizes website characteristics into those that are cognitively-laden versus those that are affectively-laden. Cognitively-laden web characteristics are those that allow for processing and recall of information while interacting with the site (Eroglu et al. 2001). On the other hand, affectively-laden web characteristics are those that evoke emotions, feelings, or reactions from the consumer (Ducoffe 1996; Richard et al. 2010). We maintain that while cognitively-laden web characteristics will differentially impact intangibility through perceptions of generality, affectively-laden web characteristics will primarily influence intangibility through perceptions of physical intangibility.

Given that individual contributions are the main driver of donation to nonprofits, an additional goal of this research is to understand for which segment of donors the proposed constructs will be the most influential. A particular donor characteristic of interest to the current research is prior experience. Literature examining experience shows that prior experience influences future perceptions of uncertainty and purchase intention (Helson 1964; Shim and Drake 1990). As consumers gain experience through purchases, they become more confident in future endeavors (Seckler 2000). For these reasons, the present research expects prior donation experience to moderate the influence of website characteristics and their impact on intangibility and donation intent.

Utilizing structural equation modeling as a means to empirically assess these assertions, this article makes several theoretical and practical contributions to the literature. First, we contribute to the services and donation literature by identifying the

dimensions of intangibility that are most influential in regard to donation. Although previous literature has completed in-depth examination of intangibility, sparse literature exists that investigates the dimensions in the donation domain. With this examination, we hope to provide a greater understanding of intangibility, and its influence, by showing how decreasing intangibility increases donation.

Next, we contribute to the literature on website characteristics by showing how cognitively- and affectively-laden website characteristics differentially influence intangibility and donation. An effect we define as the identifiable charity effect. This contribution is meaningful because little literature thus far, has empirically assessed antecedents to decreasing perceptions of intangibility. Our findings provide evidence of the kinds of characteristics, website-related or other, that decrease perceptions of intangibility: characteristics that previous authors suggest, but do not assess, as antecedents to decrease perceptions of intangibility.

Furthermore, the current research includes a nuance that, to our knowledge, has not been investigated previously. The authors examine web information within the proposed model that is both cognitive and affective. Because we assess this distinction, we contribute to the web characteristics literature by revealing how web information may operate in multiple capacities and differentially stimulate perceptions intangibility and subsequent donation intent.

Finally, we contribute to the literature on experience by showing how these constructs vary according to prior experience. By investigating this moderator, which has received sparse attention in the donation literature thus far, we are able to provide practical insights that aid managers as they attempt to reach their target audience.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows; first we discuss the conceptual background and hypothetical development. Next, we offer methodology and results. Finally, we discuss conclusions and contributions.

2.2. Conceptual Background

As figure one below shows, intangibility is a central component in our research and we surmise that decreases in perceptions of intangibility positively influence donation intent. Additionally, we investigate cognitively-laden and affectively-laden website characteristics, as they serve as antecedents to perceptions of intangibility. As previously stated, cognitively-laden web characteristics are those that allow for information processing and recall (Eroglu et al. 2001). Conversely, affectively-laden web characteristics arouse reactions, or emotions from the user (Ducoffe 1996; Richard et al. 2010). Our model investigates how cognitively- and affectively-laden web characteristics serve as antecedents, which we expect to influence perceptions of intangibility and donation. Based on the stimulus, organism, response model (Mehrabian and Russell 1974; Robert and Rossiter 1982), the model is broken into three parts. Cognitively- and affectively-laden website characteristics belong in the first portion of the model because they are variables, which instill the need to process or stimulate an emotional response. Perceptions of intangibility lie at the center of the model and serve as the organism leading to response, which is intention to donate.

