



Data for Good: Secrets of Successful Nonprofits

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By [Dana Beckman](#), Director of Corporate Affairs, Alliance Data

We're generating information, resulting in the creation of data, at a never-before-seen pace. When I say "we", that's you and me, young and old, business and industry, and with increasing necessity, nonprofits... Yes, even nonprofits.

As a data-driven marketing company, and supporter of countless nonprofit organizations and programs, we understand the vital need nonprofits have to collect, analyze and use data to drive positive outcomes in our communities.

"Nonprofits understand the important role of data in making sure their programs are effective and in securing funding for their services. Today and going forward, data will be even more essential to nonprofits as funders and prominent charity evaluators are beginning to require that they report outcomes, and the real impact they are having, not just how many are being served." – Tina Weinfurther, President and CEO [CNM.Connect](#), an organization that provides management training, certificate programs, executive recruiting and consulting services to nonprofits.

We are part of a data-driven economy and data-driven society. Savvy nonprofits recognize that leveraging data makes them more sustainable – both in terms of program outcomes and future fundraising. I have seen the success of these organizations and evidence-based programs. They innovate, evolve and grow. Supporting this type of evidence-based work is not only a good investment, but it helps to shine a light on the positive impacts "data for good" can have on society.

"The Injury Prevention Service at Children's Health System of Texas uses data as the bedrock of our in-hospital and community programs. Not only do we use data to target our outreach, but we also use the research into how and why children get injured to tailor our awareness campaigns. For example, last year we launched an evaluation into our water safety program. We delved into how and why children drown and how well they understood particular water safety messages. Our project revealed that a large percentage of children drown in pools that are not in their own backyard, which will be incorporated into our awareness campaign and education efforts." – Marisa Abbe, PhD, CPST, Program Manager, [Children's Health System of Texas](#).

As the conversations around responsible use of data continue, I see the use of data differently. I see data as doing a whole lot of good. Smart nonprofits are looking at data the same way we look at data for our clients. Collecting it, analyzing it, and using it to drive decision-making to enhance their programs and demonstrate their social impact.

"As an organization that reaches out to elected officials advocating for changes to child protection policy, accurate data is essential to our success. It informs our decision-making and helps demonstrate to lawmakers where funding is most needed. Data also allows us to monetize our program outcomes. When you can tell someone that every dollar invested returns \$5 back to taxpayers in reduced need for social services, that is a powerful tool." – Madeline McClure, Founder and CEO, [TexProtects](#)

A tool – data is a tool. A tool, that when used wisely, responsibly and effectively, can help organizations address any issue plaguing society. And that's data for good.

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