



SAGE GOVERNMENTAL & NONPROFIT NEWSLETTER

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Budgeting That's a Breeze

Budgets are an important part of nonprofit finance. In an economy that's struggling to get back on track, your budget can be a valuable tool in planning for revenues that may end up lower than expected. But for many organizations, the budgeting process is tedious and difficult ... it doesn't have to be. In this article, we'll take a look at how the Sage MIP Budgeting module can transform the process from a tiresome chore to an exciting vehicle for strategic planning.

Flexibility is Important

When done properly, budgeting can help you detect problems before they become a major financial headache. But the key to using your budget as a diagnostic tool is **flexibility**. When your budgeting process entails manual, error-prone calculations and countless spreadsheets, it becomes difficult to quickly and accurately adjust the budget to meet changing conditions.

Say Goodbye to Cumbersome Spreadsheet Budgeting

With the Sage MIP Budgeting module, you have the flexibility of creating an unlimited number of budgets for multiple fiscal years, including cross fiscal year budgeting for grants. Projects can be created at the grant, program, department, or project level. You can make budget entries directly into Sage MIP or simply copy/paste from external spreadsheets. Either way, all of your budgeting data is centralized allowing you to more easily manage changes and make better decisions about modifying programs or cutting expenses if things don't go according to plan.

You're In Total Control

Maintaining budgets in the same Sage MIP system that you use to process transactions provides tremendous benefit. For instance, you can enforce budget controls by checking for available budget in real-time with a single click during transaction entry. Whether a transaction is entered through Purchase Order, Requisitions, or any other integrated module, you choose the level of budgetary enforcement by configuring Sage MIP to simply issue a warning **or** totally prevent entries that would put you over budget.

It's All About Reporting

You're already familiar with the built-in reporting that Sage MIP Fund Accounting delivers ... and the budgeting module is no exception, offering a wide variety of standard and customizable budget reports. You can analyze budget vs. actual using real-time data from Sage MIP Fund Accounting. You can even set up best and worst case budget scenarios and perform detailed 'What If' analysis. You can look forward to future periods and calculate forecasted financial position or look back at prior years to get a historical perspective for comparison.

With the right tools, the budgeting process can produce many wonderful benefits.



[Contact us](#) if you'd like to learn about turning your budget into a valuable planning and forecasting tool with the Sage MIP Budgeting module.

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Three Keys to Growing Your Donations

A recent blog entry posted by [Jason Falls](#), public relations and communications expert, provides some interesting and compelling ideas about helping nonprofit organizations develop a strategy that will grow your network of financial giving. He presents 3 keys to nonprofit success that we explore in this article.

The Three Keys

In the opinion of the author, a good nonprofit strategy must include 3 important components as follows:

1. Have a compelling story to tell
2. Make a specific ask or establish a specific goal to reach
3. Make it astonishingly easy to give

The first of these three key components is the most important so let's take a closer look.

A Compelling Story

Some of the most seasoned, well-spoken and intelligent advocates talk for hours about the importance of supporting their cause. They are passionate about the subject matter and supply you with fact after fact to convince you to donate. Then they wonder why people don't immediately pull out their check books.

It's because their knowledge and facts don't include a compelling story. A nonprofit needs to find an emotional connection with their audience. When you see starving children on television and the desperation in their eyes, you're compelled to write a check and help out. When someone shares a personal story about breast cancer and persuades you to think about your mother, sister, wife, or other relative, it can be powerful motivation to make you want to support the cause. Nothing is more compelling than a great story and every nonprofit has one (or several).

Make a Specific Ask

If your goal is to "Raise Money," then it's difficult for donors to see a tangible result of their contribution. On the other hand if your goal is to provide "1 week of meals that serves 10 people in need within your community," donors feel like their contributions are being put to good use.

Make it Easy to Give

The third component of growing your donations is where technology comes into play: Making it easy to give.

[Sage Fundraising 50](#), integrated with your Sage MIP Fund Accounting software, streamlines every single aspect of collecting and processing donations. With the "Donate Now" feature, you'll make it easy for donors to make contributions by credit or debit card directly on your website with a couple of clicks and a few keystrokes. You can also set up recurring giving programs making it easier for donors to give smaller amounts at regular intervals.

[Click here](#) to read the full article "Three Keys to Nonprofit Success in Social Media."

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