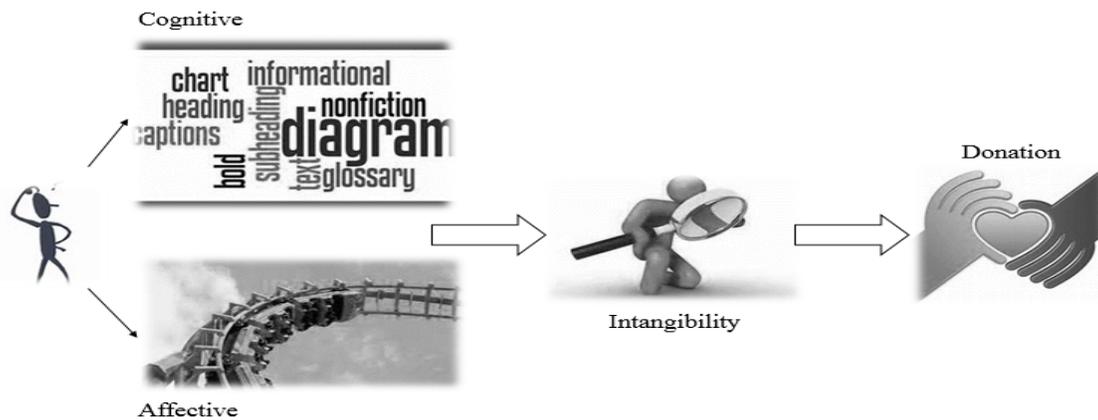


Figure 2-1 - Conceptual Model

2.2.2. Intangibility

Intangibility is a multi-dimensional construct that has received much attention in the service literature. Research by Breivik, Troye and Olsson (1998) found that intangibility encompassed both physical and general dimensions. *Physical intangibility* has been defined on the basis of whether the item, good or service cannot be touched or seen (Laroche, Bergeron, and Goutaland, 2001) and *generality* embodies the idea that a consumer may have a difficult time accurately expressing exactly what a product or service actually does (Laroche, Bergeron, and Goutaland 2001).

These dimensions are pertinent to the present study, as research shows that perceptions of intangibility are associated with decision-making (Finn, 1985; McDougall and Snetsinger, 1990). For example, research by Laroche and colleagues showed that each of the dimensions of intangibility shaped perceptions of uncertainty through the pathway of perceived risk. Further, services, which are often defined by a higher degree of intangibility, often engender a greater sense of uncertainty than goods (Mitchell and Grotorex, 1993). These findings are of interest to the literature on donation because

nonprofits are services, where the donor or potential donor often has difficulty evaluating their effectiveness. For example, it may be possible to for a consumer to gather an abundance of information when deciding to invest in a mutual fund, on the other hand, when the decision involves donation to a nonprofit, information is often unavailable or misleading (Kaufman 2012). Because of the difficulty donors often face, examining the influence of intangibility offers promise for easing decision-making in donation.

2.2.3. Why Website Characteristics Matter

Intangibility also plays a role in an online environment. Research by Mazaheri et al. (2014) found that web characteristics (i.e., content, structure and entertainment) influenced perceptions of intangibility leads to positive service attitudes and intentions. Because of the importance of website to nonprofits, web characteristics offer dual potential in the proposed model. These characteristics not only influence perceptions of intangibility, but they may impact attitudes and influence donors' decision-making processes in regard to donation as well. Website characteristics are important in consumer decision-making, as they allow individuals to evaluate websites in order to make effective judgements and decisions in regard to the organization (Richard 2005; Hausman and Siekpe 2009; Mazaheri et al. 2014). This occurs because website characteristics impact consumer attitudes leading to increase in satisfaction and purchase intention (Richards 2005; Mazahari et al. 2014). These findings imply that not only is the information on the website crucial, but also ensuring the appropriate information is presented in an acceptable manner (Mazaheri et al. 2011). In providing reliable information that is both cognitive and affective, website characteristics afford the ability to create an "identifiable charity effect". Previous research in donation has shown the

importance of identifiable victims in garnering donation (Small and Loewenstein 2003). By providing the proper information to donors and potential donors in the form of cognitively- and affectively-laden website characteristics, websites afford the opportunity to create an identifiable charity effect. We define the identifiable charity effect as any information that allows for linking a person, place or thing to the nonprofit organization. This effect occurs because website characteristics not only provide specific information in regards to the details about the organization, but also induce feelings and reactions from the potential donor. Because nonprofits rely heavily on websites for communication, developing a model that explains how these characteristics potentially create an identifiable charity effect, and influence donation intent, offers the potential to assist donors in their decision to donate.

2.3. Hypothesis Development

Figure two below shows the hypothesized relationships we propose and investigate in the current research.

