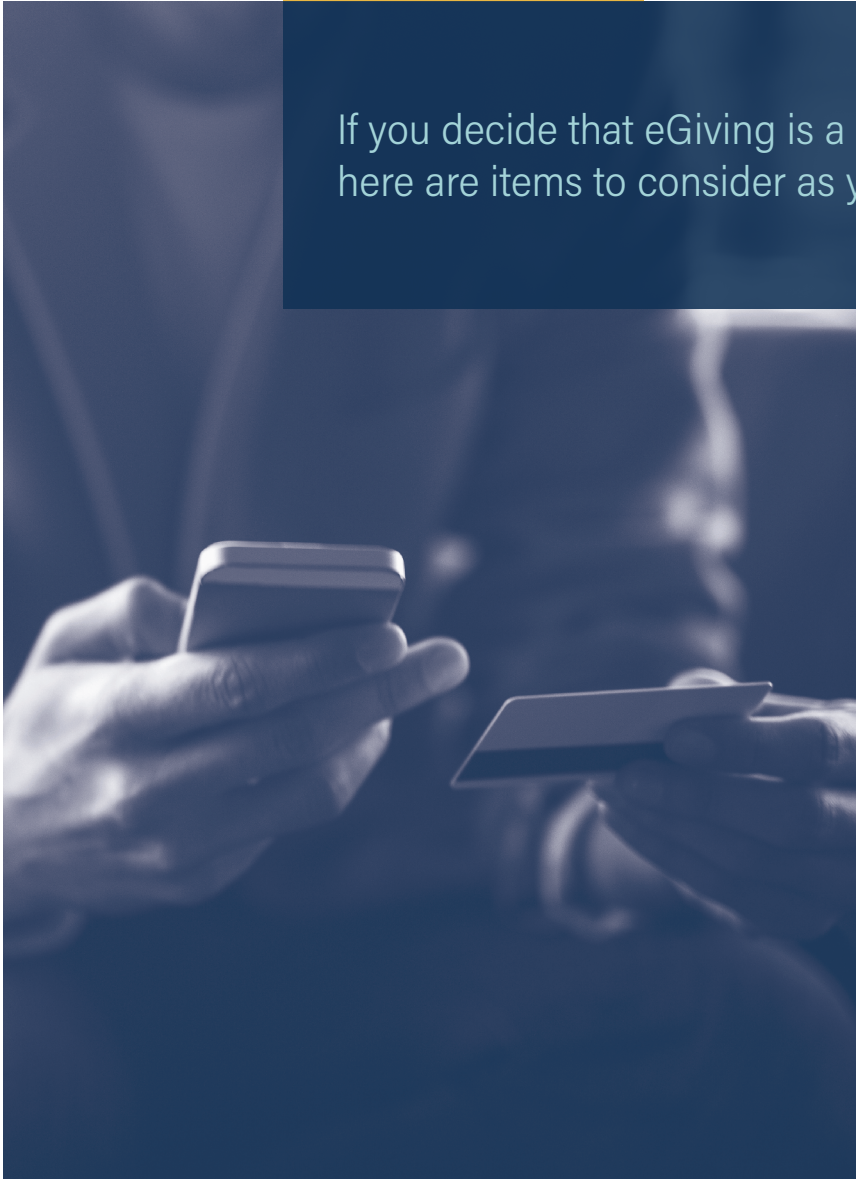


WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN INVESTIGATING AN EGIVING VENDOR

If you decide that eGiving is a viable option for your donors, here are items to consider as you review vendors.



Flexibility in Giving

“Every once in a while, a new technology, an old problem, and a big idea turn into an innovation.”

Dean Kamen

The main reason should consider eGiving is flexibility in giving options. You want as many choices as possible.

How to Give

- Recurring giving – weekly, bi-weekly, monthly
- One-time giving – giving without setting up a formal account
- Accepts all major credit cards – VISA, MasterCard, American Express
- Debit card only option – to prevent overuse of credit cards
- ACH (bank transfer) – use of bank account number and routing information
- Customize giving designations or funds
- Can give to multiple funds with one gift

Ways to Give

- Mobile Apps – Can be downloaded from an app store to a smartphone or smart device
- Text-To-Give – dedicated giving number
- Online Website Giving – mobile responsive form (can be used on a mobile device, easy to integrate into your website and other eGiving options)
- Card Reader – able to use onsite

Other Options

- Event registration
- Book or other purchases
- Ability to process mail-in bank account or credit card info offerings

"You've got to start with the customer experience and work back toward the technology – not the other way around."

Steve Jobs

Interface for Givers must be ...

Obvious

Clear account set-up and giving instructions

Simple

To store bank/card information and access giving history

Quick

Easy to change payment options, including amounts, frequency of giving, or account information; immediate donation confirmation

Secure

Secured process from account set-up to final transaction confirmation

Security

"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and few minutes of cyber-incident to ruin it."
Stéphane Nappo

How do I know my eGiving vendor is secure?

All eGiving vendors should be compliant with Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards. These standards were created to increase controls around cardholder data to reduce credit card fraud. The PCI Security Standards Council maintains and controls these security standards. Does the vendor perform regular independent audits and assessments to maintain PCI compliance? To be approved for accepting payments with credit cards, the vendor must comply with PCI standards.

