

Survey of software tools used to track and manage volunteer information

By Jayne Cravens & Rob Jackson

July 11, 2012

Published at: <http://www.coyotecomunications.com/tech/volmanagesoftware.pdf>

Introduction.....	02
Marketing efforts for the survey.....	03
Summary of data/key findings	04
Data details, with author's commentary/analysis	07
Next steps.....	42
Consultant biographies	43

Permission is granted by the authors to publish excerpts from this report, however, the report, in its entirety, should be downloaded only from Jayne or Rob's web site; no permission is granted to any organization to host this report on another web site. If you have downloaded this report from a web site other than Jayne or Rob's please contact them immediately with details.

Jayne Cravens

<http://www.coyotecomunications.com>

On Twitter: @jcravens42

jc@coyotecomunications.com

Rob Jackson

<http://www.robjacksonconsulting.com/>

On Twitter: @RobJConsulting

rob@robjacksonconsulting.com

INTRODUCTION

In March and April 2012, we – Jayne Cravens, an independent consultant in the USA, and Rob Jackson, an independent consultant in the UK – drafted a survey, in English, regarding software used to manage volunteer information. The purpose of the survey was to gather some basic data that might help organizations that involve volunteers to make better-informed decisions when choosing software, and to help software designers to understand the needs of those organizations. We also wanted to get a sense of what organizations were thinking about volunteer management software.

We chose wording in our messaging that we hoped would reach those who might not identify as volunteer managers, but who do recruit and/or support volunteers, such as fundraising staff, reception staff, office managers, and volunteers themselves.

We promised that all of the data submitted as a part of this survey would be made public WITH THE EXCEPTION of email addresses and identifying information of respondents; in other words, the identity of respondents would be kept confidential.

To market the survey, we sent announcements and reminders about the survey via our respective Twitter and Facebook accounts, via the online community of TechSoup¹, via our email newsletters, and various other online communications methods (see next for details). Several of our colleagues re-posted messages about the survey as well via their various communications channels.

The original deadline for responses was March 23, but this was extended to April 7. This allowed five weeks of marketing and responses.

This was not a comprehensive survey, per the relatively low number of respondents. Because of our limited resources – we did this research with no funding, undertaking the work amid a variety of professional and personal priorities – outreach efforts were limited to the Internet; we had no resources to do a postal mailing to nonprofit associations, charitable associations, etc., which would have garnered many more respondents. In addition, because of lack of time and other resources, no partnerships were sought regarding communicating this survey through nonprofit associations, charitable associations, international associations of non-governmental organizations, etc.

This report uses a mix of British and American English spellings, per the mix of preferences by respondents (and the consultants!).

To comment on or to discuss this report in public, please post your comments to:
<http://coyoteblog.posterous.com/results-of-survey-re-volunteer-management-sof>
and/or
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ukvpms/>

Private comments/analysis can be sent directly to Jayne and Rob.

If you blog about this survey with your own observations/analysis about the data, please post links to your blog at either of the addresses above or contact Jayne and Rob directly.

¹ <http://www.techsoup.org>

MARKETING EFFORTS FOR THE SURVEY

As we noted earlier, we chose wording in our messaging that we hoped would reach those who might not identify as *volunteer managers*, but who do recruit and/or support volunteers, such as fundraising staff, reception staff, office managers, and volunteers themselves. The target audience is summed up in this excerpt from one of the announcement messages:

If you are responsible for tracking information about volunteers at an organization or program, or you are involved in this task in some way, we welcome your completion of this survey.

The survey was marketed via:

- ^ both Jayne & Rob's Twitter accounts (multiple messages)
- ^ both Jayne & Rob's blogs
- ^ UKVPMs (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ukvpms/> ; multiple messages)
- ^ OzVPM (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ozvpm/> ; multiple messages)
- ^ CYBERVPM (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cybervpm>; multiple messages)
- ^ ARNOVA (an email-based discussion group for those that research volunteerism)
- ^ the community forum of TechSoup (<http://www.techsoup.org>)
- ^ direct emails to Jayne & Rob's colleagues
- ^ direct emails and tweets to organizations identified by Jayne and Rob as good conduits for getting the word out to prospective respondents
- ^ Promotion of various volunteer management related LinkedIn groups.

All messages encouraged people to forward the message to their own contacts.

It was noted in announcement messages that more than one person from an organization or program could complete this survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Total Started Survey: 392;

Total That Completed Every Question of the Survey: 240 (61.2%).

Most respondents were in the USA (238), followed by the UK (73), Australia (24), Canada (23). Other respondents represented more than 13 other countries.

We expected the largest response to be from the USA but were surprised to not have any responses from South Africa or India.

We had hoped for a response rate of 500, with at least 100 of those from the UK, 100 from Canada, and at least 50 from Australia and New Zealand, combined. Nonetheless, as this may be the first attempt at gathering this data internationally, we feel the survey was a success in terms of the number and diversity of responses.

By far, most respondents identified as representing a nonprofit organization, non-governmental organization, or charity (almost 65%). A distant second was government agencies, part of city, state or national offices. We believe this breakdown is reflective of the kinds of organizations we network with most in our professional and volunteering work – as we target nonprofits/NGOs primarily, that probably influenced that representation being so large in the survey.

About 60% of respondents are from small organizations (i.e. those with fewer than 50 paid staff). We believe this reflects the constituency that we (the consultants) reach most through social media: small and medium-sized nonprofits, charities and NGOs. Roughly, a third of responses have 10 staff members or less, a third have more than 10 but less than 100, and a third have more than 100 - this implies a good cross-section of organizations, in terms of staff sizes, among respondents.

Most respondents – almost 75% - said that they track 100 volunteers or more with software (page 15). However, just 44.3% reported having 100 or more volunteers (page 10). We are unable to explain this disparity in information.

In response to *What do your volunteers (all unpaid staff, pro bono consultants, etc.) do?*, we got a diversity of responses – while organizations reported that most volunteers do at least some of their work onsite, we were very pleased to have so many organizations represented that had volunteers doing what many are call non-traditional involvement, such as working offsite, with no direct supervision of staff and working online from their home, work, school or other offsite computer or handheld device (virtual volunteering, including microvolunteering).

We received several emails during and after the survey from people saying they wanted to use the survey results to find the best software package for tracking and managing volunteers. We don't believe our survey answered that question. We don't believe any survey can determine what the best software package is for every organization, or even most organizations; how organizations involve volunteers, what information they need about those volunteers, and what kinds of activities those volunteers do varies hugely among organizations. Also, different people like different features; a software loved by one organization may be loathed by another.

The most-used tools reported to be used by those surveyed to track and manage volunteers:

Spreadsheets (Microsoft Excel, OpenOffice, GoogleDocs, or unspecified)	50	Raisers Edge	15
Volgistics	46	Samaritan	14
Volunteer Impact / Volunteer Squared ²	36	Microsoft Access	13
Volunteer	16	V-Base	10

Importantly, **we do not believe that these results automatically mean that the most-used software in this survey is the ‘best’ software, nor that this survey data is an accurate assessment of the most-used software.** Also, almost 100 different software tools were identified as being use to track and manage volunteers and as we noted above, the ‘best’ solution if often a very subjective thing

We were expecting more organizations to report that they were using something that was bought “off the shelf” and then used with some slight adaptations. We were not expecting so many respondents to say their system had been built entirely from scratch. Most organizations report having altered the software they are using at least somewhat.

We were also surprised that most people reported that the software they were using was designed to track volunteers; we were expecting most to report that the software was designed to track donors.

We asked about software functions, and were surprised that respondents reported that most systems seem to have the key features most volunteer managers want (page 14). Another surprise was that more than half of respondents said they used a tool that allowed volunteers to input their own data; we had expected a much lower percentage.

The features that seemed to be most lacking in software:

- ⤴ the ability of volunteers to input their own data;
- ⤴ scheduling facilities; and
- ⤴ a users forum (which also generated the highest number of unsure responses).

Other observations:

- ⤴ 59% of respondents said their software could be accessed via the cloud, indicating that having access to a database of information about volunteers from any point – headquarters, a field office, home, on the road, etc. – is the new normal.
- ⤴ 41% of respondents say they or the software tools they use do not allow volunteers to input their own information. This means the organization's staff has to input and update volunteer information themselves.
- ⤴ The majority of respondents don't use their software for scheduling, but not every organization needs software that has scheduling functions, as per the kind of work their volunteers do.
- ⤴ Even if a software distributor provides an online forum for users, such is largely under-utilized.

Not surprising to us was that most respondents use the software to report on the number of hours volunteers have contributed to the organization in a given period (75%). The second most-common reports generated was the kinds of tasks volunteers have undertaken (almost 60%) and the demographic representation of volunteers, such as the geographic location of their residence or their ethnicity (46%).

2 See previous footnote

Regarding satisfaction with the software used to track and manage volunteers:

- ▲ Almost 60% reported being *satisfied with the cost (or value delivered for the price) of this software*.
- ▲ 72.3 percent of respondents feel the software they use now meets their most basic needs, at least
- ▲ More than 50% of respondents don't plan on switching to a different package, per their satisfaction with their software
- ▲ If ranking of satisfaction is done by number, with “5” being the best and “1” being the worst, the rating average is 3.18

While these statistics indicate that most respondents won't be changing their software any time soon, it does not mean they don't have wants for improvement: there were 235 responses to the question *What do you wish this software could do that you do NOT believe it can do currently*. In addition, many respondents said they use secondary and tertiary software as well to track and manage volunteers. For instance, more than 60 people said they use spreadsheets to supplement their primary volunteer management software tool. While we expected Microsoft tools to be well-represented as a secondary tool (and it is), various Google tools are becoming widely used as well, perhaps reflecting the trend to free tools, or the trend to cloud computing.

Almost 300 people responded to *What is your biggest challenge to capturing information about volunteers?* In attempting to group the responses into categories, we found that more than 50 of the responses related to volunteers not providing or inputting information regularly, staff not having time to input data, or staff not reminding volunteers to input information or not seeing such reporting as a priority. Other common comments related to the data that is captured not really showing the impact of volunteer work, or the software being too difficult for volunteers or the administrators to use properly.

We did not have time to analyze all of the comments made in answer to some questions; for all questions, we listed the comments made, but did not always offer any observations about such, or group the responses into categories. We welcome the efforts of other researchers to offer their own analysis of the data provided. If you blog about this survey with your own observations/analysis about the data, please post links to your blog at either of the addresses below or contact us directly:

<http://coyoteblog.posterous.com/results-of-survey-re-volunteer-management-sof>
and/or
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ukvpms/>

Private comments/analysis can be sent directly to Jayne and Rob.

DATA DETAILS, WITH COMMENTS & ANALYSIS

Total Started Survey: 392

Total That Completed Every Question of the Survey: 240 (61.2%)

Note that numbers reported in the results will not always add up to these aforementioned numbers, as everyone did not answer every question.

Respondents by country

Respondents were asked the name of the country in which they were based. Some answers were combined – for instance, a few people answered UK/Wales, while others answered Wales, and others answered the United Kingdom, some answered England, etc. We did interpret some data for the following totals. As the survey was only in English, there was no expectation of responses from non-English-speaking countries:

USA: 238 UK, England, Wales: 68 ³ Australia: 24 Canada: 23 Scotland: 5 ⁴ New Zealand: 3 Nigeria: 2 Kenya: 2	<i>One respondent from each of these countries:</i> Armenia Cameroon Czech Republic East Timor Indonesia Japan Madagascar Pakistan Switzerland Vietnam	<i>Other answers given to the country question:</i> Bexar Clark d da g s Uvuv virtual
--	--	---









Note: this question was not from a set menu; respondents wrote in whatever answer they wanted.

We had hoped for a response rate of 500, with at least 100 of those from the UK, 100 from Canada, and at least 50 from Australia and New Zealand, combined. Nonetheless, as this may be the first attempt at gathering this data internationally, we feel the survey was a success in terms of the number and diversity of responses. We expected the largest response to be from the USA. A survey in Spanish, French or other languages would, of course, garner even more responses.

We were surprised to not have any responses from South Africa or India; both countries have a large amount of NGOs with English-speaking staff. The lack of responses could be because NGOs in these countries were unaware of the survey, or did not think the survey applied to them.

Answers to the question:

Please note what kind of organization you represent (choose one):

		Response Percent	Response Count
a nonprofit, NGO or charity, registered with the appropriate government entities (can be local, regional, national or international)		64.9%	246
a community, corporate, charitable or family foundation		2.1%	8
a government program, part of a city, state, local or national government office		15.3%	58
a United Nations agency		0.0%	0
a primary or secondary school		3.2%	12
a university-based program		2.6%	10
a church, mosque, temple or other community of faith or ethical society		2.4%	9
a for-profit business		2.1%	8
other Show Responses		7.4%	28
answered question			379

For “other”, responses included such things as “We are a nonprofit zoo” or “We are a nonprofit hospital.”