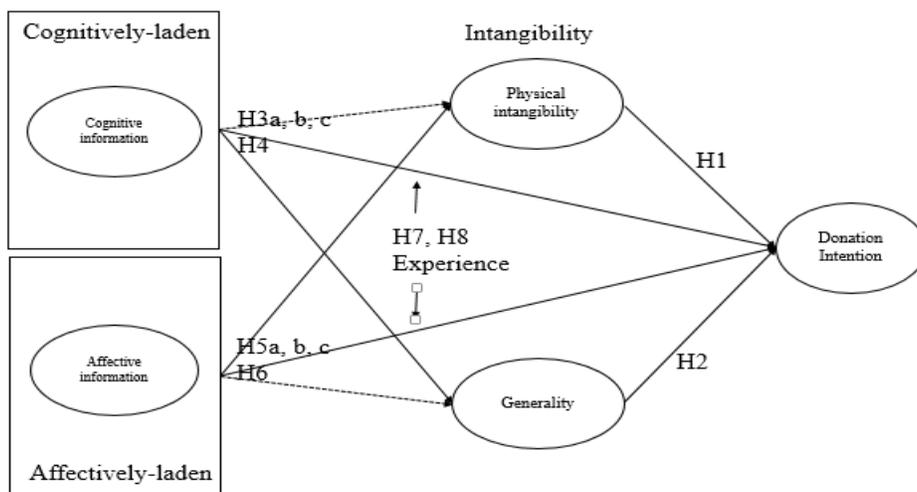


Figure 2-2 - Hypothetical Model

2.3.1. Intangibility and Donation

We expect decreases in intangibility to positively influence donation. The donation literature has revealed that certain facets can dissuade potential donors from giving their time, money or goods. Donation decisions revolve around values and costs of the choice (Phillips 1982) to the potential donor. Weighing these costs and values affects how uncertain a donor feels about bestowing to the nonprofit (Sargeant, West, and Ford 2001; Yavas, Riecken, and Babakus 1993). These findings are significant because research has shown that uncertainty (Taylor 1974) affects decision-making in consumer behavior. However, research by Laroche et al. (2005) revealed that one manner to reduce uncertainty is by reducing perceptions of intangibility. This phenomenon occurs because perceptions of intangibility impact consumer perceptions of risk. In regard to physical intangibility, this means that as consumers' perceptions of physicality and touch increase, uncertainty decreases. Likewise, literature has associated perceptions of generality with increased evaluation difficulty (Breivik, Troye and Olsson 1998). Consumers have a difficult time evaluating purchases when they lack specifics in regard to the product. The implication for donation then becomes, as perceptions of physical intangibility and generality are reduced, evaluation of the nonprofit will become easier, with an expectation that decreased uncertainty would follow. Put another way, as donors' perceptions of intangibility decrease, they are likely to feel more confident and certain in the organization. Because of this, confidence in giving should follow, leading to the following proposed hypotheses.

H1: Perceptions of physical intangibility will negatively influence donation.

H2: Perceptions of generality will negatively influence donation.

2.3.2. Cognitively-laden Website Characteristics

Cognitive information may enable an identifiable charity effect. Cognitive information represents the facts, figures and data found on the website about the organization (e.g. Colley 1961; Lavidge and Steiner 1961; Howard and Sheth 1969; Smith and Swinyard 1982). Because websites are such an integral part of nonprofit communication, it is of consequence to understand the specific aspects that afford the ability to diminish intangibility and increase donation. Previous research suggests that one manner to decrease perceptions of intangibility is through documentation, featuring objective data, facts and information (Berry and Clark 1986), or as we coin, the identifiable charity effect. By providing such documentation in the form of cognitive information, the authors contend that perceptions of intangibility will decrease as well.

Additionally, these strategies offer similar potential in terms of donation. As mentioned previously, research shows that website information is a key predictor in attitudes and purchase intention (Richard 2005; Hausman and Siekpe 2009; Mazaheri et al. 2014). Therefore, the current research proposes that the presence of cognitive information on websites potentially satisfies a donor's need for linking facts, figures and objective data to the nonprofit: the identifiable charity effect. If this is accurate, a donor or potential donor should feel more confident in the decision to give and increases in donation should follow. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H3: Cognitive information will positively influence perceptions of physical intangibility (b), generality and (c) donation intention.

Additionally, while cognitive information satisfies the need for specific detail in regard to an organization, it is unlikely that any physical manifestation is impacted. Because of the nature of the information provided to a potential donor, it is likely cognitive information has a stronger influence on generality than physical intangibility. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H4: Cognitive information will have a stronger influence on perceptions of generality than physical intangibility.

