

The Nonprofit Guide to **Snapchat**

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Introduction

If you're on social media at all, chances are you've heard someone mention Snapchat or you've seen at least one photo someone took using a Snapchat filter (whether you knew it or not). The meteoric rise in popularity of the app-based social media among younger generations points to the continuing shift from traditional marketing efforts to more influence-based marketing.

But what, exactly, is Snapchat and what makes it different from all the other social media platforms?

In a nutshell, Snapchat is similar to other platforms in that it allows users to share photos, videos, and even chat, but what sets it apart is the temporary nature of the posts and conversations. Posts are designed, by default, to delete themselves after 10 seconds once they're opened by the recipient.

Chapter 1: Snapchat Basics

According to the Pew Research Center, nowadays, nine in ten Millennials own cellphones, and they are also more active on new social media platforms such as Snapchat compared to older generations like Gen Xers and Baby Boomers.¹ Another Pew Research study has found that, in 2018, 78% of people aged 18-24 (the newly labelled Generation Z) use Snapchat and 71% of these users go on the platform more than once a day.²

Due to its popularity among a younger demographic, Snapchat has great marketing potential for nonprofits if it's used the right way. This chapter will help you understand the basics.

How to Create an Account

Getting started on Snapchat is super simple! To create an account, download the Snapchat app from the iOS or Android store, click on the app and follow a simple prompt to register for an account.

One important item to note is that the username cannot be edited, so make sure you've decided on what you want your username to be before you sign up (the best choice would obviously be to use the name of your nonprofit). If the name is already taken, take some time to think of a good username that is representative of your organization and is easy to remember.

Some ways to create a unique username if yours is already taken are by adding the city or state where your nonprofit is located or adding a qualifier such as "nonprofit" or "charity" at the end as well.

Here are some examples:

- PETA: officialpeta
- WNYC: wnycradio
- World Wildlife Fund: wwf

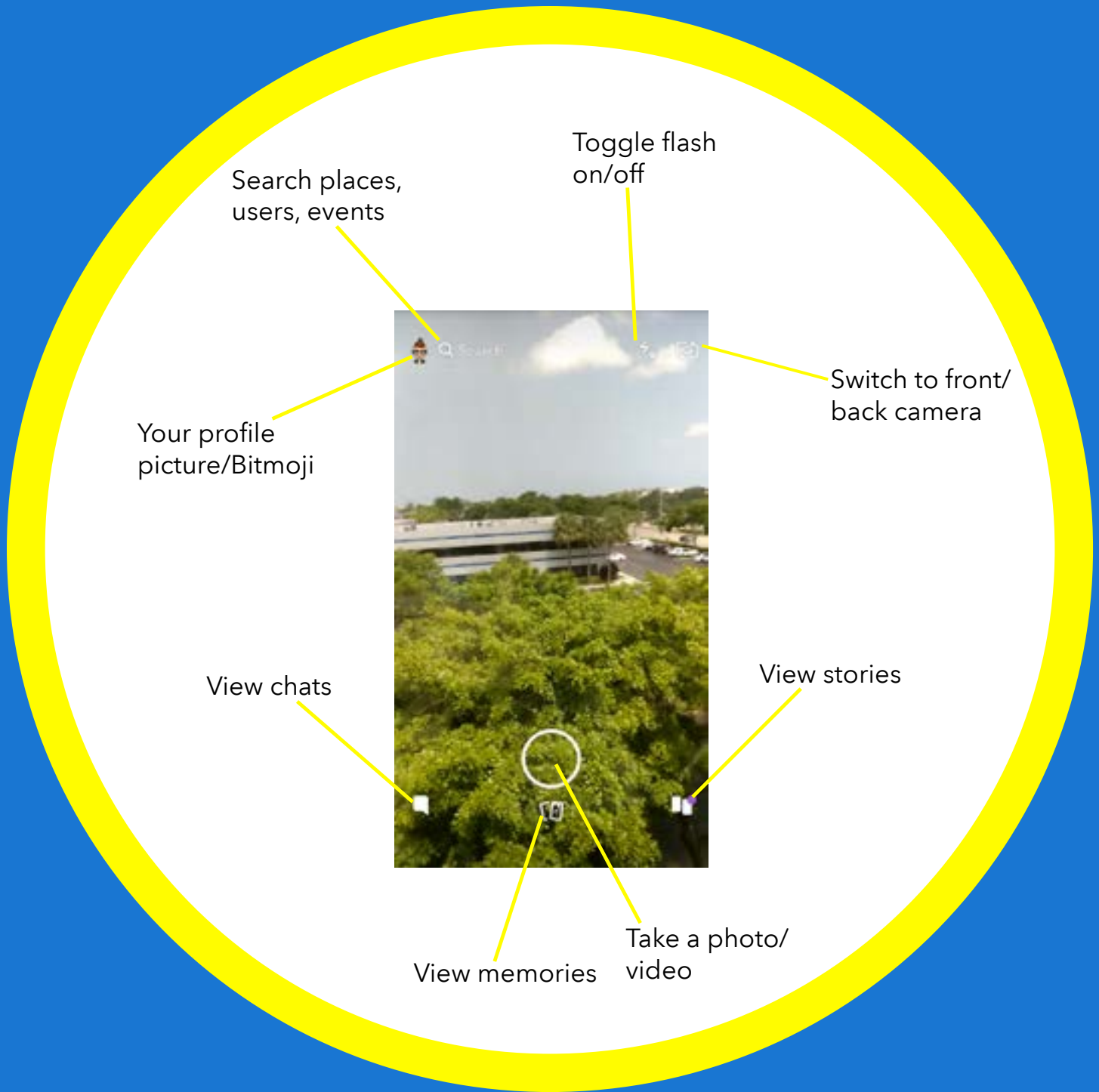
One little thing to note here is that these orgs all opted to ditch a dash or underscore between the words to separate them. It might seem like something small but removing that one character makes it even easier for people to search for your nonprofit's account.