Note that, by far, most respondents identified as representing a nonprofit organization, non-governmental organization, or charity (almost 65%). A far second was government agencies, part of city, state or national offices.

We believe this breakdown of respondents is reflective of the kinds of organizations we network with most in our professional and volunteering work – as they target nonprofits/NGOs primarily, that probably influenced that representation being so large in the survey. Consultants with a different background – from faith-based organizations, for instance – might garner a different breakdown of respondents.

The lack of United Nations agencies responding, despite the thousands of volunteers that assist UN agencies or that work through the UN Volunteers program, could be because most UN agencies do not track and report volunteers that assist their organizations, and because many involving UN Volunteers (those who have a UNV contract, as opposed to someone volunteering from the local community) think of such *not* as volunteers but, rather, as UNDP paid staff (UN Volunteers receive a monthly stipend).

³ Several people wrote that they were from UK/Wales or UK/England

⁴ Five people wrote that they were from Scotland; none wrote that they were from UK-Scotland, hence why this is separated on its own

Number of full-time, paid employees or paid consultants in your organization or in your program.

		Response Percent	Response Count
under 10 paid employees or paid consultants		38.0%	144
11 - 50 paid employees or paid consultants		23.0%	87
51 - 99 paid employees or paid consultants		5.5%	21
100 or more paid employees or paid consultants		33.5%	127
		answered question	379
		skipped question	13

About 60% of respondents are from small organizations (fewer than 50 paid staff). We believe this reflects the constituency that we (the consultants) reach most through social media: small and medium-sized nonprofits, charities and NGOs.

The consultants avoided using the word *staff* in this question, to ensure this data would be only about people receiving payment for their services, as opposed to volunteer staff (unpaid staff).

Note that, roughly, a third of responses have 10 staff members or fewer, a third have more than 10 but fewer than 100, and a third have more than 100. This implies a good cross-section of organizations, in terms of staff sizes, among respondents.

Number of volunteers (unpaid staff, pro bono consultants) involved at or through your organization or in your program at any given time (at minimum):

		Response Percent	Response Count
under 10 volunteers		7.9%	30
11 - 49 volunteers		14.8%	56
50 - 99 volunteers		11.1%	42
100 - 999 volunteers		44.3%	168
1000 or more		21.9%	83
		answered question	379
		skipped question	13

Almost half of the organizations represented in this survey – 44.3% - have 100 or more volunteers. The consultants were quite surprised that the second-largest group was organizations involving 1000 volunteers or more. Note that this information comes into conflict with answers provided to the question regarding how many volunteers are tracked using software tools (see pages 10 and 15).

Responses to:

*What do your volunteers (all unpaid staff, pro bono consultants, etc.) do?
(check all that apply)*

		Response Percent	Response Count
work onsite at our organization, in our offices		81.3%	305
work offsite but always under observation of our organization or program		42.9%	161
work offsite, independently, without observation of our organization or program		51.2%	192
work with employees and other volunteers		81.1%	304
work directly with clients		62.4%	234
work directly with the public		72.3%	271
fundraise		44.3%	166
campaign		18.4%	69
work in defined shifts (specific hours on specific days)		68.8%	258
fill ongoing roles (web master, marketing director, mentor, dog-walker, counselor, etc.)		62.9%	236
work in one-day projects with no ongoing commitment (beach cleanup, trail clean-up, etc.)		56.0%	210
volunteer online from their home, work, school or other offsite computer or handheld device		36.0%	135
Other (please specify) Show Responses		6.4%	24
		answered question	375
		skipped question	17

We expected the percentage of volunteers that worked onsite to be huge, but were not expecting such a diversity of responses. We were very pleased to have so many organizations represented that had volunteers that:

- ⤴ worked offsite, with no direct supervision by staff
- ⤴ worked directly with clients
- ⤴ worked directly with the general public
- ⤴ worked online from their home, work, school or other offsite computer or handheld device (virtual volunteering, including microvolunteering)

We believe this response demonstrates the diversity of work volunteers undertake at any one organization, as opposed to the stereotype that most volunteers work *only* onsite, directly under staff supervision.

In response to the question:

Name of PRIMARY software or system you use to manage data on, track and/or schedule volunteers (this does NOT have to be software that is ONLY to manage volunteer-related data; for instance, it could be software you use to manage all personnel, including paid staff

Please note that this was questions was to find out the range of tools and how representative the survey results were of software. We do not believe that these results automatically mean that the most-used software in this survey is the best software, nor that this survey data is an accurate assessment of the most-used software.

Here is the data in alphabetical order:

America Learns	6
CARE	4
Convio Common Ground	2
Donor Perfect	3
Drupal	2
Enterprise	4
Facebook	2
Filemaker Pro	6
Giftworks	2
Google groups	2
HandsOn Connect	2
HelpCounter	3
Microsoft Access	13
Microsoft Outlook	3
Microsoft Word	2
None/only use paper/currently researching	6
Oracle/Peoplesoft	2
Raisers Edge	15
ROVIR (Retriever Of Volunteer Information And Reporting)	4

Sage Fundraising	3
SalesForce	7
Samaritan	14
Spreadsheet – Microsoft Excel/Office	45
Spreadsheet - GoogleDocs	4
Spreadsheet - Open Office	1
Spreadsheet - unspecified which platform	4
V-Base	10
Volgistics	46
Volunteer	16
Volunteer Impact / Volunteer Squared ⁵	36
Volunteer Reporter	5
Volunteer Solutions	3
Volunteer Works	2
Volunteers for Salesforce	2
VolunteerSpot	7
VMS (Volunteer Management System)	2
YahooGroups	2
Other	65

The most-used tools by those surveyed:

Spreadsheets (Microsoft Excel, OpenOffice, GoogleDocs, or unspecified)	50
Volgistics	46
Volunteer Impact / Volunteer Squared ⁶	36
Volunteer	16

Raisers Edge	15
Samaritan	14
Microsoft Access	13
V-Base	10

5 Respondents were not given a menu of choices for this question on the survey; they wrote in their answers. 19 respondents said they used Volunteer Impact, and 17 said they used Volunteer Squared. These are two names for the same software platform, so these answers were combined in the totals.

6 See previous footnote

Other software named:

ACS Technologies	Highrise Contacts Management System	Sharepoint
Animal Services Time Tracker (private software)	home made	Shiftboard
BANNER	i-Trent used for HR registration of volunteers	Snowdrop
Cascade	ICVMS	Spark (BBNC)
CIMS	IRIS Donor Strategy	ssss
CLOE	Jhvgvvugv	test
Coachweb Volunteer Web	LDS MIS	Time Online
Concept Database from www.iris.co.uk	listserve	Titanium
Connx and Outlook	me	Truist
custom built for us	Microsoft Dynamics CRM	V
Custom software	Nuke CMS webbased system	VERA
Data Minder	OfficeWise	VIA
database only	OUr own Volunteer Management System	VIRA
dub - by Adido Systems	built in house by our IT team	VOL
E-Coordinator	personal program	Volunteer Energy
eRecruitereCoordinator	Personify - Girl Scouts USA membership database	Volunteer Match
ETO	planning center	Volunteer Matters
facebook	Register book	VolSoft
Get Connected by Galaxy Digital	Results Plus	Volunteer UP
Global Link	RSVP Reporter	VolunteerImpact (MyVolunteerPage.com)
Gnosis for Nonprofits	SERVUS - specifically designed for us	Voltrak
gv		VsysOne
		When to Work

Almost 100 different software tools were identified in this survey as being use to track and manage volunteers. Some respondents noted that they use multiple software tools to track and manage volunteers; this is explored more fully beginning on page 31.

We were interested to see if there was any correlation between the size of the organization and the product they used. For example, do bigger organizations (who might be assumed to have bigger budgets) tend to buy off the shelf products whilst smaller organizations have to find their own solutions via existing software like Excel etc. However, we do not believe there is enough data here to establish any such correlation.

When asked when they started using whatever tool they are using now to track and manage volunteers:

- ⤴ An organization said they were using the same tool they adopted in 1980; we hope that tool has been updated since that date of adoption!
- ⤴ 30 respondents are using the same software they started using originally in the 1990s
- ⤴ 166 respondents are using software they started using originally in the years 2000-09
- ⤴ 48 respondents are using software they started using in the 2010
- ⤴ 53 respondents are using software they started using in the 2011
- ⤴ 53 respondents are using software they started using in the 2012
- ⤴ 30 gave answers that either didn't apply, such as "unknown" or didn't make sense, such as "ggggggg"

In the responses, many people noted that they did not choose the software they were using, that it was provided or required to be used by a headquarters, or that it was chosen by their predecessor. About half a dozen responses said they were "told to use it".





In answer to the question:

The number of volunteers (unpaid staff, pro bono consultants, etc.) tracked on whatever software or system you use to track information about volunteers:

		Response count
Fewer than 50 volunteers	15.60%	54
50-99 volunteers	10.10%	35
100-999 volunteers	44.50%	154
1000 volunteers	29.80%	103
	Total:	346
	No response:	45

Most respondents said that they track 100 volunteers or more with software (almost 75%). Almost 30 % of respondents said they manage more than 1000 volunteers. However, just 44.3% reported having 100 or more volunteers (page 10). We are unable to explain this disparity in information.

The survey asked this question to determine how much respondents had altered the tool they were using: *Is this software or system something that was:*

		Response Percent	Response Count
Bought "off the shelf" and used as-it-came?		33.8%	117
Bought and then used with some slight adaptations/a few enhancements you developed?		30.9%	107
Built entirely or mostly from scratch?		15.3%	53
Other (please specify) Show Responses		19.9%	69
		answered question	346
		skipped question	46

We were expecting far more organizations to report that they were using something that was bought “off the shelf” and then used with some slight adaptations. We were not expecting so many respondents to say their system had been built entirely from scratch.

The responses proved to be a hodge podge of information: feelings about various software, wishes for various functionality, etc. As all of these thoughts are represented in other parts of survey respondents (see later in this report), we have not reproduced these comments here.

Results for the question regarding software capabilities/features:

Is your software or system that you use to track and manage volunteers capable of doing any of the following? (it doesn't matter if you have used it for this or not to do these functions; we just want to know if, from your perspective, the software is or is not capable of these functions):

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Response Count
May volunteers input some or all of their own information directly into this software from their own computers or smart phones? (does the software offer this capability?)	55.1% (183)	41.6% (138)	3.3% (11)	332
Does the system allow you or anyone at your organization to add & customize fields, input screens & reports in this software?	75.4% (251)	19.2% (64)	5.4% (18)	333
Can the software be used to track volunteer hours / completed tasks by week?	69.8% (231)	23.9% (79)	6.3% (21)	331
Can the software be used to track volunteer hours / completed tasks by month?	75.1% (247)	18.8% (62)	6.1% (20)	329
Can the software be used to track volunteer hours / completed tasks by project?	65.4% (217)	23.2% (77)	11.4% (38)	332
Can the software be used to track volunteer skills?	71.0% (235)	19.9% (66)	9.1% (30)	331
Can the software be used to track volunteer availability & interests?	72.0% (237)	21.3% (70)	6.7% (22)	329
Does the software easily export data into other types of files (e.g. MS Excel)	83.6% (275)	8.2% (27)	8.2% (27)	329
Does the software come with a scheduling function?	56.6% (185)	32.4% (106)	11.0% (36)	327
Can more than one person can access this product at same time?	81.5% (268)	14.9% (49)	3.6% (12)	329
Does the company that created this software have an online users' forum, where you can ask questions of other users, share tips, etc?	48.5% (160)	28.2% (93)	23.3% (77)	330
		answered question		334
		skipped question		58

Most systems seem to have the key features we asked about. This was a surprise to us. Another surprise was that more than half of respondents said they used a tool that allowed volunteers to input their own data; we had expected a much lower percentage.

Those which had the most “no” responses seem to be:

- ⤴ the ability of volunteers to input their own data;
- ⤴ scheduling facilities; and
- ⤴ a users forum (which also generated then highest number of unsure responses).

In answer to the question:







Do you access your volunteer data in this software via the Internet/Cloud? (if you answer "no", it means your data is actually on a computer or server in your office)

		Response count
yes	59.00%	204
no	38.70%	134
don't know	2.30%	8
Total:		346
No response:		46

We were pleasantly surprised by this feedback; a much larger “no” answer was expected. This, coupled with the previous question, indicate that having access to a database of information about volunteers from any point – headquarters, a field office, home, on the road, etc. – is the new normal.