Is your eGiving option using SSL?

SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) is a standard security protocol for establishing encrypted links between a web server and a browser in an online communication. SSL is the secure method to send credit card or banking account data from one website to another, from an app or mobile responsive form to the payment processor. All data transmitted between servers and browsers is encrypted.

What should I look for involving encryption?

Industry standard is 256-bit encryption. The encryption is used for data in transit and sensitive or important data such as financial data. A hacker will require 2256 different combinations to break the encrypted message. This is virtually impossible.

Questions to Ask About the Payment Process

*"Follow the money "
William Goldman*

When will funds reach your church or organization's bank account?

- Deposit schedule – daily, weekly, etc. By transaction, i.e., credit card, ACH or debit?
- Customize deposit schedule?
- Any funding delays?

Are funds co-mingled with operation funds?

- Payments sent electronically only?
- By check?

How are refunds handled?

- Who must contact the vendor for a refund?
- The organization or the donor?

When are fees taken out?

- Before deposits?
- Monthly?
- Per transaction?

Cost

"There is a sacred cost for everything."
Lailah Gifty Akita

eGiving has costs associated with it. Software, security, and financial fees factor into the price, much like bank account fees, the cost of checks, and staff time to make deposits.

Cost for any eGiving solution should be straightforward and transparent. That said, there are several fees that a vendor may add to a monthly cost and contract. Make sure you address potential costs with possible vendors.

Possible Fees

Interchange: Credit card networks set the cost of completing a card transaction. This fee is paid to the donor's bank by your church or organization's bank to cover operating costs.

Processing: Percentage fee per transaction, may include the interchange fee for credit card and ACH payments.

Transaction: Flat rate per transaction fee; may be different for each payment type – VISA, MasterCard, American Express, and ACH.

Monthly: Charge per month to supply the software.

PCI Compliance: Additional fee for PCI compliance (This should be a requirement of a contract and not for an additional fee).

Merchant Account: Additional fee to handle a merchant account. (This account allows you to process online credit and debit payments.) Look for vendors who provide all-in-one payment platforms, a merchant account, and payment gateway processing solution.

Deposit or Transfer: Additional fees for each deposit made into your bank account.

Monthly "Minimum": A penalty fee if you do not process more than a stated minimum amount per month.

Other Fees

- Credit card authorization
- Credit card chargeback
- Credit card account update
- Credit card decline
- ACH return
- Dedicated number for text-to-give

* One last question, does the vendor allow an "offset" option for fees? Can the donor "cover the fees" with his or her donation?

How to Figure The "True" Costs

Total fees for the month

Divided by

Total \$ Processed/Month

Ex. $\$320/\$10,000 = 3.02\%$

Administration

"Our business is about technology, yes.
But it's also about operations and
customer relationships."

Michael Dell

The user interface for your eGiving solution is important, but so is the back end. How easy is it for church or organization staff to use the administrative interface? Can you get what is needed to reconcile your financial records easily?

Some other questions to ask possible vendors regarding interface and technology:

1. What does the dashboard display look like? Much like the user interface, is it simple and easy to use? Is it obvious and quick to learn? Does it display key performance indicators, i.e., average gift amount, percent of recurring gifts, or average weekly giving?
2. Are there multiple levels of access for different users? Not everyone needs to have "all access" or should have access to every donor's account information and giving history.
3. Is it easy to transfer member data from forms filled out? Can staff create accounts for those who need help?
4. What are the reporting capabilities? Is it easy to create the types of reports and data exports you need for account reconciliation? Can you sort by funds or designations, as well as by individuals? What types of search fields are available? Request samples and share them with your accounting team.
5. Is other software or hardware needed to access the giving information? Is that cost included in the fees and contract or an additional cost?
6. Can the eGiving solution integrate with your management software or system?
7. Are there scheduled software updates and are there any additional costs associated with the updates?
8. Are there plans to upgrade the technology?

Support

"Have you tried turning it off
and back on?"
Every IT support Specialist

Set-up

The provider should walk you through the process of setting up your church or organization with the eGiving solution you selected.

- Adding users to the administrative interface
- Training users on how the system works
- Connecting your bank account to the payment processing solution
- Integrating the platform with your accounting or management software or system

Customer Service

What is their on going support?

- Additional cost?
- Can you reach an actual person? Or only community forums and a support library? Chat option? Phone contact? Email? Text?
- Response time?

On going Training

- Provided with any updates or changes to the solution

Promotion

"Marketing still needs art to go with the science."
Alison Wagonfeld, VP of Marketing, Google Cloud

Now that you have picked the technology, will it integrate easily with your brand? Can the vendor incorporate your colors, fonts, and style into your eGiving app and/or website giving form? Will your logo be featured on any communication sent from the provider, like the donation email confirmation?

Does the vendor have tips, tools, and resources to help you promote eGiving to your church or organization? Will this be on going support?

Customized Launch Materials to Ask For

- Inserts
- Email announcement templates
- Direct mail pieces
- eGiving cards to hand out
- Slides
- Videos