How to Create Snaps and Stories

To create stories, use the Snapchat app to take photos and videos, also known as snaps, and share them with friends as stories. You can create stories using photos and videos that you upload from your own camera roll as well.

Anatomy of the Snapchat Homescreen



Stories

Many stories now are made up of a series of snaps. To create a thread of snaps for your own story, click on the check mark in the top right corner of the Memories page to enable the “multi-select” function.

This function will work for pictures that you upload from your own camera roll as well as snaps. To create a thread of pictures and videos that were taken on the app:

- Download snaps using the download button on the bottom left corner of the home screen right after you have taken them.
- Go to the Memories page to access your download and enable “multi-select” to choose the downloaded picture and video snaps to make up your compelling Snapchat story.

Don't forget that you can use the clock icon displayed in a column on the right side of the camera page to set up a time limit between 1 to 10 seconds for your snap. If you select the infinity symbol, there is no time limit for the snap, so the receiver will have to tap on each snap to get past it.

If you are using sources from your own camera roll, to have access to the clock icon, hold and press down on your snap, and click the ‘edit photo’ function.

The next step is to send and share your story! To do so:

- Tap the arrow-shaped send button on the bottom right corner of the Home or Memories page.
- You will then be directed to a page where you have the choices to share the snap to your own story which is called “My Story,” which is private to just friends and/or followers, or to Snapchat’s story called “Our Story.”
- Snaps shared to “Our Story” are public and stories published this way can show up in the search bar and on the Snapchat location map, both found on the top of the home screen, and in the “Discover” section.

One of the unique aspects of Snapchat is that photos and video shared with friends and followers disappear after they have viewed them, and snap stories are automatically erased after 24 hours. To keep pictures and videos that you really like, make sure to download them to the “Memories” page.