2.3.3. Affectively-laden Website Characteristics

Affective information may facilitate the identifiable charity effect. Affective information represents information related to the reactions, feelings and emotions from the website in regard to the organization and beneficiaries (e.g. Colley 1961; Lavidge and Steiner 1961; Howard and Sheth 1969; Smith and Swinyard 1982). Literature has shown the importance of symbols, visualization, and appealing to the heart in decreasing perceptions of intangibility (Berry and Clark 1986). When donors and potential donors encounter information that is symbolic, emotional or reactionary, the identifiable charity effect, we believe this affords the opportunity to decrease perceptions of intangibility.

Furthermore, because research shows (Small and Simonsohn 2008) the importance of emotions and reaction in garnering donation, we also expect that affective information will impact attitudes and perceptions toward the organization as well. As such, increases in donation intent should follow. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H5: Affective information will positively influence perceptions of physical intangibility (b), generality and (c) donation intention.

In the service literature, one strategy for creating a physical manifestation is to create a unique identity between the consumer and the brand. This is accomplished by a narrative, symbols or reactions that make the experience more concrete (Mittal 1999; Cobb-Walgren and Mohr 1998): the identifiable charity effect. We surmise this strategy will also work for online websites and donation. Affective information generates emotions and reactions through the narrative of the site and, in doing so, the organization may be able to create a unique identity with the donor. Because of this, this research contends that affective information will have a greater impact on reducing perceptions of physical intangibility as opposed to generality. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H6: Affective information will have a stronger influence on perceptions of physical intangibility than generality.

2.3.4. The Moderating Role of Prior Donor Experience

We conceptualize donor experience as the frequency of past donation with any organization. Literature suggests that previous experience can positively influence uncertainty and increase purchase intentions (Shim and Drake 1990). When consumers experience positive relationships in previous purchase situations, future endeavors are positively impacted (Helson 1964). Evaluability theory (Alba and Hutchinson 1987; Hsee 1996) suggests that experienced consumers are better suited to evaluate and understand information, and as consumers gain experience through small purchases, their confidence increases, leading to greater ambition in the future behaviors (Seckler 1990). In the

donation domain, literature shows once a donor gives and develops a relationship with a nonprofit, they are more likely to give to a broad range of causes in future donations (Callero et al. 1987).

On the other hand, research suggests that when consumers lack experience they are more likely to rely on affect to aid in their decision-making process. Often this includes relying on feelings, pictures, or physical representations (Kim, Lim, and Bhargava 1998; Miniard et al. 1991). The implication is that experienced donors can better evaluate and understand information and therefore, any subsequent impact should be enhanced as well. Conversely, potential donors lacking experience in donation will likely rely heavily on affect and affective information to aid in their decision to give. Consistent with this logic, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H7: Relative to affective information, the influence of cognitive information on perceptions of generality, as opposed to physical intangibility, will be more influential when the donor is more experienced.

H8: Relative to cognitive information, the influence of affective information on perceptions of physical intangibility, as opposed to generality, will be more influential when the donor is less experienced.

2.4. Research Methodology

Questionnaires containing items were dispensed to a students from a large university in the southwest United States. Research was conducted in a lab, where respondents browsed a nonprofit website and lab monitors could ensure respondents browsed the appropriate website before responding to survey items. Websites were

selected based on size and familiarity (see Webb et al. 2000). Additionally, websites were pretested with PhD students in order to ensure both familiarity and similar breadth, and scope. Similar to previous studies on web characteristics (Richard 2005), respondents browsed the website for 8-10 minutes before responding to the questionnaire.

Respondents who did not spend at least 15 minutes total on the survey were removed leaving a sample of 478. The respondents ranged from 18-58 (mean = 23.41) years of age and 46% of the respondents were women. The profile of the sample is similar to previous studies on giving (Liu and Aaker 2008).

2.4.1. Measure Development

Tables one and two provide correlations and item reliabilities. An exploratory factor analysis was performed in order to reduce items and capture the meaningful items for each construct of interest. Cronbach's alpha was utilized to assess the reliability of each measure.

The three-item measure for cognitive information was adapted from Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999). The sample items included, "the website provides a lot of information about benefits to me as a potential donor," "the information I gained on the website is useful," and "the website makes acquiring information about the organization efficient." The scale's reliability was .768.

