

+ The National Funding Scheme

CASE STUDY NO 1: [HOLBURNE MUSEUM](#)

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DONATE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- People will give at the point of emotional impact – and share their data – if they connect with the cause
- More than three quarters of donors are adding Gift Aid
- Almost 90 per cent of donations are through the web app – only 11 per cent through SMS
- Of those giving by SMS, over half give more than the lowest entry-level £3 donation
- An integrated approach (marketing, comms and fundraising) is key to success
- Integrating DONATE across all platforms generates more revenue

THE ORGANISATION

The Holburne Museum is Bath's Art Museum for Everyone. They take the enjoyment of art seriously. It is the Holburne's aim, in line with its founder's wishes, to encourage as many people as possible to experience the pleasures art brings.

The Holburne's collection was assembled for pleasure. It was shaped by the enthusiasms and tastes of Sir William Holburne. It is he who the Museum has to thank for the collection's strengths: Renaissance bronzes, maiolica, Dutch landscapes, silver and porcelain.

Above all the bequest of Sir William's collection, in 1882, gave the Museum its character, its human scale and its delight in the small and exquisite. Its other great strength is works from the Georgian period. The Picture Gallery houses one of the greatest groups of British eighteenth-century portraits in the country: Gainsborough, Stubbs and Zoffany.

Following a major redevelopment in 2011 visitor numbers are over 130,000 a year (up from c.22,000 a year before redevelopment). In part, this is due to the new policy of free admission but perhaps even more in response to the award-winning displays and growing programmes of exhibitions, education workshops, talks, concerts and events.

The Holburne has always prided itself on the integrity of its collections. With few exceptions, new acquisitions were and continue to be made only if they are in keeping with the character of the original collection.

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THE CAUSE



When a beadwork basket, dated around 1670, came onto the market, the [Holburne](#) wanted to acquire it for its collection. The basket was probably made by a talented young girl in a wealthy household around the time of the Great Fire of London. Made from thousands of tiny glass beads threaded onto wire frames it 'has much in common with the Museum's... seventeenth-century silk embroideries'. The [Holburne](#) has adopted DONATE as its primary fundraising platform for the campaign. As one of the Pathfinders, the [Holburne](#) and its cause featured in the NFS launch event on 27 March 2013. The Museum launched its Campaign locally on St. George's Day (23 April).

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THE ASK

Please help us acquire this exceptional beadwork basket.

We only have until July to raise £6,000 to bring this seventeenth-century beadwork basket to the Holburne. If sold on the open market it is very likely that this wonderful object will leave the country.

The basket was probably made by a talented young girl in wealthy household around the time of the Great Fire of London. Made from thousands of tiny glass beads threaded onto wire frames, it has much in common with the Holburne's wonderful collection of seventeenth-century silk embroideries. However where they have faded, here the glass beads retain their astonishingly vibrant colours. The glass heads and hands of Charles II and Queen Catherine of Braganza in the centre of the basket are exceedingly rare and important. Like the glass beads, they were imported from Europe, perhaps Venice or France.

The basket won Country Life's Object of the Year Award in 2012 for its rarity and astonishing condition. It was described as *'testimony to the remarkable domestic needlework skills of women and teenage girls'* during this period.

The basket will not only illuminate our embroideries, it will also be a great object for young people visiting the Museum with their schools or families to learn from and be inspired by the intricate detail and social history.

We have until July to raise a total of £78,000 to complete the acquisition. We have submitted applications to the Art Fund, V&A Purchase Fund and the National Heritage Memorial Fund for the majority of this cost. However a condition of their support is that we raise £6,000 towards the purchase.

THE DATA

As of 17 May 2013:

- The Holburne Museum currently leads the Pathfinder table in terms of money raised and number of donors
- The DONATE web app is the most popular channel for giving (89 per cent of donations)
- The remaining 11 per cent of donations have come through SMS, of which only 37.5 per cent are at the lowest-entry level of £3
- 77 per cent of all donors opted to Gift Aid their donation
- 13 per cent of donors have shared their data
- Of those who shared their tax information, 45 per cent paid higher rate tax

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THE ORGANISATION'S PERSPECTIVE

Interview with Marnie Whiting, Head of Development, Holburne Museum, 16th May 2013

How is the National Funding Scheme – DONATE working for you?

“In terms of raising money, the scheme is working really well for us. People are really getting behind our cause... because it is really magical and it has a lot of charm...The basket certainly supports your theory that people are likely to give at the emotional point of impact.”

How does DONATE fit with the museum’s wider fundraising strategy?

“We recognize the great potential of digital giving. Our five-year fundraising strategy highlights it as an area to develop by taking advantage of opportunities that support digital giving, but are not resource heavy. We are not in a position to create our own digital giving platforms and previous trials have not been cost effective. DONATE is cost-effective. By being part of the pilot scheme we are keeping the Holburne on a national platform and demonstrating our ability as a regional museum to be innovative in our fundraising.”

How have you marketed DONATE and the Basket cause?

“Our focus has always been to promote the Campaign, rather than DONATE. We have used signage, social media and media coverage to make people aware of the cause. Locally, BBC Points West ran several stories in their news bulletins; we have had pick-up from national media including the Times Literary Supplement. People aren’t giving because of DONATE, they are giving because of the Basket. DONATE makes it easy for them.”

Looking forward, do you think it is going to be successful for your institution?

“We are interested in using DONATE to manage online giving for our other fundraising activity (including the Heritage Lottery Fund Catalyst Endowment and general donations). However,

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what is essential is the Museum's ability to communicate with donors as soon as they have given. Currently DONATE has not been able to supply the data for those donors who are happy to hear from us, so until the relevant reporting mechanism is in place, we cannot make the move."

THE LEARNING

- The [Holburne](#)'s cause supports DONATE's proposition that people will give at the point of engagement if they feel an emotional connection to the 'ask'
- Focusing on the cause rather than the platform is what drives donations
- By integrating DONATE across fundraising, marketing and web channels, the journey from the 'ask' to the 'give' is seamless
- Committing resource to communications and marketing of the cause is key; don't view DONATE as a stand-alone solution
- Web app appears to be a far more popular channel for giving than SMS
- DONATE is proving to be a cost-effective tool

KEY WORDS

- **Organisation type:** museum
- **Location/Region:** Southwest England, Somerset
- **Cause Code:** HOL001
- **Cause Type:** collections acquisition
- **Cause target:** £6,000
- **Catalyst match-funded:** The Holburne is in the HLF Catalyst Endowment Campaign, not Arts Council England's Catalyst programme. The HLF Campaign requires donations to be made specifically to the Endowment to receive match funding.

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