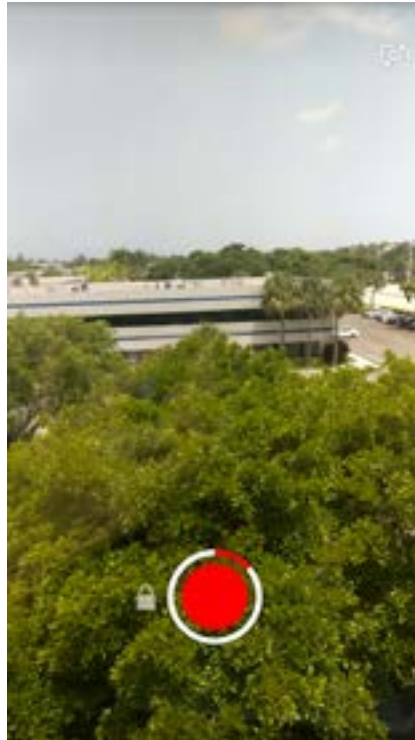


Photo Snaps

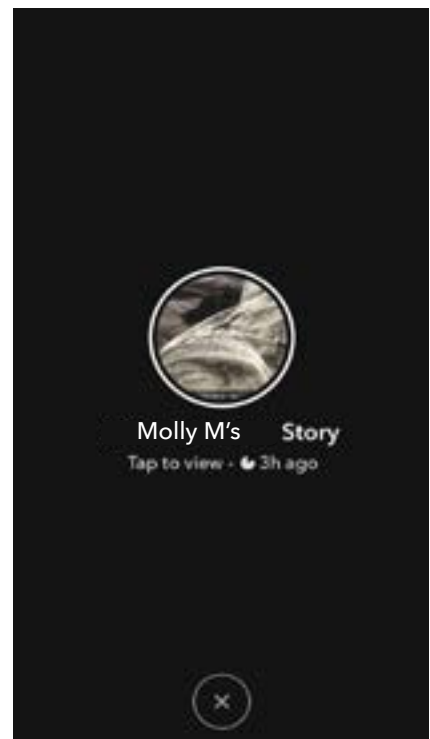
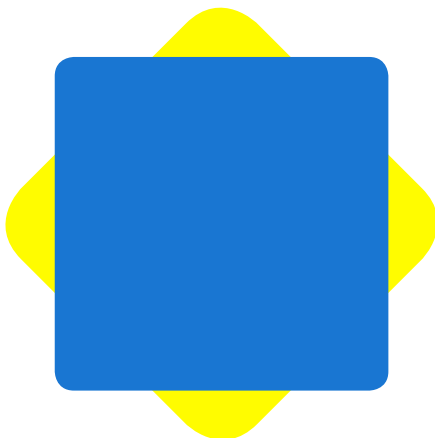
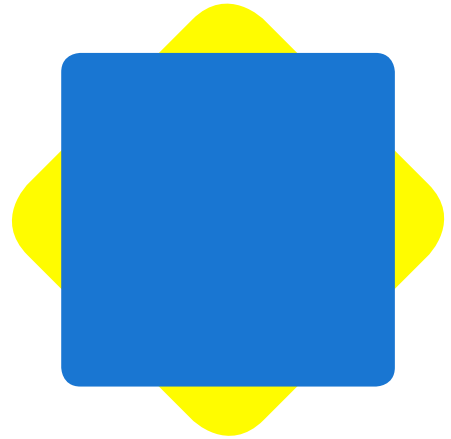
Creating snaps is as easy as taking a photo or video with some bonus features. With a single tap of the circular home button, located at the bottom of the camera page, you can take a picture snap.



Photo Snap



Video Snap



Start of Snap Story



Video Snaps

If you want to take a video snap, press and hold the same home button until you finish recording. The maximum length of a single video snap is only 10 seconds, so to record for a longer time, you'll need to use the multi-snap function.

Multi-Snaps

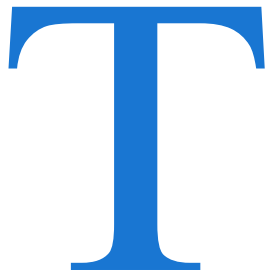
To use the multi-snap function, press and hold for video, but don't let go of the home button even after the time has run out, because a new video snap will start rolling automatically after every 10 seconds. In the end, one multi-snap will show up at the bottom of the screen.

Memories

If you want to use pictures and videos from your own camera roll, go to the Memories page by clicking on the phone icon below the home tab. Look at the top of the Memories page, and you will see the Camera Roll section to your right. Select the source from your own photo album and press and hold onto the selected picture to edit the snap.