The four-item measure for affective information was adapted from Singh et al. (2000). The sample items included, "this nonprofit likes to talk to people," "this nonprofit tries to establish a personal relationship," "this nonprofit is pleasant," and "this nonprofit is friendly. The scale's reliability was .851.

The intangibility items were adapted from Laroche, Bergeron and Goutaland (2001). The sample items for physical intangibility included, “the nonprofit is easy to see and touch,” “I can physically grasp this nonprofit,” and “this nonprofit is very tangible.” The scale’s reliability was .886.

The sample items for generality included, “I could easily explain the features associated with this nonprofit,” “it is not difficult to give a precise description of this nonprofit,” “it is easy to describe many of the features related to this nonprofit,” “this is not a difficult nonprofit to think about,” and “this is the sort of nonprofit that is easy to picture.” The scale’s reliability was .859.

Finally, sample items for donation intent included, “likely to donate,” “will donate,” and “probable to donate.” The scale’s reliability was .974.

Table 2-1 - Means and Correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Cognitive information	5.6	0.93	1				
Affective information	5.9	0.82	.542***	1			
Physical Intangibility	4.7	1.3	.309***	.381***	1		
Generality	5.2	1	.383***	.365***	.354***	1	
Donation Intent	4.3	1.97	.271***	.219***	.202***	.203***	1

Table 2-2 - Items and Loadings

Items	Loadings
<i>Cognitive information</i>	Alpha=.942
The website provides a lot of information about benefits to me as a potential donor.	.82
The information I gained on the website is useful.	.80
The website makes acquiring information about the organization efficient.	.60
<i>Affective information</i>	Alpha=.851
This nonprofit likes to talk to people.	.77
This nonprofit tries to establish a personal relationship.	.69
This nonprofit is pleasant.	.78
This nonprofit is friendly.	.84
<i>Physical intangibility</i>	Alpha=.886
The nonprofit is easy to see and touch.	.83
I can physically grasp this nonprofit.	.88
This nonprofit is very tangible.	.84
<i>Generality</i>	Alpha=.859
I could easily explain the features associated with this nonprofit.	.85
It is not difficult to give a precise description of this nonprofit.	.83
It is easy to describe many of the features related to this nonprofit.	.89
This is not a difficult nonprofit to think about.	.50
This is the sort of nonprofit that is easy to picture.	.55

2.5. Analysis and Results

2.5.1. Measurement Model

Table three below shows the results of convergent and discriminant validity tests. The measurement model was assessed next. The model fit was acceptable with a $\chi^2=244.598$, $df=125$, $NFI=.957$, $CFI=.979$, $RMSEA=.045$ and a $p\text{-close}=.845$. All estimates were acceptable. Next, following Fornell and Larcker (1981), convergent and discriminant validity were assessed. To establish convergent validity the average variance

extracted should be greater than .5 and to establish discriminant validity, the squared multiple correlations should be smaller than the average variance extracted. The requirement were met for all constructs.

Table 2-3 - Convergent and Discriminant Validity

Correlations Squared	Cognitive information	Affective information	Physical intangibility	Generality	Donation intention
Cognitive information	0.56				
Affective information	0.46	0.60			
Physical intangibility	0.10	0.18	0.85		
Generality	0.22	0.20	0.18	0.72	
Donation intention	0.10	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.97

2.5.2. The Structural Model

Figure three below shows the results of the structural model. The structural model was assessed utilizing AMOS 22. The model fit was acceptable with a $\chi^2=825.306$, $df=375$, $NFI=.895$, $CFI=.939$, $RMSEA=.05$ and a $p\text{-close}=.468$. Additionally, structure, entertainment, nonprofit, depth of search, prior knowledge, and age were included in the model as control variables.

Physical intangibility ($\beta=.114$, $p<.05$) and generality ($\beta=.13$, $p<.05$) both had a significant influence on donation intent, lending support to H1 and H2. Cognitive information had a significant influence on generality ($\beta=.312$, $p<.01$) and donation intent ($\beta=.263$, $p<.001$), but not physical intangibility. This finding lends supports to H3(b),

H3(c) and H4. Affective information had a significant influence on physical intangibility ($\beta=.356, p<.001$), and generality ($\beta=.218, p<.05$), but not donation intent. This finding lends to support to H5(a), H5(b) and H6.