In response to the question:

What data was this software or system primarily designed to track?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Information about volunteers		64.5%	223
paid employees (but it's also used for volunteer information tracking)		2.9%	10
donors (but it's also used for volunteer information tracking)		10.1%	35
customers, event attendees, etc. (but it's also used for volunteer information tracking)		4.3%	15
clients		4.0%	14
other (please note what group it was designed primarily to track) Show Responses		14.2%	49
		answered question	346
		skipped question	46

We were surprised that most people reported that the software they were using was designed to track volunteers; we were expecting most to report that the software was designed to track donors.

In response to questions regarding how the software can be used:

	Yes	No	Don't Know	Software does not have this capability or feature	Response count
Do volunteers input some or all of their own information directly into this software from their own computers or smart phones?	46.4% (149)	35.2% (113)	2.2% (7)	16.2% (52)	321
Have you or anyone at your organization added & customized fields, input screens & reports in this software?	76.6% (245)	1.6% (37)	5.9% (19)	5.9% (19)	320
Do you or anyone at your organization or program use the software to track volunteer hours / completed tasks by week?	46.7% (148)	42.6% (135)	4.1% (13)	6.6% (21)	317
Do you or anyone at your organization or program use the software to track volunteer hours / completed tasks by month?	67.5% (214)	23.0% (73)	3.5% (11)	6.0% (19)	317
Do you or anyone at your organization or program use the software to track volunteer hours / completed tasks by project?	56.6% (179)	29.4% (93)	5.4% (17)	8.5% (27)	316
Do you or anyone at your organization or program use the software to track volunteer skills?	53.9% (171)	33.4% (106)	4.4% (14)	8.2% (26)	317
Do you or anyone at your organization or program use the software to track volunteer availability & interests?	57.5% (181)	30.2% (95)	4.1% (13)	8.3% (26)	315
Do you or anyone at your organization or program use the software's scheduling function?	45.1% (144)	30.1% (96)	6.0% (19)	18.8% (60)	319
Does more than one person at your organization or program access this product at same time?	74.5% (237)	17.9% (57)	1.9% (6)	5.7% (18)	318
If the company that created this software has an online users' forum, where you can ask questions of other users, share tips, etc., have you or anyone at your organization used it?	40.6% (128)	21.9% (69)	18.4% (58)	19.0% (60)	315








answered question **321**

skipped question **71**

Observations:

- ⤴ It's interesting that respondents say they do allow volunteers to input their own information, if the software has this capability. This means the organization's staff does not have to input and update volunteer information themselves.
- ⤴ Most organizations have altered the software they are using in some way (and as noted earlier, many have built their system themselves).
- ⤴ The majority of respondents don't use their software for scheduling, but not every organization needs software that has scheduling functions, per the kind of work their volunteers do.
- ⤴ If a software distributor provides an online forum for users of the software, these seem to be largely under-utilized.

What kind of reports do you use this database or software to generate about your volunteers?
(check all that apply):

		Response Percent	Response Count
demographic representation of volunteers (where volunteers are from, what cities, countries, organizations, ethnic groups volunteers represent, etc.)		46.1%	146
number of hours volunteers have contributed in a given period		75.1%	238
kinds of tasks volunteers have undertaken		59.3%	188
volunteer accomplishments		33.8%	107
currency value of volunteer hours		24.3%	77
Individual volunteer performance reviews		13.2%	42
Other (please describe) Show Responses		27.4%	87
		answered question	317
		skipped question	75

Not surprising to us, most respondents use the software to report on the number of hours volunteers have contributed to the organization in a given period (75%). The second most-common reports generated was the kinds of tasks volunteers have undertaken (almost 60%) and the demographic representation of volunteers, such as the geographic location of their residence or their ethnicity (46%). We were pleased that just 24.3% of respondents use the software to generate reports that equate volunteer contributions with a currency value, per our belief that this is an inappropriate way to determine volunteer value.⁷

Several of the “other” responses said “none” or “none of the above.” Here are the other responses in this section (because of time constraints, we have not had time to group the answers into different categories, to look for trends):

- ^ those are all reports that I would like to be able to generate, but right now, our system is pretty broken. We are in the midst of researching new CRM options, and I am hopeful.
- ^ If I had a software program I would use it to produce all of these types of reports
- ^ places from which volunteer was recruited (college, club, or friend referral)
- ^ Performance review of volunteer sites
- ^ Partner demographic info and opportunity details
- ^ Length of Time Volunteered, Publications Sent, Details of oru Local Groups and their volunteers
- ^ number of volunteers by location, adult vs. teen volunteers,
- ^ calendars, online applications, etc
- ^ Length of service / retention, type of volunteer service (internship, court-mandated, skilled)

7 For more on this, see Jayne's web site, <http://www.coyotecommunications.com/volunteer/value.shtml>

- ^ *Volunteers' contact*
- ^ *Would like ability to track dollars raised at various levels!*
- ^ *We use all of the above but it would be nice to have one report customizable to all needs in one report.*
- ^ *scheduling of resources, Vehicles, radios etc.*
- ^ *We have nothing! And over 300 Volunteers! Excel allows mail merge and manual searches for LOTE, start date and other fields created-but it is all manual-we have paper files still*
- ^ *Birthday reports (to send a card), who has completed trainings, returning volunteers for summer programming (who needs to update info), etc.*
- ^ *Scheduling*
- ^ *Roles and dates of appraisals*
- ^ *scheduling*
- ^ *volunteer training undertaken, motivations, vol hours,*
- ^ *schedule reports for individual volunteer sites, master schedule for assigned volunteers*
- ^ *Opportunities data*
- ^ *Volunteer Coordinator Reports- who is scheduled in their groups(decorations, etc.)*
- ^ *anniversaries, birthdays, etc*
- ^ *Not sure that this information is very helpful as it is not a bespoke piece of software, but a simple Access database designed in house - I should like it to do much more than it does but don't have the skills to build it myself and still await finding the right person to do it for me! If and when I get it developed the way I want I will hope to do much of the above.*
- ^ *schedules*
- ^ *People belonging to specific groups*
- ^ *Mostly contact information, location of service,*
- ^ *Income generated & active numbers of volunteers*
- ^ *Schedules*
- ^ *mailing lists & email lists*
- ^ *generate schedules for teams and individuals; qualifications expiry dates; years of service dates*
- ^ *schedules for different areas of our organization listing the volunteers*
- ^ *to mark whether externally brokered/referred vols have been placed or not*
- ^ *scheduling volunteers*
- ^ *Who will be at the event, location they will be helping, when they will work*
- ^ *Stats on clients; stats on no of volunteers etc*
- ^ *costs.job allocations, screening and preparation,wok times etc*
- ^ *Schedules for specific shifts*
- ^ *It's not suitable for these purposes - I export to XL and go from there - we are very small!*
- ^ *volunteers by department or program, number of active volunteers, waiting time for volunteers from initial interest to placement*
- ^ *missed shifts, recognition items given, important dates (start, end, hold, ID, training)*
- ^ *registration, background checks, completed training*
- ^ *Agency needs; detailed reporting statewide; assistance with disaster relief*
- ^ *several others specific to roller derby needs e.g. roster checking and things of such*
- ^ *Trainings*
- ^ *# of volunteers by time & day for all schools using the program (45 at this point)*
- ^ *number of volunteers in a given department, when volunteers have last been active*
- ^ *birthdays, training needed, rewards, other stuff as needed*
- ^ *We do not generate many reports about our volunteers. For creating reports, we use our other software program,*

eTapestry (which we use primarily to track donations, but we keep information about all of our constituents in that database.).

- ^ *Names, when they started and when they left*
- ^ *schedules, goals*
- ^ *General information lists to contact volunteers. Very basic.*
- ^ *rosters, mailing lists*
- ^ *volunteer information, CRB's etc*
- ^ *different roles undertaken, whether they are currently active/non-active*
- ^ *Report on Project Hours across multiple regions*
- ^ *Number of volunteer, names and contact information*
- ^ *challenges the volunteers are having, successful lessons planned, anecdotal reporting*
- ^ *Annual comparisons of increase/decrease in number of volunteers vs number of hours served*
- ^ *We haven't used it to generate any reports about volunteers*
- ^ *wish I could do all these things, and cross-reference with donor records*
- ^ *America Learns can be used to track any set of outcomes that we need it to. It's amazing.*
- ^ *Best practices and strategies from the field; current goals & challenges and other professional development-related metrics; break-outs of specific types of volunteers (e.g., by volunteer role, congressional district serving in, educational background)*
- ^ *skill set of volunteers*
- ^ *Awards received by volunteers, number of hours contributed by volunteers of various types (adults vs. youth, etc.)*
- ^ *do not use it for reports*
- ^ *ID checks, CRB status and recruitment status, comms history*
- ^ *Impact*
- ^ *volunteer lists- birthdays, etc*
- ^ *PLACED.REFERRAL AGENTS,STUDENTS,JOB REFERRALS*
- ^ *completion of training and mandatory check*
- ^ *Scheduling reports*
- ^ *rosters and checkins*
- ^ *job titles, volunteer worksites*
- ^ *number of volunteers & hours designated to certain programs*
- ^ *demos for training*
- ^ *feedback from volunteers*
- ^ *cash, check, credit card, online, and in-kind/pro bono donations*
- ^ *Retention rates for positions. We have a volunteer that runs many of reports. Because it can download into excel, he can manipulate any of the information we put into it to run reports*

Respondents were asked to

Rate the overall performance of the software I or my organization uses primarily to track and report volunteer information and activities

I am not at all satisfied with this software & am looking for alternatives	14.2% (44)
I am not a fan of this software, but I'm stuck with it.	13.5% (42)
There is a lot of room for improvement, but the software meets my most basic needs.	21.0% (65)
I am very satisfied. There are some minor things that could be improved, but I don't plan on switching products.	42.3% (131)
I am completely satisfied, the software does absolutely everything I need, I don't ever want to change.	9.0% (28)

310 people responded

There are three ways to look at this data:

- ▲ 72.3 percent of respondents feel the software they use now meets at least their most basic needs
- ▲ More than 50% of respondents don't plan on switching to a different package, per their satisfaction with their software
- ▲ If ranking is done by number, with “5” being the best and “1” being the worst, the rating average for satisfaction is 3.18

In response to the question:

Are you satisfied with the cost (or value delivered for the price) of this software?

Yes	59.5%	206 responses
No	10.1%	35 responses
Neutral	30.3%	105 responses
346 people answered this question		

But while these statistics indicate that most respondents won't be changing their software any time soon, it does not mean they don't have wants for improvement. In answer to the question:

What do you wish this software could do that you do NOT believe it can do currently:

There were 235 responses. Most are below; the “no answer” and “test” answers have been removed. Because of time constraints, we have not had time to group the answers into different categories, to look for trends. We did observe, however, that few people said they are seeking integration with mobile technology such as smartphones and associated social media, and we found this surprising. As mobile technology becomes more prevalent, we believe that associated forms of volunteering and volunteer support that make use of such mobile technology will further develop/expand, yet few respondents cited such as desired developments for volunteer management software.