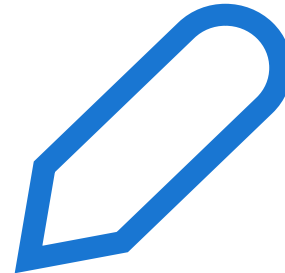
How to Customize Snaps

Snapchat allows you to add text, doodles, stickers, lenses, filters and more to your snaps, be they photo or video. These tools appear in a column on the right side of the home page after you have snapped a picture or a video.



Add text:

- Click the type tool and begin writing your message.
- Change the color and font to add emphasis and place the text box anywhere on the snap.



Add drawing:

- Tap the pen icon and choose any color to draw with your finger.
- You can adjust the size of the brush by keeping two fingers on the screen and expanding them at the same time to enlarge the circular color dot.



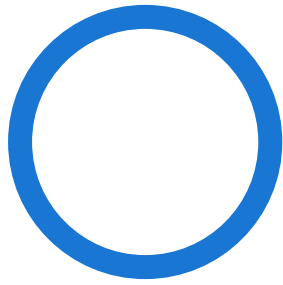
Add stickers:

- Tap the third icon in the right column.
- Scroll down the page to select your favorite sticker or input keywords in the top search bar to find other stickers that you like.
- If you want to make your own sticker, swipe to the right to use the Scissors tool to outline parts of the snap that you want to keep.



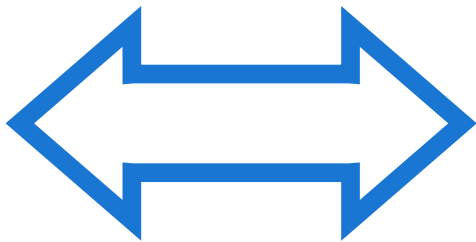
Add a link:

- Copy the link you want to paste from your web browser.
- Click the paperclip icon to insert your URL.
- Paste the copied link into the form or type out the intended link if you know it.



Add lenses:

- Before taking a snap, tap anywhere on the Camera screen.
- Various lenses choices will appear at the bottom of the page, so swipe from left to right to choose the one that you like.
- Apply the lens and make your snap.



Add filters:

- To use an existing filter, take a snap then swipe to the right and left to choose from a variety of filter options.
- Filters are updated daily and sometimes differ by locations. Check the selections often for new updates!

What's the difference between a filter and a lens?

While both filters and lenses are a big part of what makes Snapchat so much fun, they do it in distinct ways. A filter is static and can be applied to a photo that's already been taken. A lens adds animation to your snaps based on facial recognition and your movement on the screen. Some lenses will even distort your voice if you speak! Lenses only work while you're taking a snap and can't be applied to video or photos retroactively.



Managing Your Account

To manage your account, click on the profile icon on the top left corner of the home screen to create your own Bitmoji, which is a personalized cartoon avatar, to access the Snap code, a unique QR code assigned to each user, or to update the settings.

Snapchat has a few other functions that can be easily navigated.

Swipe to the right of the home page, and you will see a list of all your friends and their snaps. On this same page, you can chat with friends in a more traditional way, by sending messages and making voice and video calls.

Come back to the home page, swipe to the left and you will arrive at the Discover page. Trending topics, community events, current news updates and a plethora of other engaging content are presented on this page in snap forms from tons of Snapchat accounts.

You can search and subscribe to accounts and receive regular updates from them, or you can freely explore snaps that are recommended to you in the “For You” section and find ones that interest you (we recommend searching terms like nonprofits, charity, volunteer, or terms specific to your organization’s focus to find accounts to follow).