The results from the structural model show that cognitively-laden web characteristics have a greater impact on donation through generality. On the other hand, affectively-laden web characteristics, seem to have a slightly stronger influence on donation through physical intangibility.

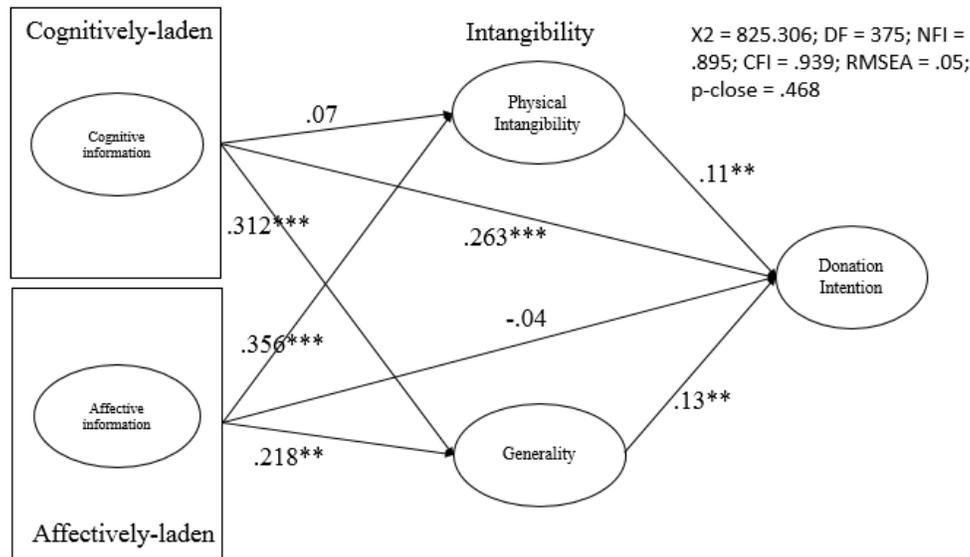


Figure 2-3 - The Structural Model Results

2.5.3. Testing Multigroup Invariance

Table four below offers the results of tests of invariance. A multigroup analysis was performed to assess the influence of experience on the proposed model. In order to execute the analysis, a median split was performed and the groups were dummy coded. Following the approach by Hair et al. (2006), we introduced measurement level constraints to test the equality of high and low experience simultaneously. After

measurement invariance was assessed, structural level constraints were implied in order to test H7 and H8. Model 1 tested configural invariance and freely estimated between the two groups. Model 2 tested metric invariance, while the factor loadings were restricted, the factor covariance and error variance were estimated without restriction, model 3 tested for scalar invariance allowing group means to be compared and model 4 tested for factor covariance invariance allowing covariances to be compared.

The χ^2 difference between model 3 and model 4 ($p < .05$) was significantly different than the configural model. Additionally, the model that tests the nested model between model 3 and model 4 was also significantly different ($p < .05$). This provides evidence that the groups are somewhat different at the model level.

Table 2-4 - Tests of Invariance

	250	410.777	.000	.930
	ΔDF	$\Delta \chi^2$	p	ΔNFI
Configural				
Metric	13	20.903	.075	.004
Scalar	31	51.291	.012	.009
Factor covariance	46	65.181	.033	.011
<i>Assuming the Metric model correct</i>				
Scalar	18	30.388	.034	.005
Factor covariance	33	44.278	.091	.008
<i>Assuming the Scalar model correct</i>				
Factor covariance	15	13.890	.534	.002

Next, a path analysis was performed. One at a time, each pathway was constrained and then with that pathway constrained the model was recalculated and the new chi-square was compared to chi-square of the unconstrained model at confidence

intervals of %90, %95, and %99 percentiles. The estimates of the significant links are reported below.

Results from the path analysis showed that the estimate from cognitive information to generality was significantly higher for donors with more experience ($\beta_{\text{low-experience}} = .139$, vs. $\beta_{\text{high experience}} = .493$, $p < .001$). Results from the path analysis showed that the estimate from cognitive information to donation intent was significantly higher for donors with less experience ($\beta_{\text{low-experience}} = .386$, vs. $\beta_{\text{high experience}} = .044$, $p < .001$). Results from the path analysis showed that the estimate from affective information to physical intangibility was significantly higher for donors with less experience ($\beta_{\text{low-experience}} = .412$, vs. $\beta_{\text{high experience}} = .339$, $p < .001$).