- ▲ *online access, communication tools*
- ▲ *Integrating information for various events and service projects; tracking skills and interests; ability for volunteers to sign up on their own; ability to access from other locations and by other locations (cloud computing).*
- ▲ *integrate with a mass email tool; make it easy to customize layouts and reports - there are a lot of things that it COULD do, but it is not setup and I don't have the time or training to fix it, so I have a lot of hacks that involve Excel, which is neither efficient nor sustainable.*
- ▲ *I would be happy just to have one.*

- ^ *Type directly into fields (called grid columns) without having to "edit" each individual volunteer profile. THANKFULLY, the staff truly do their best to accommodate any requests we make, and they are honest enough to give me timelines for each request and tell me if a request is not possible in the near future.*
- ^ *modify reports to fit need easily sort by site make updates easily in response to consumer feedback Make more reports*
- ^ *Have more choice on modules.*
- ^ *I would like staff and volunteers across the country to have access to the system to input their own details rather than emailing the central volunteer team who then inputs the information. I would like more comprehensive reporting systems.*
- ^ *The database is currently under development, so features are added as we define the need for them.*
- ^ *no answer*
- ^ *Allow users to update their own information.*
- ^ *Send emails easier and categorize volunteer groups easier.*
- ^ *Merge volunteer records easily, update multiple volunteer records simultaneously with particular information,*
- ^ *More robust reporting tool within the application.*
- ^ *Calendar feature to view available opportunities*
- ^ *Link to other external websites with details of our vacancies. Allow online completion and then import of Volunteer Registration Forms*
- ^ *Communicate with the cloud; save reports to my computer; configure major categories to fit my needs*
- ^ *Just about everything - I inherited the excel spreadsheet system and am looking for a software program to shift to.*
- ^ *We are still trying to generate some customized automatic report. Samaritan is working with us on this effort.*
- ^ *Provide more flexibility to modify the forms on the system.*
- ^ *tabulate hours for the President's Volunteer Service Awards*
- ^ *Be more flexible to accommodate multiple locations on a single online signup form.*
- ^ *add certificates to mail merge via email*
- ^ *Needs to be more user friendly, all around. Would like reporting to be simplified and would like a user friendly way for volunteers to log hours.*
- ^ *Prevent registration of duplicate volunteer records; prohibit registration by individuals who do not meet age guidelines of specific opportunities; better customize reports*
- ^ *Bar code reader for real-time volunteer hours tracking.*
- ^ *scheduling*
- ^ *Enable volunteers to enter/update data through an on-line form.*
- ^ *This software can do most things, but in indirect round about ways. For instance, instead of having all profile tabs searchable, you must go in and create a report to find a volunteer with a particular skill, which takes 10 minutes, instead of the 2 it would take to search. It also does not have phone support, which is often much more time efficient than emailing back and forth when a problem is immediate.*
- ^ *Track volunteers' hours, skills and interest easily*
- ^ *post job opportunities and volunteer interest- so volunteers could match to opportunity themselves- at least express interest*
- ^ *Nothing. If I need anything customized that I can't do, I just email the designer, and she gets back to me immediately. Her software is wonderful and she is awesome with her customer service.*
- ^ *TEXTING!!! Allow volunteers to see "who's here" from VIC Touch. When scheduling a volunteer, instead of choosing from the full list of assignments, narrow the list to assignments that have been assigned to volunteers.*
- ^ *I work for the State and we are not allowed access to Facebook or Youtube. This is the support and training for VOL2 program. It is not helpful and I had to teach the software by hands on alone. Very frustrating*
- ^ *Consolidate information selected and be reformatted into a usable financial reporting tool (ie: funds raised at various locations, by volunteer, by geographic location)*
- ^ *Get one report with all info needed..no matter what the information is. Doing several reports and combining is very time consuming.*

- ^ More customizable searches. IE: volunteers that haven't volunteered in the last year, Automatic e-mail on acceptance
- ^ I have two pages full of things I wish it did.
- ^ We are pleased with our software
- ^ I have different excel files and I wish all the information was in the same place
- ^ Users could view some schedules in some organizations. Would prefer that Administrators control which reports are available to users. Might even be a limit of the number available.
- ^ Allow the organization to send emails sorted by group with links for volunteer scheduling, volunteer surveys and volunteer contact information updates.
- ^ display rosters, search for & match skills of Volunteers according to available shifts/roles, pretty much everything-customised searches, auto reviews/reminders, bulk emails etc
- ^ HTML/WYSIWYG editing in emails, ability to preview an application before it is accepted into the database, a users forum, ability to add more of specific types of fields on the online application (especially drop boxes).
- ^ Track volunteer hours Track Service Awards Track Start and Finish Dates
- ^ Record monitoring information e.g. gender, ethnic minority also leaving date
- ^ Be more user friendly
- ^ schedule work groups efficiently - work groups can apply as a group, update how many volunteers will be coming on the software by themselves, and then use the timeclock to have one person clock entire group's hours (currently just counts as one person's hours even if scheduled manually as a group of 5)
- ^ Our volunteer software was bought to respond to a specific funders need which was measuring hard targets, but we are more outcome focussed now and the software does not reflect soft outcomes.
- ^ The volunteer management module has not been used in a few years. I am in the process of re-introducing it.
- ^ allow volunteers to specify a time when they'll be in to complete a task (instead of me having to create the schedule); create customized reports (like Access queries and reports); allow volunteers to sign up for shifts from a calendar view; send reminders to volunteers about their assigned shifts; track communication with volunteers; option to list groups that volunteer as groups (instead of as an individual, with the group name included in the notes section); option to log hours by viewing the week's schedule and marking the # of hours next to each scheduled volunteer; option to mark attendance (attended/late/no-show/cancelled)
- ^ Our software is too limited in options for "archiving" volunteers. It's far too difficult to get a report with a master view of our volunteer activities and schedules. Exporting reports to Excel is a highly frustrating process and much of the data that comes in the report are useless identifiers.
- ^ Ability to track hours that volunteers contribute. Ability to report on volunteer numbers / data such as numbers / % of involved with certain areas, e.g can show all volunteers or volunteers for 1 vol opp, but not e.g ALL volunteers in Museum service, or how many vols consider themselves to have a disability in the Library service. The reporting function of VBase 2.5 was designed a number of years ago, when reporting required was less detailed as now. Vbase 3 has been promised since 2009 and may be launched some time this year, but may also be delayed for whatever reason.
- ^ Auto reminders for annual requirements. Although i think the last upgrade is getting close for this.
- ^ Easy to see save buttons! , Copy functions - eg data entry, calculate age and show on screen, ability to set and save report functions for a site eg demographics,
- ^ let volunteers log on and off, Track hours Send notifications
- ^ Have an "app" for volunteers to log their hours
- ^ save sent email messages or at least let you review what you have just sent
- ^ It has a wide range of functionality but it is only currently used to record donors and members and the basics of who is on a branch committee. We are currently carrying out a knowledge management project of which a volunteer database is a part of this process so this will change in the future.
- ^ not sure. Excel does what I want
- ^ Not sure, will know more soon
- ^ I believe it CAN do much of what I want it to do, but it needs to be built to do it the way I want - see answer to last question
- ^ Record volunteer hours

- ^ *Communicate with volunteers by text using telephone numbers rather than mobile email addresses which seems to be something used in North America.*
- ^ *Not sure - all previously mentioned would be useful or interesting, but not necessary at moment*
- ^ *on line rota system*
- ^ *Paper system works just great.*
- ^ *Gather data automatically from volunteer application, gather data from volunteer reports (confirmation of volunteer service) including hours.*
- ^ *Pulling out information about an individual volunteer is cumbersome... as is everything else with this system.*
- ^ *Where do I begin ... I wish I had tags in order to generate reports (ex: how many community service hours were served in April at the warehouse specifically), I wish it tracked relationships to other volunteers and/or referrals, I wish I could easily track which of our ongoing volunteers participated in which special event, I wish volunteers could update their own contact info, I wish I could search availability and interests, it would be *really* nice to be able to track our corporate group projects better ...*
- ^ *Not Sure*
- ^ *allow one volunteer to record hours for their group without being an administrator*
- ^ *it gives me a table format to prepare my strategic work plan*
- ^ *Schedule; track history and relationships; organize data in an easy-to-use UI*
- ^ *spellchecker before sending emails export individual volunteer schedules to iCal/iPhone send auto reminders to volunteers*
- ^ *Don't know.*
- ^ *This software is straight out of the 80's. It is archaic in the way data is input, awkward in developing reports, and TERRIBLY time consuming. It was MUCH faster performing the tasks by hand. The benefit is that management could off-load their participation to local users. Really a third rate product from my point of view.*
- ^ *not sure*
- ^ *NA - we need to move to a management software in order to do anything beyond basic #/hours per project.*
- ^ *Volunteers able to add/modify their own data.*
- ^ *Produce all reports regarding to the volunteer*
- ^ *We are currently not using a VMS. So basically we are looking to implement something that can do all of the things indicated in previous questions.*
- ^ *nothing*
- ^ *Skills Bank list Link spouses/partners so only one email per household goes out if requested Comparative reports for hours of various tasks Donor database/management*
- ^ *ability to have a different maximum number of volunteers in the schedule for one given activity. IE: "manning a booth" activity, I require 5 volunteers on a thursday, but need 12 on saturday. The system won't allow me to state that when creating a schedule.*
- ^ *Give our own vols the opportunity to self log experiences, skills, hours.*
- ^ *VolunteerSpot is easy to use for scheduling volunteers that is all we need.*
- ^ *We manage all functions on excel, yahoo and google groups, facebook, list serve, free conference calls, doodle all free products on web to manage*
- ^ *Format the tasks in different ways... Not ONLY by hour, but by task type for our 24 hour event.*
- ^ *Collect more information on each volunteer. Allow for copying of certain jobs/events.*
- ^ *I just wish for proper database software*
- ^ *More qualitative data possibly*
- ^ *Not sure yet - we've only just started to use it.*
- ^ *Help with scheduling*
- ^ *Organise information more succinctly*
- ^ *integrated fundraising*
- ^ *Track email*

- ^ *effectively manage groups of volunteers. Groups and organizations can not reserve multiple vacancies using the systems. The software also does not communicate how many remaining vacancies there are for a given volunteer opportunity.*
- ^ *Record and report skills, availability. Easy to use so I actually use it!*
- ^ *Not sure*
- ^ *Run more individualized reports. Provide reports based on certain number accomplishments such as every time a volunteer achieves 50 hours. This would be useful for volunteer rewards/benefits.*
- ^ *Allow volunteers to enter the skills they can offer, and allow nonprofits to search for specific skills and contact volunteers that offer those skills.*
- ^ *Track volunteer availability/scheduling. Track hours contributed more easily.*
- ^ *It's not a complete volunteer management database; it's antiquated and hard to use and get information and reports from.*
- ^ *interface with various projects - it can its just a question of costs*
- ^ *the company is very receptive to suggestions and over the years has made updates to performance*
- ^ *-Schedule -Volunteers be able to sign in and out themselves/access to specific areas*
- ^ *Create reports*
- ^ *Online Scheduling*
- ^ *Show volunteers a list of available shift in list format instead of calendar format.*
- ^ *allow volunteers and program staff to manage their own schedules and time entry.*
- ^ *Cc staff, forwarding, sending automated email template (e.g. on birthday, anniversary), allow for text field in outcomes (for volunteers to enter message), track email/message sent in volunteer profile*
- ^ *Nothing. America Learns is user friendly and completely adaptable to my organization's needs.*
- ^ *Merge both the database and the excel software together. Have volunteers be able to log in and put in there hours themselves.*
- ^ *reports with data organized in usable format. Currently our national organization has created reports that are labor intensive to utilize because of the way they are formatted.*
- ^ *I am not sure yet. We are still in the infancy stages of usage.*
- ^ *Log hours off schedules automatically*
- ^ *Be more flexible and easier to manage*
- ^ *More reporting*
- ^ *More functionality of the 'activity' and 'activity category' sections. We need to track our volunteers by the program they volunteer for (essentially, their role), as well as the location they do it at (we have 18 locations plus some volunteers are offsite). This is very difficult to do in the current set up of activity and activity category. Right now our activity represents our program and our activity category represents the location. All our coordinators need to be able to search for volunteers in their program, which is difficult to do with the current software. We also need to be able to search for volunteers at certain locations. The only way to do that at the moment is through an additional field in the custom field area that we have added.*
- ^ *Wish we could build our own Queries and reports Improved scheduling option – more of a visual layout/design then function. As it is now the schedule is just a great long list of dates would prefer calendar.*
- ^ *Easily organize all information about every volunteer esp. skills and interests. It is challenging to remember what volunteers have potential to accomplish specific tasks that pop up months after the initial contact by the volunteer. It would be great to use a program that keep tracks of hours, applications, and contact info specifically for mass emails. We currently save volunteer info in three different programs (Outlook, shared network hard drive and VMS) .*
- ^ *Let volunteers directly input hours of service.*
- ^ *More granular administrative permissions so staff only work with their own volunteers.*
- ^ *Ability to change an activity form an unscheduled to a scheduled activity without re-entering all the information. Ability to define levels of administrators. Email reminders that volunteers are confirmed and/ or assignment is coming up.*
- ^ *When sending e-mails through it, it will only do text and will not allow you to attach more than one document at a time.*