How to Create Custom Filters and Lenses

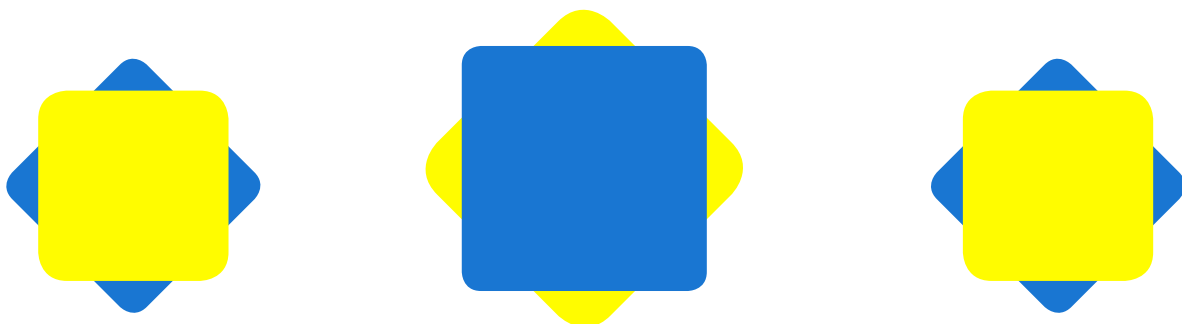
Filters and lenses are some of the features that make Snapchat so fun and you can be a part of it by creating your own filter or lens. For a really low cost (we're talking \$5-\$20 a day low), you can set up a filter or lens and boost your nonprofit's brand presence on the Snapchat platform!

Customer filters and lenses are perfect for fundraising events! From galas to 5Ks, you can set up a filter or lens promoting your nonprofit and the event in every filter. It's a great way to engage attendees and get their followers interested in your cause when they send their snaps out to friends. You have the option to choose from a bunch of standard templates in Snapchat or you can get really creative and make your own.

Here's how to make your own filters and lenses using Snapchat's templates:

- Go to your Camera screen and press the icon in the top-left to go to your profile and then go to Settings.
- Choose Filters & Lenses.
- Select either Filters or Lenses depending on what you want to create.
- Tap the button in the top right to create a new filter or lens.
- Choose the type of event your filter or lens will be for (there are a bunch of options) and pick the template you like best.
- Edit your filter or lens by adding text, changing the colors, and using stickers.
- Name your filter something that will identify what event it's for.
- Choose a start time and an end time.
- Map out the area you want your filter or lens to cover by dragging the points of your Geofence to change the shape and size.
- Tap 'Submit' to send your filter or lens to Snapchat for approval. Approval usually only takes a couple of hours, but it's best to plan ahead and submit your filter for approval at least a few days before the event so you're not caught scrambling at the last minute.

Here are more in-depth tutorials on Snapchat site: [Filters](#) and [Lenses](#)



Chapter 2: Incorporating Snapchat Into Your Social Media Mix

According to a survey done by Sumpto, a marketing company that measures the activities of college students on social media, 73% of college-age Snapchat users would open snaps from a brand they know, and almost 50% of them would still view content from a brand that they did not know.³

Snapchat stories help enhance a nonprofit's engagement with current followers and help expand the brand's influence to attract new user traffic.

Read on to find tips on how to create creative and effective Snapchat stories that engage and inspire the audience.

Basic Guidelines

First, you should strive to make sure that your Snapchat Story content follows these four basic rules:

Keep the Content Relevant and Clear

A Snapchat story is ephemeral, lasting only for a few seconds. To ensure people effectively understand the message, only select the most relevant video clip, picture or text to include in the story. Also make sure the content is brief and clearly presented.

Update the Account Consistently

A Snapchat story disappears after 24 hours, so post at least once every day to keep followers engaged with fresh content. However, don't spam and update your story for more than three times per day. According to a study by Snaplytics, engagement drops by 36% when viewers are seeing more than three different Snapchat stories by the same brand in a day.⁴

Be Engaging and Creative

Create entertaining, informative or unique content to grab viewers' attention. You will find a list of story ideas in the "What Snapchat Stories to Create" section below.

Make Your Posts Actionable

The underlying goal of using Snapchat stories at your organization is to motivate people to take tangible actions after viewing the stories. Include simple and concise call-to-action messages such as "learn more," "volunteer with us", and "make a donation" to motivate people to get involved in your nonprofit's initiatives.



What Snapchat Stories to Create

Using Snapchat stories are a great way to attract prospects if they are used in the proper way. Here's a list of different kinds of stories that you can create to effectively build presence and gain followers on Snapchat.

Create stories that capture the behind the scenes of your organization, and provide followers with a live, authentic (emphasis on authentic; it's obvious to savvy users when a snap has been staged), and immersive account of what is it like behind the scenes. This legitimizes your organization's operation through a willingness to show transparency and attracts individuals who empathize with its causes.

