



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

Americans under age 40 are as likely to donate to Japan disaster relief through electronic means as traditional means like the phone or postal mail

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<http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Japan-donations.aspx>

Top finding

In a striking shift in charitable donations methods, Americans under age 40 are now just as likely to give donations to disaster relief through digital means as they are through traditional means.

In the immediate aftermath of the Japan earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear plant crisis, some 12% of Americans between ages 18 and 39 say they donated money to relief via the internet or their cell phone. Another 12% in that age group say they gave through traditional means such as over the phone, in person, or by postal mail.

That is a notable jump in the proportion of under-40 Americans who gave digitally in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami. At that time, 5% of Americans ages 18-39 donated to relief efforts and 20% donated via traditional means.

Older Americans are also more likely than in the past to give to disaster relief efforts via electronic means, but they still prefer traditional methods of giving.

The overall donations patterns to relief efforts: Past and present

In the first days after the Japanese disaster, 21% of Americans say they have made a donation to help those affected by the earthquake and tsunami. Another 24% say they plan to make a donation.

More than a third of those who have already donated (36%) say they made their contribution digitally – online, through text messages or e-mail. Among those younger than 40, about as many have donated digitally as through more traditional methods.

One in five report making donation to Japan disaster relief

| | Indian Ocean Jan 2005 | Katrina Sep 2005 | Haiti Jan 2010 | Haiti Feb 2010 | Japan Mar 2011 |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Made donation? | % | % | % | % | % |
| Yes, made donation | 30 | 56 | 18 | 52 | 21 |
| Planning to donate | 30 | 28 | 30 | 12 | 24 |
| Don't plan to donate now | 37 | 15 | 46 | 35 | 53 |
| Don't know/Refused (Vol.) | 3 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 3 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Survey followed event by: | 10-14 days | 8-9 days | 2-5 days | 22-28 days | 6-9 days |

Source: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press and the Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, March 17-20, 2011. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Less than a week after the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, 48% said they either had (18%) or planned (30%) to make a donation to relief efforts there. But the number who actually donated rose quickly in the weeks following the quake. By early February, more than half (52%) said they had made a donation and another 12% said they planned to do so.

Many donations now given online or by text message

| | % of all adults | % of adults who donated |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Donated money | 21 | 100 |
| Traditional donations (NET) | 11 | 55 |
| In person | 9 | 45 |
| Over the telephone | 1 | 5 |
| Through the mail | 1 | 5 |
| Digital donations (NET) | 8 | 36 |
| On the internet | 5 | 23 |
| By text message | 2 | 9 |
| By email | 1 | 4 |
| Other/Don't know | 2 | 10 |
| No donation so far | 77 | -- |
| Don't know/Refused | 3 | -- |
| | 100 | 100 |
| | <i>N</i> | |
| | 1,004 | 195 |

Source: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press and the Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, March 17-20, 2011. Figures may not add to totals because multiple responses were allowed, and some volunteered other means of donations.

Among those who gave, donations made through traditional methods – in person, over the telephone or by mail – are still more popular than donating digitally: 11% of the public (55% of those who have made a donation) have given to the Japan relief effort through traditional means, compared with 8% (36% of those who have made a donation) who have done so digitally (on the internet, by text message or via email). The balance between donations made traditionally and digitally was similar in the immediate aftermath of the Haiti earthquake.

Still, digital donations have grown in popularity in recent years. Six years ago, just after the deadly Indian Ocean tsunami, the balance tilted much more heavily toward traditional giving: 25% of the public said they had given by tradition means, while 4% said they had given digitally.

The change is most striking among younger people. Currently, those under 40 are just as likely to say they donated through traditional or digital means (12% each). Following the Indian Ocean tsunami, 20% said they had donated traditionally, while 5% said they had donated digitally.

Digital giving now more popular, especially among the young

| | Total | 18-39 | 40-64 | 65+ |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Japan (2011) | % | % | % | % |
| Donated money | 21 | 26 | 19 | 15 |
| Traditionally | 11 | 12 | 11 | 11 |
| Digitally | 7 | 12 | 6 | 2 |
| Other/DK | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| | <i>N= 1,004</i> | <i>227</i> | <i>487</i> | <i>260</i> |

| Indian Ocean (2005) | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Donated money | 30 | 26 | 35 | 28 |
| Traditionally | 25 | 20 | 29 | 27 |
| Digitally | 4 | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| Other/DK | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | <i>N= 1,503</i> | <i>458</i> | <i>757</i> | <i>378</i> |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Increase in digital | +3 | +7 | +1 | +1 |
|---------------------|----|----|----|----|

Source: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press and the Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, March 17-20, 2011. Figures may not add to totals because multiple responses were allowed, and some volunteered other means of donations.

Digital giving is increasingly popular among college graduates

Digital giving is also becoming more popular among college graduates. Following the Indian Ocean tsunami, 33% of college graduates said they had donated traditionally, while 10% said they had donated digitally.