- ^ Alert administrators when information changes about a volunteer from the volunteer portal
- ^ Quite a few things! More searchable fields, hour entry directly from schedule, better email functionality (HTML!), and others I can't think of, better award tracking info - resetting after a set number of awards earned/used!
- ^ I wish it had an option for us to make additional forms (like consent forms) that can be stored in an individual volunteer account.
- ^ More variety in reports and queries. There are reports I need to run that should be simple, but they are not.
- ^ internet access portal home page have more capabilities, It is very limited with simple html
- ^ Give a report on the retention rate of volunteers. Expanded search options.
- ^ Create a volunteer application that can be printed out as a nicely formatted hard copy.
- ^ Spanish version
- ^ To keep a running total of hours entered under each individual volunteer profile to get a single shot of their accomplishments. Additionally, recap email communication and record what has been sent out to each volunteer (possibly a subject line or name of email template) to alleviate lengthy notetaking.
- ^ A lot--schedule, allow volunteers to enter their own data (including volunteer time), track volunteer interests and schedules
- ^ Can't audit scheduled times vs actual timesheets. Limited reporting functionality Limited flexibility with online applications Limited "notes" capability, not searchable, etc.
- ^ The coordinator functionality is limited enough to make it mostly useless for many staff supervisors. You can't get the kind of back end information that is really necessary to contact volunteers and look up their hours easily.
- ^ Send birthday cards automatically and create certificates.
- ^ Every now and then I want it to do something more, but I can't think of an example right now.
- ^ 1. provide roster display to the individual volunteer showing who is rostered when and where there are vacancies 2. Ability to give Managers view access with no ability to update
- ^ Track hours by location rather than task.
- ^ It only tracks volunteers directly associated with clients.
- ^ Better reporting options other than outputs
- ^ It's an inexpensive software package. I wish it allowed me to add/modify fields as needed. (New fields need to be added by the vendor, at a cost.). I can create a tabular report, but other than this, it's not very flexible. And it's not that intuitive! Many of the reports/lists included with the software are useless to me and it's not easy to create what I'd like -- especially since we initially added a field to describe the assignment, not just the department (which is included). I paid for some modifications that never worked. The vendor is a very nice guy, but the software has never worked as it should. Alas, I'm stuck with it.
- ^ it exports into excel in such a way that the excel spreadsheet is then not easily manipulated.
- ^ The email system is not great, I wish volunteers and "supervisors" (staff or senior volunteers with access to certain info in the database) could send messages to me and each other directly through the software. Several other little things would be nice like volunteers being able to fix mistakes in their input hours. Also, some things I have had to cobble together, I wish the extra fields were more flexible so I could use them in other ways and move them around. I also would love it if it could track family volunteers with a bit more info about individual members than a corporate group of volunteers, but still all together - rather than individual files on each. Also, would love it if only the appropriate fields showed up in each volunteer's online account.
- ^ More flexibility with the content management system and design of the site. Ability to roll up data across multiple agencies utilizing the same system.
- ^ Track hours and outcomes
- ^ Be used via smart phone
- ^ Warnings when volunteer participation goes below a certain level.
- ^ better reporting, add more fields
- ^ cannot easily customize reports or surveys. We have had specialized surveys built that combine volunteer hours and outcomes but I wish this were easier. I wish it would track awards and training better. Also wish it would allow us to track the induction steps required for a job before placement, you can add UDF's that name the steps but it's awkward and not fully integrated as a function of the software.
- ^ track interests for one off events

- ✧ *make martinis⁸*
- ✧ *Between GoogleDocs and eTapestry, a lot of our software needs surrounding volunteers are taken care of. It would be nice if I had the space to capture all the information we need in one place - for example, hours/projects/messages/reports from our volunteers "on the ground" about what they accomplished and experienced, in addition to the more mundane details like email address and phone number.*
- ✧ *Allow for local input, anywhere at anytime, give volunteers a personal account, allow us to track the different level of engagement and shape communication around this, set up way for volunteers to tell stories about how they are changing lives... and a lot more.*
- ✧ *I would like to have the ability to make more "mass changes" they are working on it.*
- ✧ *Not be so expensive. Worried that we had created too many special modification.*
- ✧ *search of duplicate volunteer applications merge information from duplicate applications it is very slow we would like it to work quicker*
- ✧ *Enable online application or volunteer updates. Track essential skills and choices. Monitor hours volunteered and activities taken part in.*
- ✧ *Connect volunteers in an online forum*
- ✧ *allow greater level of customization for coordinator users, track possible substitutes for events, print calendar-style monthly schedules*
- ✧ *I wish Groundwire would provide more support for Volunteers for Salesforce than just the online forum. The creators have moved on to other projects. They answer questions posted to the online forum, but I would like to be able to talk with them more about best practices, how to make V4SF do certain things, etc.*
- ✧ *More customization*
- ✧ *track hours, skills, availability be accessed by volunteers communicate with volunteers*
- ✧ *Have a skills bank and have a phone app for time reporting.*
- ✧ *Where do I start! Capture and report on skills Volunteer - self management / access Talk to other systems Mandatory fields to support key processes / aspects of the volunteer journey Manage different types of volunteering - groups, internships Link to opportunity system Online Self selection Auto responses Support personalised communications - dependent on relationship as a volunteer, donor, member etc. Simplify scheduling Support professional development Links to training options*
- ✧ *Lots! Record skills, hours, activities, keep a volunteering history*
- ✧ *We are replacing it with an HR based system that can store and manage data, and most importantly can handle workflows. New system will be Captivate HR*
- ✧ *We've struggled with reports - especially to connect volunteer data to the jobs they have done. They company tries very hard to be responsive, A HUGE improvement from Volgistics- our previous vendor, but they are a small company with only so many humans to task to our requests.*
- ✧ *Call the company/can only e-mail them*
- ✧ *Allow volunteers to read mail messages more than once.*
- ✧ *Integrate social media - one stop shop. It is a little cumbersome - not completely user friendly. I use an apple interface and expect that level of user-friendly design*
- ✧ *We also use CRM to track donor relations and have integrated Enterprise with CRM. We have not adapted CRM for use with volunteers yet. I think this is the way to go.*
- ✧ *It fits our needs and can always be adjusted if possible*
- ✧ *send email*
- ✧ *Update date contact information*
- ✧ *I can't think of anything. We love it!!*
- ✧ *produce a schedule, be more like an access database, be more stable, not be so visibly HUGE, have forms to fill in instead of a spreadsheet*
- ✧ *This software can probably do everything I want it to do, but I lack the expertise needed to program it so that it will do what I want, and our tech staff doesn't make my needs a priority.*

8 The authors would like to say that they, too, would like to see this functionality in volunteer management software, but are not expecting such any time soon.

- ^ *Nothing. We're incredibly happy with America Learns for our current needs.*
- ^ *our current software is just a spreadsheet. I need a management software that can keep CRM on volunteer/donor relationships as well as interests and abilities and availability, and also hours served on which project and financial value of their gift of time and talent. I do not need ti to schedule for me, and I do not need volunteers to enter their own data.*
- ^ *Nothing. Anytime we have needed a change or improvement the America Learns team has delivered.*
- ^ *It would be great if volunteers could enroll the students they work with directly. This feature is supposed to go live in a few months.*
- ^ *Generate monthly alerts when volunteers have achieved targets for rewards and repeat that test one year later*
- ^ *A lot-- we're still trying to identify what specific volunteer-focused software we should purchase.*
- ^ *be more user friendly when creating custom reports*
- ^ *It does not have telephone based help/service.*
- ^ *I wish that Volgistics had more customizable text fields. I need a tab, other than the "Notes" tab, that would enable me to have fields for typing in Medical Conditions, Allergies, Accommodations, and Medications. I don't need to be able to search these fields, but just store the information for future reference, and I don't like having to use the Notes field for it. I also wish that every staff member who needs to use Volgistics did not have to be a system operator (for whom we have to pay a monthly fee). You don't have to pay a monthly fee for "Coordinators," but Coordinators don't have the ability to email volunteers using Volgistics, which is a critical thing for our staff who use Volgistics. As a result, all of these people need to be System Operators, at great expense.*
- ^ *that it can interface with other databases in our office ie: donor contributions.*
- ^ *Does what I need it to do in a very clear, easy to complete format.*
- ^ *It's fine as is*
- ^ *All the items listed that it does not do.*
- ^ *I wish I HAD real volunteer software! Excel is very limited.*
- ^ *'Talk' to other systems in the organisation simply - this is an issue of our data structure, not the software. Speed of database particularly report manager when working remotely*
- ^ *not sure*
- ^ *I wish the reports we use for volunteers were more in line with the reports we use for participants/clients*
- ^ *I wish that it was more user driven. Volunteers can enter hours and that is it. I wish they could update their personal info, add skills, schedule, etc*
- ^ *It would be great if it monitored volunteers for equality and diversity. I could generate an online form to do this, but have not found the time to do so yet.*
- ^ *Allow import from webforms, both for volunteer registration and opportunity information*
- ^ *As a start - Track hours and tasks, capture outcomes, hold feedback and exit form info. Better info/motivation of our non-volunteer supporters*
- ^ *- allowed volunteers to change their own data, where appropriate - Sent group emails in HTML format (currently Rich Text) - Notified the database administrator when a change had been made by any user - Easier data entry procedures*
- ^ *The email functionality is very limited and poor, have to export to another email system - this one just isn't even usable.*
- ^ *let volunteers append their own hours. Right now an admin has to make changes if their hours changed.*
- ^ *I wish I had software.*
- ^ *copy shifts and not just whole days to future days*
- ^ *allow volunteers to update personal information and log hours themselves + remotely. Allow retrieval of data (e.g. total number of volunteer hours, demographic information, etc)*
- ^ *Getting a timesheet report that adds up several timesheets in a useable format is difficult.*
- ^ *We get annual updates, so I am happy.*
- ^ *be used more as a CRM function to enable us to keep in touch with volunteers - to schedule calls/send automatic emails*
- ^ *Allow for scheduling of volunteers and tracking of communication between org and volunteer (i.e. noting when email*

was sent, last time volunteer came in or was involved, etc.)

- ^ integrate with our donor database*
- ^ There is no live (in person or even on the phone) tech support. Reports are not very customizable, and the spreadsheet exports are messy to work with. I wish I could get into the data in the tables and mess with it as I like! Also the online scheduling function is really ugly when people access it from home; the software doesn't give me the ability to change very much of the look.*
- ^ track hours*
- ^ Have a NOT function in search Sort by classification*
- ^ so far, they have continued to innovate over many years - so usually needs are resolved over time*
- ^ User self-scheduling via computer or phone, more user friendly way to track volunteer schedule, more flexibility for system-wide changes after user/volunteer data is in the system*
- ^ Easily change fields.*
- ^ import from Excel, talk to other software such as Pearson PowerSchool and Engrade*
- ^ Volunteer access from home - This is available if we upgraded to the newer, cloud-based version.*
- ^ Make it easier for me to contact returning volunteers vs. new ones*
- ^ Link three related database objects in a 1:1:1 relationship.*
- ^ For emailing from the system have HTML coding available! Better scheduling functionality Be able to accurately approve hours of volunteers before they automatically go into the software (it says you can do this but actually it auto pops into the volunteers record)*
- ^ function and connect volunteers with opportunities so we can track 'life history'*
- ^ Allow users to update their own information*
- ^ Track hours, skills, interests, availability; volunteer scheduling*

To address these issues, many respondents said they use other software as well.

- ⤴ 62 people report using spreadsheets to supplement their primary volunteer management software tool. The overwhelming software choice for this was Microsoft Excel, though a few people said they are using the spreadsheet program of GoogleDocs.
- ⤴ 6 people reported using just “GoogleDocs” or “Google”
- ⤴ 6 respondents reported using Google Calendar, and 3 people said they used it specifically for scheduling volunteers.
- ⤴ 7 people reported using Microsoft Access
- ⤴ 6 people reported using Microsoft Word; one person said these are posted to the web and shared with all volunteers.
- ⤴ 5 people use Microsoft Outlook
- ⤴ 6 people reported using something “customer built in-house.” One said “HQ is starting to use our agency database to do some limited volunteer management functions.”
- ⤴ 3 people said they use “paper.”
- ⤴ 6 people reported using Raiser’s Edge

The following were also reported by one person each as being used as the supplemental tools for volunteer tracking and support:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⤴ Accent (for volunteer expenses) and a third bespoke client database. ⤴ America Learns ⤴ business tracking ⤴ Calendar Creator for schedules ⤴ Crystal reports ⤴ doodle for scheduling (free), employees themselves ⤴ Enterprise to track ⤴ FileMaker Pro ⤴ HandsOn Connect ⤴ Kronos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⤴ phpScheduleIt ⤴ Sage CMS, Aggresso HR ⤴ Salesforce ⤴ SMS Alchemy for HACC funded programs ⤴ Theatre Manager ⤴ Troopmaster ⤴ VC Connect ⤴ “Volunteer First (Prior release version of current software) is still being used because reporting choices are better.” ⤴ WuFoo forms to register group project participants ⤴ Zoomerang 	
--	---	--	--

Our thoughts on these results:

- ⤴ The heavy use of spreadsheets means either nonprofits aren't being served with the spreadsheet function of volunteer management software.
- ⤴ We were expecting Microsoft tools to have a wide representation here, but are intrigued by Google tools being so well-represented as well. This is perhaps related to the attractiveness of free software, as well as cloud computing solutions, to storing volunteer data.
- ⤴ We were surprise and, in Jayne’s case, disappointed, to not see any FOSS⁹ tools reported as used.
- ⤴ We suspect there is much greater use of email and paper as supplemental tools than was reported.
- ⤴ It is possible that some people double reported, writing in the same software name that they reported as their primary tool.

9 Free, open-source software

What is your biggest challenge to capturing information about volunteers?