Post creative teasers about upcoming campaigns and events to get people excited about the new initiatives.

Create fun videos that talk about your organization's cause, work progress, and goals in a humorous and lighthearted way.

Enhance followers' interaction with your charity by involving them in interactive contests, games, and quizzes. Users participate in them by submitting their entries to the account through direct messaging. You choose the best response and post it in your charity's snapchat story.

Post stories with educational content to help increase awareness about the root causes, scope, and potential solutions of an issue. Utilize stickers and emojis to make the informative content more entertaining. If the cause could be improved through individual behaviors, such as certain environmental issues, you can also post stories with actionable tips that people can use in their day-to-day lives.



Use Snapchat stories to regularly thank donors for their contribution. To appreciate those who have made more significant donations, you can create and share brief profile features of them in the Snapchat stories to give supporters more recognition.

Work with influencers to get access to their large networks of followers. You could convince the influencer to post content related to your charity in his or her own Snapchat story or let him or her personally manage the Snapchat account of your nonprofit for a few hours to generate unique and impactful content. Well-known people make your non-profit organization and its causes seem more credible, driving up donations.

Feature questions and polls in Snapchat stories to allow people to give suggestions and feedback directly your nonprofit. You can ask them to weigh in on what speakers to invite to events or what theme to select for a fundraiser. Followers who contribute will likely be more willing to contribute to your organization.

Reward followers by directly sending them personalized holiday messages or incentives. On snapchat, it's very easy to direct message your followers. One-on-one interaction make followers and donors feel that they are highly valued, which strengthens their emotional connection to your organization and the likelihood of responding to requests for donations when the time comes.



Chapter 3: Translating Snaps to Donations

Snapchat currently has 187 million daily active users. Its user base has grown by 18 percent in the last year.⁵ Non-profit organizations can leverage the huge user base to turn followers into potential supporters and donors for their nonprofit by enhancing engagement with followers.

While there is currently no way to collect donations directly through Snapchat, there are a couple of ways to convert your snaps into donations through as many steps as it would take on many other social media platforms.



Add-Ons and Ads

Add Links to Snaps

Earlier in this book, we briefly explained how to add links to your snaps. Sporadically add a call to action to donate along with a link to your donation page right in the snap. Followers simply swipe up on the snap and your website opens up right in the app.

It's important not to do it too often and to be choosy about the type of content you place the call to action on. Share snaps of real people, animals, or places that were improved with donations to your nonprofit.

Set Up Snapchat Ads

There are ads available in Snapchat, just like every other social platform. Realizing, of course, that this is provided you can allocate funding for the ads, Snapchat is a great place to experiment with ads. They offer a much more interactive and helpful add set up than most other social media sites, which is probably due to the app's basic principle of simple use and design.

They'll offer you suggestions based on the goals of your ad and let you select diverse audience types. They also have an ad builder within the app, which is more than Facebook or Instagram can offer. Finally, they offer performance analytics, so you can determine whether your ads are working well.

Learn more about Snapchat ads from the company itself here: <https://forbusiness.snapchat.com/tools>.

Conclusion

Much like any other social media platform, true ROI comes from time and effort put into engaging with users on the site itself. However, with its numbers growing in younger generations—and numbers on other platforms dwindling—Snapchat is poised to become a platform with many opportunities for organizations that are early adopters.