Figure four below reveals evidence that supports H7 and H8. For donors with more experience, cognitive information has a greater impact on perceptions of generality. Conversely, for donors with less experience, affective information has a greater impact on perceptions of physical intangibility.

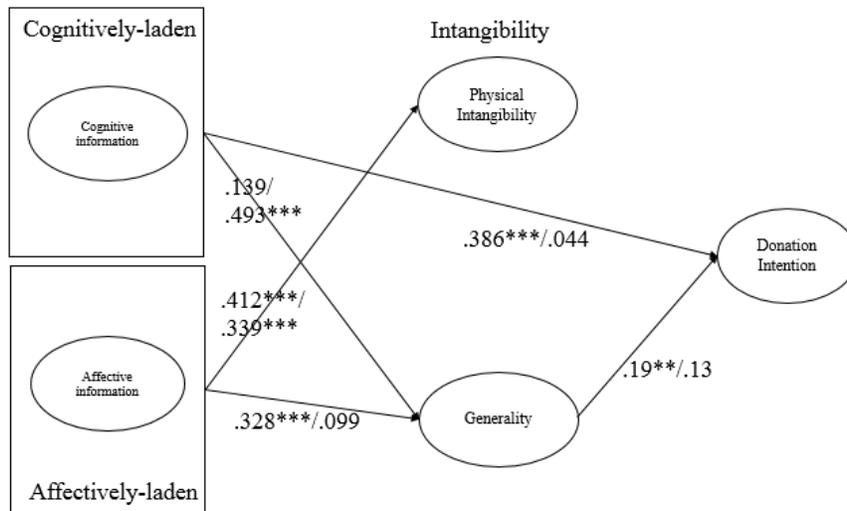


Figure 2-4 - Multigroup Path Analysis

Additionally, total effects are reported in table five below, providing further support for H7 and H8.

Table 2-5 - Total Effects

	Low Experience		High Experience	
	Affective Information	Cognitive Information	Affective Information	Cognitive Information
General	.328**	.139	.099	.493**
PhIn	.421**	-.034	.339	.165**
DIM	-.060	.409**	.181**	.121

2.6.General Discussion

Several conclusions arise from these results. First, a properly designed website, which focuses on decreasing perceptions of intangibility, has the potential to increase donation. Next, in terms of website characteristics, both cognitively- and affectively-laden characteristics on the website have an influence on perceptions of intangibility and donation. Finally, if inexperienced donors are targeted, the affective aspects of the site may become paramount to the success of the nonprofit in gathering funds.

2.6.1. Theoretical Contributions

Theoretically, this research contributes in three notable ways. First, we contribute to the service and donation literature by demonstrating that website characteristics impact donation. This occurs both directly and indirectly through differentially influencing perceptions of intangibility, we term this as the identifiable charity effect.

Additionally, we contribute to the website characteristics literature by dissecting web information into a cognitive and affective component. This dissection allows us to

reveal how each component influences perceptions of intangibility and donation intent on a more intimate level.

Finally, we contribute to the marketing communication literature by showing that cognitively-laden web characteristics have a greater impact on generality when donors have more experience with donation. Whereas, the reverse is true for affectively-laden web characteristics.

2.6.2. Managerial Contributions

Managerially, we contribute by demonstrating that the proper information on the website is vital to the success of the nonprofit. This information will impact how donors perceive the organization and perceptions of the nonprofit will influence how people decide to donate. Managers should have information on the website that is specific, relevant, and allows donors to link a person or place to the organization through feelings and reactions (i.e. the identifiable charity effect). This will increase the likelihood of donation.

Additionally, in most instances, these strategies are more important when donors have less previous experience donating to nonprofits. Therefore, managers should have a good understanding of who their audience is as this may also impact the type of information necessary to garner donation. If managers need to attract new donors, as opposed to retention, the information on the website becomes integral to success.