Almost 300 people responded to this question. In attempting to group the responses into categories, we found that more than 50 of the responses related to volunteers not providing or inputting information regularly, staff not having time to input data, or staff not reminding volunteers to input information or not seeing such reporting as a priority. Other common comments related to the data that is captured not really showing the impact of volunteer work, or the software being too difficult for volunteers or the administrators to use properly.

Below are all of the comments, except for “no answer” or “not applicable” comments:

- ^ *spreadsheet only*
- ^ *Integrating information for various special events and service projects.*
- ^ *Getting them to track their hours*
- ^ *Tracking Hours, this is more human capacity and lack of interactive system / NHS system issue rather than program*
- ^ *At this moment I have no complaints. Again, this is because I have talked extensively with the software team and they have worked diligently to modify our system (over the course of 1.5 years) to make sure the program gathers everything we need.*
- ^ *We use it for our whole system but it is hard to just manage the volunteers in your site*
- ^ *Getting them to volunteer.*
- ^ *Volunteers are based all across the country in 40+ locations often with little or no access to computers and the internet (many volunteers don't know how to use the technology).*
- ^ *Information about volunteers themselves is relatively easy to track, but the biggest challenge is capturing their impact.*
- ^ *Keeping current with on-going assignment changes and accomplishments.*
- ^ *No answer. I am capable of capturing all the data that I need or want.*
- ^ *Getting volunteers to update their own profiles because many do not have computers and/or e-mail addresses.*
- ^ *Balancing wanting information and the time that it takes for them to fill it out.*
- ^ *Getting our staff/volunteers to enter this on our system and keep it up to date.*
- ^ *Having volunteers give me the information*
- ^ *All information has to be hand entered and is not very manageable in spreadsheet form.*
- ^ *Making sure all staff are using the system consistently and to the greatest capacity. More training needed. Samaritan is not always consistent on the changes in all areas of the program. For example, In log book the selection of multiple volunteers are located in the menu to the left of the page. In main volunteer tab, there is a toggle button. This gets tricky! You can't get everything in the grids that are located in volunteer's file.*
- ^ *amount of time it takes to record information*
- ^ *Somewhat limited functionality for volunteers signing up groups.*
- ^ *legibility of application - we have therefore transitioned to an online application process in hopes to eliminate error and ensure accountability*
- ^ *Online registration is too long and volunteers don't complete the form.*
- ^ *reporting of volunteer hours after service*
- ^ *Once the volunteer is registered trying to have the volunteer keep his/her information current.*
- ^ *Getting individual projects to submit monthly information trackers timely and accurately.*
- ^ *That we rely upon volunteers self-reporting much of their information since a majority of their volunteer tasks are conducted off-site and on their own time (not under our supervision)*
- ^ *After initial orientation, the volunteer's main contact become staff members at our various programs, so beyond an annual survey, I don't get much feedback from them and rely on staff for submitting documentation of supervision, recognition, and performance evals.*
- ^ *Regional staff do not see it as a priority to capture volunteer data, and it can sometimes put volunteers off if we ask*

for too much information and form-filling. So capturing accurate national data is very difficult.

- ^ *Ease of use and entry*
- ^ *The time it takes to get it from them - not software related.*
- ^ *Getting their up-dated info.*
- ^ *Getting the volunteers to turn in their hours. I have to contact volunteers and boards multiple time to get their hours for the month. I enter all hours. I am concerned I would not capture volunteer hours if the volunteer had to enter the hours themselves. I have heard from others who do my type of job that they do not enter volunteer hours and a lot of their volunteers do not report their hours.*
- ^ *Monumental amount of data is necessary to input by few people because volunteers don't have the resources to do it--PCs, knowledge of software, desire to report accurate information.*
- ^ *Volunteers are having to return an log their hours unless they use the time clock feature. If the hours were automatically logged when they sign up that would be best. We have sign in sheets to figure out who showed and who didn't.*
- ^ *Searches, needs more options. I would like to be able to search for volunteers that did not receive a specific communication so I don't e-mail them twice*
- ^ *Encouraging volunteers to use the software and input their own information like updating contact info, tracking their hours, etc. is the biggest challenge of using a volunteer management software.*
- ^ *Getting the volunteers to log their hours.*
- ^ *our database is fine, but we can do a better job of designing our website to make it easier for volunteers to give us their info.*
- ^ *Completed paperwork*
- ^ *getting the users to keep personal profiles updated.*
- ^ *Volunteers using timesheets*
- ^ *Our system is from the 1970's and it's upkeep is arduous and time consuming, meaning that things do not get done, causing triple handling/follow up*
- ^ *Sometimes it's difficult to capture the information I want using the database alone to run reports. When the info we want is too complex for Volgistics, we export it to Excel and then convert it to Access so we can use SQL to get the information we want. It takes a while, but ends up being easier than trying to run a report in the database itself.*
- ^ *Being able to record it in the database. Even if this means customizing. Current database does not allow enough customability.*
- ^ *hours inaccurate due to work groups not accurately being captured on time clock*
- ^ *Capturing the impact of volunteering. So we use reports/survey results/case studies, etc to try to capture impact. Volunteer Works has a lot of data, but we can't manipulate in the way we'd like so there is a lot of manual counting which is not an effective use of anyone's time.*
- ^ *getting the right amount of information about vols in certain areas. VBase reports usually on ALL vols, without separating them out. It also doesn't take account of the throughflow of volunteers - as some become dormant during the year, as many do.*
- ^ *Getting volunteers to sign in and out when they undertake their shifts*
- ^ *Developing uniform practices across the organization*
- ^ *Time.*
- ^ *That they complete all fields when asked to.*
- ^ *Having a database that is intuitive enough for this to be of benefit and a well rounded system. We also have a large range of roles at different sites and in different projects, some self managing (so hard to get accurate information) and some managed by staff so challenging to get an appropriate system for all.*
- ^ *A budget to buy a specialized piece of software, or the skills to build our own database - I want it to be relational with a client database*
- ^ *The volunteer has to go to two different pages when signing up to volunteer online - often they do not get to the second page, leaving most information off of their application.*
- ^ *Ensuring a consistency of format*
- ^ *The sheer number of volunteer we have and other staff/volunteers who coordinate different gorups not passing on information*

- ^ *it is mostly paper based but i am addressing this*
- ^ *As a national governing body of a sporting activity, our biggest challenge is actually capturing the information of ALL our volunteers. Our internal procedures & resourcing mean we only store information on volunteers who directly engage with us e.g. who hold our awards. We do not record who our more remote volunteers are e.g. those who do administrative tasks in our affiliated Clubs.*
- ^ *The time it takes to input all of the data*
- ^ *Collecting the information.*
- ^ *Volunteers fill out paper applications and don't always write legibly. Additionally it takes a lot of staff to enter the data.*
- ^ *Frankly, had I been more familiar with Microsoft Access, I *might* have been able to make a decent database. My system of spreadsheets is really only a snapshot, I can't generate meaningful reports ... it's just sloppy.*
- ^ *Most staff members who work with volunteers work with relatively few, so it is difficult as the coordinator to maintain consistency in how agency policy is applied regarding volunteers, meaning the information I get is often inconsistent*
- ^ *The current system we use is a box within a box within a box system so you need to bring up or click out of several pop up boxes before you can tackle the task at hand*
- ^ *1. The tendency for them to blame users when there is a glitch - ie "can't be our fault, software wouldn't do that" and yet, the 'glitch' keeps happening...and we can't see any source as suggested by operators (in fact, they don't offer solutions relevant to the problem). 2. While it caters to a broad range of org sizes and types, I wish that some features were controllable (could turn off) to 'downsize' the software to meet our smaller org needs.*
- ^ *Currently, not having software that considers relationships.*
- ^ *accurate timely data entry. Volunteers unable to log-in/use system; say it's too difficult to use.*
- ^ *admin time*
- ^ *Getting old people to use a computer to input the hours they worked. They don't want to do it!!!*
- ^ *keeping information current*
- ^ *we only capture generic #/hours by project. All volunteer contact/demographic information is lost on a paper form.*
- ^ *Keeping contact details up to date*
- ^ *When donor need report it could not report a good report.*
- ^ *Not having a VMS*
- ^ *keeping on top of the data entry and cleansing by recruiting volunteer programme admin volunteers and maintaining the VP task manual*
- ^ *Databases are only as good as what you put in them - having volunteers put in all the information - or none - such as the requirements for this field in this survey*
- ^ *Not having it on one place*
- ^ *an easy, efficient way to input data - and the time to do it!*
- ^ *Getting volunteers!*
- ^ *No where to put it in this software when captured from volunteers.*
- ^ *Time on my part and getting the volunteers to buy in that this information is IMPORTANT!*
- ^ *Not having a suitable database*
- ^ *Many volunteer managers are not inputting details onto the database*
- ^ *Volunteers sending information back*
- ^ *lack of a decent system - I'll be interested to see the finding of this survey*
- ^ *Getting all volunteers to log onto the website from home to report their volunteer hours (or email me their hours so I can log them).*
- ^ *My biggest challenge is building a culture where volunteers continually interact with web based software to manage their volunteer activity schedule. I may introduce it and they may use it at first but it appears that volunteers then fail to continue to use the system to sign up for re-occurring volunteer activities. They may just show up or may not come back to our organization*
- ^ *Needs to be flexible, but not too overwhelming to use.*
- ^ *Actual time*

- ^ *Getting volunteers to use the time clock. Older volunteers do not like having to memorize a username and password.*
- ^ *keeping up with rapid changes*
- ^ *It's hard to produce meaningful reports.*
- ^ *time: theirs and ours*
- ^ *thinking through ways to customize the software to automatically capture/track new information we deem important to volunteer performance*
- ^ *Having to get necessary info myself*
- ^ *The lack of a good database - no money at present to buy one or get training to use MS Access effectively.*
- ^ *Group volunteers do not fill out an online form for each individual so I don't get to capture their info other than name and address.*
- ^ *People actually entering their full info into the database.*
- ^ *tracking volunteer hours*
- ^ *Volunteers forget to sign in at there individual sights*
- ^ *format of reports*
- ^ *Volunteers need to keep track of their hours and sometimes they dont because they forget or they just don't use the software so I have to do it.*
- ^ *getting them to log their own hours*
- ^ *Volunteer reluctance to engage*
- ^ *time spent inputting the information*
- ^ *Having the time to collect and input that information, and having enough staff trained to input that information.*
- ^ *consistency with tags for information*
- ^ *Getting volunteers to remember to sign on and sign off.*
- ^ *Getting volunteers to record their service hours and submit their service forms once a month - we make this very easy and many of our volunteers are not Internet literate.*
- ^ *That there are so many of them and so very few staff.*
- ^ *Their availability.*
- ^ *Would really like a snap shot view of schedules.*
- ^ *That we have volunteers that stay for a very long time and they forget to update us when their contact info changes. Also the system won't allow PIN numbers to start with zero.*
- ^ *The data (especially words)need to be very consistent. Otherwise, it is useless for queries.*
- ^ *Manually inputting all the hours and the initial inputting of information to set up an individual's record.*
- ^ *Staff resistance and lack of understanding about databases.*
- ^ *Unwilling/unable to go online to fill out information.*
- ^ *The only thing that is hard is in some of the reporting in Volgistics, it won't let you exclude an area from a report.*
- ^ *Incomplete information from previous Database changes*
- ^ *Getting volunteers to enter their hours regularly!*
- ^ *GETTING the information (timesheets, etc.) from the volunteers.*
- ^ *Getting the volunteer or staff person to enter and update information.*
- ^ *Getting them to use the software.*
- ^ *Volgistics is not an easy program to use.*
- ^ *Making sure they sign in AND out*
- ^ *Excel limitations*
- ^ *Volunteers not filling in certain fields*
- ^ *Getting data back from other supervisors about what volunteers have accomplished, when their service ended, etc.*
- ^ *Not having them sign in and log hours themselves. I have to log their hours each month which is time consuming.*