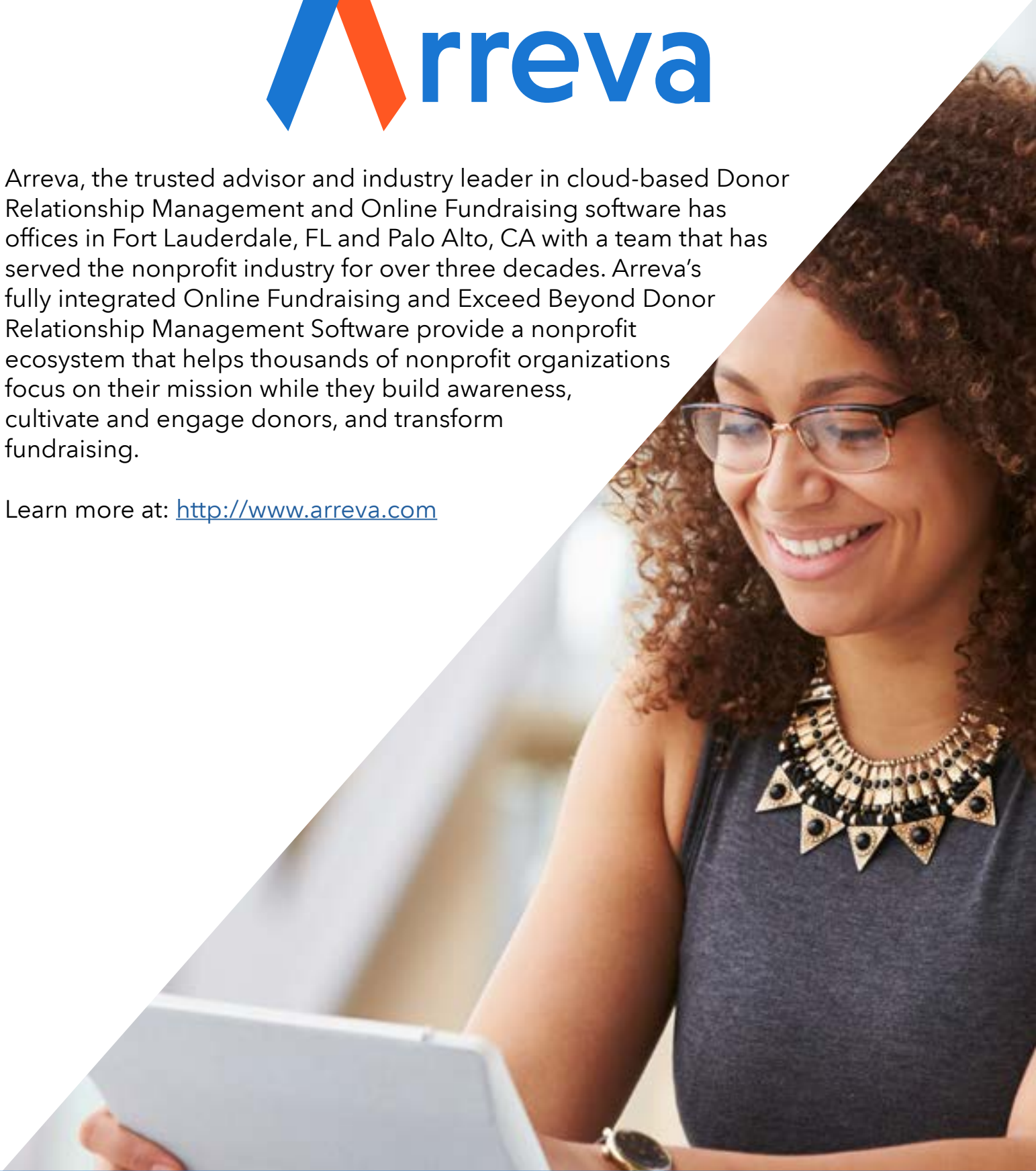
If you think about it, it's rather ironic that a site built using content that automatically disappears isn't going anywhere anytime soon.

ABOUT



Arreva, the trusted advisor and industry leader in cloud-based Donor Relationship Management and Online Fundraising software has offices in Fort Lauderdale, FL and Palo Alto, CA with a team that has served the nonprofit industry for over three decades. Arreva's fully integrated Online Fundraising and Exceed Beyond Donor Relationship Management Software provide a nonprofit ecosystem that helps thousands of nonprofit organizations focus on their mission while they build awareness, cultivate and engage donors, and transform fundraising.

Learn more at: <http://www.arreva.com>



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⁵Kerry Flynn, "Snapchat's 2017 earnings impressed everyone, app is growing with Android," Feb 6, 2018, <https://mashable.com/2018/02/06/snapchat-2017-earnings-evan-spiegel-187-million-daily-active-users/#4.k73aE6yqqN>



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