2.7. Limitation and Suggestions for Future Research

The research presented has several limitations. First, we utilized a convenience sample of students. Future research should look to replicate these findings with

respondents at more mature stages in their lives. Next, we were limited by the lack of objective data. By surveying actual donors about their website perceptions, future researchers could match those responses with historical data for a more robust finding. Additionally, future research needs to examine a broader range of personality variables that may influence the strength of the model. This will yield more meaningful contributions to academia, as well as, offer managers practical ways to segment potential donors. Finally, future research should examine the role of social media as a communication tool for nonprofits. Because social media offers tools that are not always available on typical websites, understanding its influence on donation may yield interesting contributions to the literature.

Appendix
Survey Instrument

How would you rate your browsing experience on the American Red Cross website?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Browsing on the website bored me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website was fun for me to navigate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Browsing on the website was interesting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Interacting with the website made me curious.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Browsing on the website aroused my imagination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Browsing on the website excited my curiosity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thinking back to your browsing experience, how would you rate your agreement on the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
When navigating the website, I was aware of distractions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was totally absorbed in what I was doing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
While visiting the website, I thought about other things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate agreement or disagreement about the American Red Cross website on the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel I had no control over my interaction with the website.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website allowed me control in the computer interaction .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When navigating on the website I felt in control.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Overall, what do you think of the American Red Cross website?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The website is exciting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is imaginative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is entertaining.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is fun.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is cool.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is flashy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The color schemes of the website convey good feelings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is visually appealing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

As you think about the structure of the American Red Cross website, how would you rate your agreement on the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The structure of the website is well-organized.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is straight-forward.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website allows for a great overview of the structure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is easy to access.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The website is easy to use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Navigational problems on the website are limited.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The website has good search agents to find information.	<input type="radio"/>						
Easy keywords to find information are used.	<input type="radio"/>						

Please recall browsing on the American Red Cross website. As a potential donor, how would you rate your agreement on the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The website provides me a lot of information in regard to how they spend their money.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website provides a lot of information about benefits to me as a potential donor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The information I gained on the website is useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website makes acquiring information about the organization efficient.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The following questions are about American Red Cross, the organization. Based on your visit to the American Red Cross website, as a potential donor, rate your agreement on the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The American Red Cross likes to talk to people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The American Red Cross is friendly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The American Red Cross tries to establish a personal relationship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The American Red Cross is pleasant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that the American Red Cross would treat me like just another donor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like the American Red Cross as if they were a person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Think about the information on the organization from the American Red Cross website. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement on the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel like I know the organization well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel close to this organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like doing things that could help this organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Again, think about the information on beneficiaries from the American Red Cross website. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement on the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel like I know the beneficiaries well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel close to the beneficiaries .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like doing things that could help beneficiaries .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think of the beneficiaries as peers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

With regard to the overall content in the American Red Cross website, please indicate your agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The information on the website is accurate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The information on the website is up-to-date.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The information about beneficiaries on the website is complete.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How would you rate your agreement about the American Red Cross website on the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The website is useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is practical.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is handy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The website is useless.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The following questions are about your overall attitudes toward the American Red Cross website in the future:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I'm satisfied with the service provided by this website.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel comfortable in surfing this website.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel surfing this website is a good way for me to spend my time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compared with other websites. I would rate this one as one of the best.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to visit this website again in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How would you rate your agreement about the American Red Cross on the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The organization is easy to see and touch.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can physically grasp the organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization is tangible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I do not need more information about the organization in order to get a clear idea of what it is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization is not difficult to think about.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization is the sort of nonprofit that is easy to picture.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I could easily explain many features associated with the organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is not difficult to give a precise description of the organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy to describe many features related to the organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please think about the American Red Cross, the organization, and rate your agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The American Red Cross reflects who I am.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can identify with the American Red Cross.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel a personal connection to the American Red Cross.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can use the American Red Cross to communicate who I am to other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think the American Red Cross can help me become the person I want to be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider the American Red Cross to be me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The American Red Cross suits me well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Kristopher Floyd received his B. S. in Elementary Education from Appalachian State University in 1997, M. B. A., with a concentration in marketing, from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2010, and a Ph. D. in Business Administration in the field of Marketing in 2015. Kristopher spent 10 years working as an elementary school teacher before returning to complete his M. B. A. He has also worked as a financial advisor for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. During his years in the Ph. D. program, he received several honors including receiving awards for both his teaching and research excellence. He was also named a Sheth Doctoral Fellow. His area of research interest examines where marketing communication intersects with the consumer in order to promote prosocial behavior.