- ^ *Getting them to send the information to us, I.e., how many hrs served, where they are serving.*
- ^ *collecting the data - knowing what to collect in advance of a management requirement (lot of guessing) and then updating all records with this info - new volunteer info good, volunteers have been with us over 50 years and we do not have good information about them*
- ^ *Their skills, work experience & languages spoken.*
- ^ *Lack of a system that tracks off-site volunteer hours and other information.*
- ^ *Getting the volunteers to start using the system themselves*
- ^ *Not enough hours in the day to get everything done*
- ^ *customizing reports is awkward.*
- ^ *consistency amongst multiple users*
- ^ *I'm not sure - getting enough info without making forms etc. too long that they won't fill them out? Or maybe the amount of work it takes to set up the forms and software on my end. Getting the volunteers to show up when they are scheduled for an interview?*
- ^ *Data integrity - what's the true measure of volunteer activity? Determining the outcomes of the data versus just the outputs - how does the software help facilitate positive change"*
- ^ *Funding from employer to purchase new software*
- ^ *It relies on the volunteers entering the information - and they vary greatly in what information they provide.*
- ^ *Getting them to provide COMPLETE information.*
- ^ *Receiving information from the partners who we place volunteers with.*
- ^ *agency employees not requiring various volunteers to input hours and mileage. Remote locations with no internet access.*
- ^ *better tracking*
- ^ *cycles*
- ^ *Getting local managers to do it. If we could encourage volunteers to do it themselves, then the 'paperwork' argument is superseded and we can have automated central checks to flag up good and bad practice.*
- ^ *Making sure that volunteer information is being updated and hours are being recorded correctly.*
- ^ *Rigidity of the system.*
- ^ *getting them to report their hours*
- ^ *Budget for development*
- ^ *Getting them to actually enter their information.*
- ^ *those who don't report their time (mostly board members)*
- ^ *the software doesn't record anymore that the very basic info*
- ^ *the volunteers themselves they need to updates and put in hours which we encourage*
- ^ *Ensuring operational staff who manage and work with volunteers see real benefit in holding the info - so not just seen as a reporting tool to those at central office*
- ^ *Volunteers are managed by many individual staff members who all have different ways of working, many of which are not used to having to store information about volunteer interactions*
- ^ *Capturing is not the problem. The problems are with reporting.*
- ^ *Resourcing to keep information up to date.*
- ^ *we can't get all the data we put in out in reports - there are fields we enter that we cannot manipulate and extract : (Also, not all reports capture the unique ID number of each file. maddening amounts of work ensure when we need to make complex reports.*
- ^ *Ensuring volunteer supervisors submit hours regularly.*
- ^ *We don't capture much information about volunteers, names and contact information and role is about it.*
- ^ *length of time to input data*
- ^ *Birthdates,*
- ^ *Getting the volunteers to turn in their timesheets and keep information up to date*

- ^ *They have no incentive to input their hours or accomplishments regularly, let alone a way to do it on this software - and my tech team doesn't make my needs re: this a priority.*
- ^ *Getting the input from staff who are supervisors of volunteers.*
- ^ *Getting the hours submitted on a timely basis*
- ^ *Our biggest challenge is ensuring that our volunteers understand that entering their data is mandatory.*
- ^ *That volunteers can apply and not completely fill out all the required information*
- ^ *we have volunteers that schedule volunteers so the main volunteer/scheduler often does not provide info back to us in proper format*
- ^ *time in and time out*
- ^ *complication of organization initial data*
- ^ *Contacting them after we have placed them with an organisation. Getting in contact*
- ^ *adding a field is cumbersome and other staff balk about capturing more data*
- ^ *Making sure that my coworkers enter data correctly. A database is only as good as the data it stores!*
- ^ *The software can make it hard to find volunteer groups already entered in*
- ^ *Volunteers remembering to enter their hours by the deadline date.*
- ^ *lack of a good software program*
- ^ *I have to update everything*
- ^ *lack of funds to buy more touch screens and computers for each station*
- ^ *Exit of volunteers. The fact that our client database (that duplicates information on the main database for those volunteers involved with clients) does not talk to the main database, requiring a manual transfer*
- ^ *my ability*
- ^ *Managers do not always forward volunteer information to the volunteer services department in a timely manner.*
- ^ *Consistency of data management*
- ^ *keeping it current*
- ^ *Requiring volunteers to choose to give information about their hours - more or less untrackable otherwise.*
- ^ *Time taken to input data. Monitoring info is stored with the volunteer details- this is not appropriate.*
- ^ *start to use some software about volunteers :-)*
- ^ *Getting all managers to understand the value of capturing the outcomes of volunteer involvement*
- ^ *ensuring accurate data entry and minimizing user error in this area*
- ^ *Having volunteers use the system more fully*
- ^ *Getting them to fill in hours for off site service.*
- ^ *My organization does not have the resources to purchase software.*
- ^ *keeping data up-to-date*
- ^ *accurate, consistent information*
- ^ *Time to input the data and then getting the data from our biggest event so it can be entered.*
- ^ *we are a brokerage agency and so try to make it easy for people to volunteer, which means not asking too many questions*
- ^ *Volunteers who don't enter their own service hours after completing tasks.*
- ^ *Applications! Volgistics has an online app system but then enters each incoming app as a record and charges by the record. That's too much clutter (+/-50% of applicants never wind up volunteering), and gets expensive.*
- ^ *Not user friendly interface with volunteers*
- ^ *Having time to enter the data*
- ^ *reluctance of organizations to have full time paid volunteer managers*
- ^ *Tracking the overall volunteer schedule for our agency*
- ^ *Making sure volunteer enter their hours*
- ^ *Getting volunteers to give feedback*

- ^ *converting and importing volunteer-entered data from cvs files downloaded from zoomerang/the cloud*
- ^ *Irregular/inconsistent shifts make tracking hours difficult.*
- ^ *knowing when they leave to delete them from the system*
- ^ *Making sure that staff are collecting information accurately from volunteers (paper or electronically) Collecting hours especially from highly skilled volunteers. Paper or electronic reporting is a challenge*
- ^ *I want to SIMPLY be able to email any of them or all of them!*
- ^ *Asking the right questions (especially about demographics)*
- ^ *I am currently in the process of encouraging Shelter to establish vol mgmt software. It is currently following the organization's procurement process. We currently use Excel, which is time consuming, labor intensive and doesn't enable the report writing we need*
- ^ *getting them to input*

The last question asked was:

Any other comments you have about how your organization tracks information from or about volunteers, what tools you wish you had, etc.

With a great deal of time, we could look through the survey and find out which software each of these respondents reported using. However, because of time constraints, we do not have time to manually go through the data to glean this. We also do not have time to group these reports into categories. We welcome the efforts of other researchers to do so and report back:

- ^ *Would like to be able to have volunteers sign up online and have info automatically "dump" into database and have the ability to integrate information for all special events and service projects.*
- ^ *I believe our non profit is one of the first non-profit clients Samaritan has taken on and I am legitimately impressed with how much their team has sincerely learned about our program/process in order to help customize Samaritan to our needs. There are functions I would like to see, but I feel confident that Samaritan is working on them.*
- ^ *The previous version had more flexibility. To be able to find a software that manages event AND long term volunteers easily.*
- ^ *Would like to implement parts of <http://www.gbowden.com/downloads/VolunteerEntityRel.xls>*
- ^ *In our project we have had to develop a range of tools for capturing information from across a region with little resource. As a result we use a variety of methods and tools and a lot of time is spent on collating data from various sources.*
- ^ *I am very happy with our current software since I have used Raiser's Edge for the past 12 years and it is AWFUL for tracking volunteers. Samaritan has the best customer support. They are very responsive and helpful and the product works very well. I do wish we could afford to have e-Coordinator at all 18 locations, but for cost reasons we only have 1 license.*
- ^ *Have one program that keeps track of volunteer info, hours, interests AND can communicate with volunteers at the same time. Needs to be web based, too.*
- ^ *We are exploring the possibility of adapting SharePoint and/or Tessitura to aid in tracking volunteers since my organization already uses these two software programs for other purposes.*
- ^ *Automatic notification, "alert" of completed milestone hours. Notification if someone didn't come in for their shift.*
- ^ *this is the first program we have discovered that has the features we have been seeking in terms of accountability and tracking*
- ^ *Easy way to track volunteers who participate in 1-day service projects; i.e. painting, landscaping, cleanups, etc. Simplified reporting. Reporting system is way too complex.*
- ^ *I was able to launch Raiser's Edge's volunteer module from scratch, so I am very pleased with how we have set up and adjusted it to do just what we wanted, but I think it would be overwhelming if not impossible to update or change the system at this point if someone new came in.*
- ^ *I find the ROVIR system to be a very easy tool for helping to track volunteer hours.*
- ^ *CRM*
- ^ *I like that this software is NOT on a cloud format. That was a major factor in picking ROVIR, and I couldn't be*

happier with our choice.

- ^ *We really wish we could send mass texts.*
- ^ *Like to have 10 or 12 laptops for having volunteers input own data.*
- ^ *Facebook and YouTube*
- ^ *Sign in of multiple volunteers at a single event warrants an electronic touch screen that has scheduled list of participants so "start and stop time" can be efficiently entered.*
- ^ *If there was a screen saying who will be arriving today. They could touch their name or click on it and their time would begin instead of each having to log in separately to the time clock feature.*
- ^ *I wish I had more money in my budget to look at other programs.*
- ^ *We are a specialized Law enforcement Volunteer group. This software is aimed at the general Volunteer population might be a good thing if some variance were available for specific types of volunteer groups.*
- ^ *software is secure but clumsy. Difficult to use. Requires using multiple tabs & frequent scrolling to do simple tasks.*
- ^ *We currently use MS Excel to record Volunteer personal details, role allocated, start date, LOTE, etc and a simple table in a MS Word document represents our roster...it is 15 pages long! We need help!*
- ^ *We have 3 databases and are looking to merge them. We are currently exploring having an HE student take this on as a placement to offer suggestions of ways that we could make this happen.*
- ^ *I'm working on re-introducing the software so that staff can make use of it instead of having multiple Word and Excel files for volunteer information.*
- ^ *During the holiday season, our office lists approx. 75 different volunteer activities, each at a different location, each has an 6 week/12 hour per day schedule with 2 hour shifts. Our volunteers can be confused by the online sign-in process, they often don't realize the system needs them to confirm their shifts. Scheduling groups and tracking those numbers is very difficult. Usually we have a single contact but we know a large group has volunteered. I'd like a function that would allow me to list a number of volunteers under a single name. Finally, our volunteer software has no good way to schedule our events which require over 100 volunteers to be at a single location in a single day. Again, this is largely due to an inadequate understanding of groups wanting to volunteer together. The way I'm forced to configure my activity results in a difficult online process for the volunteer (ie: finding an open shift, finding a shift with multi opening for a group to sign up for). The fragmented way I'm forced create my activity also makes it impossible for me to view a master list of unclaimed volunteer shifts.*
- ^ *Some important data has to be collected manually, e.g. # of vols enquiries, source of enquiries; vols within each opportunity that then allows me to add up, e.g how many Home Library Service vols are in such-and-such library and how many vols are working within the Museum service. i'd like to be able to cross reference vols #s with demographic info, such as how many retired vols are in the library Service, how many under 25 vols are there at museums?*
- ^ *Ability to enter data on screen and then print for the volunteer to sign rather than starting with a paper copy*
- ^ *I am constantly pushing to collect data but I work over 7 sites and it is hard to get staff support.*
- ^ *We ideally should have as mentioned before an intuitive piece of software that would have a wide range of functionality that not only records volunteering information but can be used to run reports to review how we are doing and to help us plan how best to support our volunteers*
- ^ *Need new software that is not expensive that can track volunteers skills, hours, accomplishments*
- ^ *tools majorly designed for monitoring and evaluation of projects, programs and staffs/volunteers*
- ^ *integrating and improving bit by bit*
- ^ *LET THERE BE MORE SIMPLE FOR SEMI EDUCATED*
- ^ *A very bureaucratic solution.*
- ^ *In order to effectively track volunteers and do anything beyond basic #/hours per project we need to move to a management software.*
- ^ *I wish we had a database that would let us manage volunteer data - we use excel spreadsheets. Our organization is looking for a database that will allow us to manage volunteer data, as well as contact and clients information.*
- ^ *Please suggest options for VMSs that can manage volunteers on a project base (one-offs) as well as on role base (scheduling).*
- ^ *Ability to customize a schedule to a look that works for us - it takes hours of editing each week to make the schedule easy for volunteers to read- the export moves too much over - Having the ability to create a template on the system that data could be exported to would save time. Email functions in VI are excellent.*

