

## Donors prefer to be contacted by email, report says

The report, by the Institute of Fundraising and the marketing analysis firm *fast.MAP*, is based on a survey of nearly 3,000 people and more than 100 fundraisers



Email is the method of contact preferred by charity donors, including the over-55s, according to a new report by the [Institute of Fundraising](#) and the marketing analysis firm [fast.MAP](#).

The report, *Fundraising Media DNA 2016/17*, is based on a survey of 2,958 people and 118 fundraisers. It looks at how donors describe different fundraising channels, whether they act in different ways to charity messages from different media and whether the fundraising channel that is used can affect a donor's decision on allowing further contact.

It says that across the eight fundraising channels included in the research an average of 46 per cent of respondents consented to further contact by email.

The average level of consent for contact by post was 24 per cent, for phone contact 14 per cent and for SMS 11 per cent, the report says.

It adds that more traditional media, such as direct mail, press and inserts, are still an important way of engaging with a large number of people, including younger donors and the over-55s.

It says that people who responded to press, inserts and direct mail gave levels of consent for further contact comparable to those who responded to more modern forms of fundraising, such as email or SMS.

But the report adds that fundraisers can sometimes overestimate the readiness with which supporters will donate or respond when compared with actual response levels.

Direct response television advertising was found to have mass appeal across all demographic groups, although the report says this popularity is underestimated by fundraisers, especially DRTV's appeal to 18 to 34-year-olds.

The report says that among some groups, principally the over-55s, the popularity of DRTV has increased.

The findings come after the ratification of the General Data Protection Regulation by the European Parliament, which means the legal framework for direct marketing will change to require unambiguous consent.

David Cole, managing director of *fast.MAP*, said: "Trends cannot be identified in just two waves of research. However, we can now start to understand the ways the donor landscape might be starting to change, as seen with the growth in engagement by email.

"It is also important to acknowledge that the wider environment has changed, with the charity sector under more scrutiny than ever. This should not be intimidating – it is about putting the donor first and thinking sensibly about the different roles that channels can play in encouraging them to donate, as well as continuing to support the cause over the longer term."