- ^ I've answered these questions based on my understanding of how the system will meet our needs
- ^ maybe videos tutorials. And a general starting template for many of the volunteer activities that the organization I work offers to the community. Creating more consistency and clarity to volunteer intake procedures.
- ^ Most of the databases I've seen are out of our price range. Needs to be either platform independent, or cloud - I use Linux, most volunteers use Windows, so it needs to be usable on both platforms (and maybe Mac too!)
- ^ A scanner for cards or IDs so volunteers could clock in and out would be a huge help.
- ^ When I run reports, It shows how many individuals volunteered in a given period of time. For statistics, i need to know how many shifts were volunteered. (for example, if John and Judy volunteered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, according to the way stats are done at my company, that would be six volunteers)
- ^ We wanted a volunteer management database that our four distinct volunteer programs in the agency could modify for their individual program needs.
- ^ we are not at the level where we would seriously think about it yet. This might change in the future, if we involve more volunteers and assign more responsible tasks to them
- ^ quick response when emailing about problems, constant update based on suggestions received
- ^ America Learns is a fantastic network. Gary, the Founder and CEO, is amazing and always there when needed. The level of customer service is by far the best I have ever experienced. I would recommend America Learns to any volunteer organization that needs to track all of the amazing things that volunteers accomplish.
- ^ We use Raiser's Edge so info is stored with donor info. A gift is a gift is a gift.
- ^ It would be better if I had the ability to edit the software to suit my needs more. I can edit the 'custom fields' section very extensively, but I cannot edit the other sections. It would also be nice if I could edit what categories we can search for in the search fields, so that we could eliminate the unnecessary ones.
- ^ I work for an international organization, and keep local information onsite sharing with staff when requested. It would be advantageous to connect this organization's volunteer information across the organization as a whole.
- ^ I did not take the training on creating reports (Crystal Report) & do not have time to learn so have been exporting the data onto excel to create my reports.
- ^ I like other programs SO MUCH better, but they are cost prohibitive.
- ^ Background Check verification is being added. Creating ease for people to update their info without risk to others info.
- ^ Volunteer IMPACT is wonderful, and I encourage many to at least do a trail run with it! I'm truly a satisfied customer!
- ^ resistance to change has seen poor implementation of volunteer entry - management support would help - easy training programs to roll out would be good
- ^ I'd like a way to send an email to all of our volunteers easily, a way to get background check results back more quickly, and a way to run reports about a variety of things -- not just hours.
- ^ Volgistics was a BEAR to set up. We had great difficulty with the customization we needed, and the import. In hindsight it would have been well worth our money to pay for this customization through volunteer squared.
- ^ Mostly just wish the software was more intuitive and flexible, that the message functions were better, and that supervisors were able to schedule volunteers (rather than having to get me to do it). See my answer to #19
- ^ Volunteer Reporter gets better with each year we use it.
- ^ Samaritan is extremely easy to work with and meets every request quickly and efficiently.
- ^ poor
- ^ Having a good tool to track volunteer opportunities and those who want to help is a great tool, but it doesn't make great volunteers in and of itself.
- ^ Our organization is primarily concerned with cost and with ease of use - we do not have a big budget to spend on purchasing expensive programs, nor the time to learn complicated new systems.
- ^ Difficult to get top level buy-in that investment will improve engagement and provide other opportunities across the business - want us to use what we have.
- ^ right now volunteers sign in and out at a kiosk or online. I wish we had a scanner that would scan in who they are and what position they are volunteering
- ^ Monetary constraints does not put this high on the agenda of the organization. Though, with better online processes, we could be far more efficient and effective in communicating with our volunteers.
- ^ Wish we had an interface between our volunteer database (volgistics) and donor/member database (raisers edge)

- ^ software isn't currently suitable for volunteers. Changes are underway. It is a HR software - more suited to paid staff
- ^ skills bank
- ^ If it's working for the local user then ok - not a priority to make sure fit for future - though this is now changing!
- ^ More sophisticated reporting. More sophisticated email tool that would let us tailor who receives each email.
- ^ Doing a comparison now w/Samaritan software and Volunteer2.
- ^ We have a very complex set of data management systems. We've actually had a team of pro bono volunteers assess our current data systems to determine how we might streamline. We are primarily a fundraising organization that houses a volunteer center. We engage 1000+ volunteer pretty effectively, but our volunteer engagement efforts are very decentralized.
- ^ something very simple for both those creating the activity to be tracked and those fill in the data, would like it to keep a running tab if you will of a specific employee so hey could just add new activity and hours instead of repeating data already in the system
- ^ We hope to eventually be able to purchase VSysOne
- ^ Prior to using America Learns volunteer tracking and reporting was a huge challenge. America Learns has improved the quality and quantity of the information we need. We can customize to fit our program needs and it is easy for the volunteers to access and complete reports.
- ^ I would like to have a tracking program designed for volunteer management and tracking with specially designed reports and templates.
- ^ We're still developing how we and our AmeriCorps service members can track volunteers but as of right now, all of our needs are met.
- ^ We are in the middle of a software search at the moment.
- ^ I strongly recommend that any organization interested in not just collecting data about volunteers, but using data to constantly measure and increase on-the-ground performance evaluate the America Learns Network.
- ^ See this link: <http://perfectforms.com/blog/2010/05/>
- ^ Would like software that would allow volunteers to sign up on their own.
- ^ I wish it were easier to track whether volunteers were actually volunteering with organizations - we're very reliant on them to maintain their records on our system.
- ^ I wish I had a tool that was specifically developed for managing volunteers. Unfortunately in a large organization standardization is everything
- ^ The biggest challenge to effective use of the database is getting program staff to see the importance of tracking volunteers at several levels - within programs, departments and across the wider organisation.
- ^ Better blast email. We export into outlook, would be easiest to do from one program.
- ^ Am a huge fan of VolunteerSpot. We've only had minor glitches in two years and their service and response time was amazing - much better than the expensive proprietary tool we used before. VolunteerSpot is free, but we upgrade to their premium service for simpler hours tracking and extra registration fields.
- ^ I wish people could sign up online and the information would go directly into the database!
- ^ Needs to be VERY user friendly for both volunteers and administrators
- ^ Requires full-time employee to manage all of our IT needs, and most of that time is spent managing the database system. Adequate training, accurate data entry in a timely manner and ongoing data management is time-consuming and a challenge.
- ^ I wish there was a system that could track all volunteers, schedules, interests/skills, take input from staff or the individual volunteers, where volunteers could self schedule, and that would allow me to communicate with volunteers via email/facebook/sms (especially reminders), and that volunteers could use to log their own hours at the time of service. It would be great if I could send my customized application to them and have it seamlessly entered into the system, with the option for application input approval. Seamlessness is key.
- ^ We concurrently track volunteers' monetary and in-kind donations and use our database to send targeting communications to select cohorts, such as volunteers who do/don't donate and donors who do/don't volunteer.
- ^ We have recently moved the data to a server in another town but the server ain't big enough to allow us on it more than one at a time!
- ^ We have a full time IT person to support this program, which is the only reason it works so well. Our Board is currently researching different programs to make sure Enterprise is the correct one for us.

Additional author commentary about this data:

The purpose of the survey was to gather some basic data that might help organizations that involve volunteers to make better-informed decisions when choosing software, and to help software designers to understand the needs of those organizations. We also wanted to get a sense of what organizations were thinking about volunteer management software. We believe this survey achieved those goals.

Some things we wished we had asked in the survey:

- We wished we had asked respondents to say what role they held at the organization they were writing about. We chose wording in their messaging that they hoped would reach those who might not identify as volunteer managers, but who do recruit and/or support volunteers, such as fundraising staff, reception staff, office managers, and volunteers themselves. However, because we did not ask the question, we don't know how successful our effort was.
- We wished we had asked respondents if the maker of the software they are using to track and manage volunteers had ever asked for their feedback, and how often this feedback had been asked for.
- We wished we had asked respondents if they ever talk about how they are using software in blogs or on any online forum, if so – why?, and if not – why not?
- As noted earlier, many people noted that they did not choose the software they were using, that it was provided or required to be used by a headquarters, or that it was chosen by their predecessor. About half a dozen responses said they were "told to use it". We wished we had asked respondents if they they had participated in the decision-making process regarding software adoption.

We received several emails during and after the survey from people saying they wanted to use the survey results to find the best software package for tracking and managing volunteers.

We don't believe our survey answered that question. We suspect that many organizations will be disappointed that this survey did not provide that information. But we don't believe any survey can determine what the best software package is for every organization, or even most organizations; how organizations involve volunteers, what information they need about those volunteers, and what kinds of activities those volunteers do varies hugely among organizations. Also, different people like different features; a software loved by one organization may be loathed by another.

NEXT STEPS/RECOMMENDATIONS

We have no immediate plans to engage in further research activities, in terms of user surveys, regarding software used to track and manage volunteers. However, they strongly encourage other researchers to undertake such activities in the future.

The author's welcome comments, observations and additional evaluation of the data by others regarding this data. Please contact us direct and/or post links to such to:

<http://coyoteblog.posterous.com/results-of-survey-re-volunteer-management-sof>

and/or

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ukvpms/>

If you blog about this survey with your own observations/analysis about the data, please post links to your blog at either of the addresses above or contact us directly.

Based on the feedback from this survey, the consultants recommend for software designers:

- ⤴ You should have a forum where users can talk about their experience with your software and ask each other questions. This would allow users to learn from each other, and for you to see what their frequently asked questions and needs are.
- ⤴ You should survey your users regarding their satisfaction with your product and what other software they use to manage volunteers – if you aren't already.

For organizations, the consultants recommend:

- ⤴ Talk more about your experiences with whatever tools you are using to track and support volunteers. Do this via blogs, via sites like the community forum of TechSoup, and via whatever forum the software company provides. Organizations are hungry for advice from actual users of software; that advice can happen only if you all share more with each other.
- ⤴ Encourage the associations you are a part of to talk about tech tools to track and support volunteers. There are associations for managers of volunteers, for human resources managers, for fundraising staff, and for organizations based on their mission-focus (museums, animal shelters, education, etc.); make sure discussions about volunteer management software are a part of the conferences, online discussions and resources they are producing.
- ⤴ Talk to those that produce software directly; you don't have to wait for a survey to share your feedback with them.

Suggestions future researchers:

- ⤴ Several weeks need to be devoted to identifying and approaching appropriate associations and umbrella groups for nonprofit organizations, NGOs, charities, religious organizations, universities, and other organizations that involve volunteers. This would help garner a greater number of responses.
- ⤴ A postal mailing to nonprofit associations, charitable associations, etc., would help to garner even more respondents, as not everyone monitors the Internet as regularly as the respondents in this survey.
- ⤴ An international focus would help provide an even clearer picture of how organizations are using tech tools to track and manage volunteers.

CONSULTANT BIOGRAPHIES

Jayne Cravens is an internationally-recognized trainer, researcher and consultant. Her work is focused on communications, volunteer involvement, community engagement, and management for nonprofits, NGOs, and government initiatives. She is a pioneer regarding the research, promotion and practice of virtual volunteering, including virtual teams, microvolunteering and crowdsourcing, and she is a veteran manager of various local and international initiatives. Jayne became active online in 1993, and she created one of the first web sites focused on helping to build the capacity of nonprofits to use the Internet. She has been interviewed for and quoted in articles in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and the Associated Press, as well as for reports by CNN, Deutsche Well, the BBC, and various local radio stations, TV stations and blogs. Resources from her web site, www.coyotecomunications.com, are frequently cited in reports and articles by a variety of organizations, online and in-print. Women's empowerment and women's full access to employment and education options remains a cross-cutting theme in all of her work. Jayne received her BA in Journalism from Western Kentucky University and her Master's degree in Development Management from Open University in the U.K. A native of Kentucky, she has worked for the United Nations, lived in Germany and Afghanistan, and visited more than 30 countries, many of them by motorcycle. At the time of this report's publication, she is based near Portland, Oregon in the USA.

Rob Jackson has worked in the volunteering movement since July 1994, during which time he has led and managed volunteers and volunteer programmes in education, advice, fundraising and children's services settings at local, regional and national levels. In April 2005 Rob joined Volunteering England (www.volunteering.org.uk). During his six years there, most of which he spend as Director of Development and Innovation, Rob successfully generated over £1million of income, led a merger with Student Volunteering England and oversaw the delivery of a number of strategic development projects in the volunteering field. Rob also provided the secretariat to the ground breaking Volunteer Rights Inquiry (www.volunteering.org.uk/3rpromise). Rob has strong links with the fundraising world, including a period working as Head of Fundraising Strategy for the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) and chairing the Institute of Fundraising working party that developed the UK's first code of good practice on volunteer fundraising. Rob now runs his own business, Rob Jackson Consulting Ltd (www.robjacksonconsulting.com), providing consultancy and training services on a range of topics, with strategic volunteer engagement remaining at the core of his work. Rob writes, speaks and trains management internationally and is an active volunteer, serving as: chair of governors at his local primary school; as founder and moderator of UKVPMs (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UKVPMs>), the first email networking resource for UK based Volunteer Programme Managers; and as a member of the editorial team for www.e-volunteerism.com, an international journal on volunteering issues.

To comment on or to discuss this report in public, please post your comments to:
<http://coyoteblog.posterous.com/results-of-survey-re-volunteer-management-sof>
and/or
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ukvpms/>

Private comments/analysis can be sent directly to Jayne and Rob.

If you blog about this survey with your own observations/analysis about the data, please post links to your blog at either of the addresses above or contact us directly.

Jayne Cravens

<http://www.coyotecomunications.com>

On Twitter: @jcravens42

jc@coyotecomunications.com

Rob Jackson

<http://www.robjacksonconsulting.com/>

On Twitter:

rob@robjacksonconsulting.com