Currently, giving to Japan among college graduates is evenly split between digital donations (12%) and traditional donations (14%).

Digital giving more popular among college graduates

| | Total | <College Grad | College Grad+ |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Japan (2011) | % | % | % |
| Donated money | 21 | 17 | 30 |
| Traditionally | 11 | 11 | 13 |
| Digitally | 7 | 4 | 15 |
| Other/DK | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| | <i>N= 1,004</i> | <i>648</i> | <i>350</i> |
| Indian Ocean (2005) | | | |
| Donated money | 30 | 26 | 42 |
| Traditionally | 25 | 23 | 33 |
| Digitally | 4 | 2 | 10 |
| Other/DK | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | <i>N= 1,503</i> | <i>965</i> | <i>532</i> |
| Increase in digital | +3 | +2 | +5 |

Source: Pew Research Center for the People & the Press and the Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, March 17-20, 2011. Figures may not add to totals because multiple responses were allowed, and some volunteered other means of donations.

Note: Digital donations in 2005 only include internet donations. Digital donations in 2011 include internet and text donations.

About the News Interest Index

Data for this report were gathered as part of the Pew Research Center's *News Interest Index*. The *News Interest Index* is a weekly survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press aimed at gauging the public's interest in and reaction to major news events. This project has been undertaken in conjunction with the Project for Excellence in Journalism's *News Coverage Index*, an ongoing content analysis of the news. The News Coverage Index catalogues the news from top news organizations across five major sectors of the media: newspapers, network television, cable television, radio and the internet. Each week (from Monday through Sunday) PEJ compiles this data to identify the top stories for the week. (For more information about the Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, go to www.journalism.org.) The News Interest Index survey collects data from Thursday through Sunday to gauge public interest in the most covered stories of the week.

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted March 17-20 among a national sample of 1,004 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (673 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 331 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 144 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample is also weighted to match current patterns of telephone status based on extrapolations from the 2010 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

| Group | Sample Size | Plus or minus ... |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Total sample | 1,004 | 4.0 percentage points |
| 18-39 | 227 | 8.0 percentage points |
| 40-64 | 487 | 5.5 percentage points |
| 65+ | 260 | 7.5 percentage points |

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER NEWS INTEREST INDEX
MARCH 17-20, 2011 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,004

ASK ALL:

PEW.4 Have you or anyone in your household made a donation to help those affected by the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, are you planning to do so, or is this something you don't think you will do right now?

TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:

| | | <i>Earthquake in Haiti</i> | <i>Hurricane Katrina</i> | <i>Earthquake/ Tsunami in Indian Ocean</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Mar 17-20 | | Feb 3-9 | Jan 14-17 | Sept 6-7 |
| <u>2011</u> | | <u>2010</u> | <u>2010</u> | <u>2005</u> |
| 21 | Yes, have made a donation | 52 | 18 | 56 |
| 24 | Planning to do so | 12 | 30 | 28 |
| 53 | No, don't think will donate right now | 35 | 46 | 15 |
| 3 | Don't know/Refused (VOL.) | 1 | 6 | 1 |

ASK IF HAVE DONATED OR PLAN TO (1,2 IN PEW4):

PEW.5 **[If PEW.4=1: Did you donate][If PEW.4=2: And if you make a donation, do you think you will donate] [READ AND RANDOMIZE; MULTI-PUNCH, ENTER ALL ANSWERS GIVEN; DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL]**

BASED ON THOSE WHO HAVE DONATED [N=195]

| | | <i>Earthquake in Haiti</i> | <i>Earthquake/Tsunami in Indian Ocean</i> |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Mar 17-20 | | Jan 14-17 | Jan 5-9 |
| <u>2011</u> | | <u>2010</u> | <u>2005</u> ¹ |
| 45 | In person such as at church | 39 | 59 |
| 23 | On the internet | 23 | 15 |
| 9 | By text message | 14 | -- |
| 5 | Through the mail | 5 | 17 |
| 5 | Over the telephone | 12 | 10 |
| 4 | By e-mail | 5 | -- |
| 6 | Other (VOL.) | 2 | 1 |
| 4 | Don't know/Refused (VOL.) | 3 | 2 |

¹ In January 2005, the question did not ask about making donations by email or text message and the response option on making a contribution in person did not explicitly ask, "such as at church."

BASED ON THOSE WHO PLAN TO DONATE [N=254]

TREND FOR COMPARISON:

Earthquake in Haiti

| Mar 17-20 <u>2011</u> | | Jan 14-17 <u>2010</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 40 | In person such as at church | 51 |
| 25 | On the internet | 17 |
| 10 | Through the mail | 17 |
| 6 | Over the telephone | 8 |
| 4 | By e-mail | 3 |
| 4 | By text message | 6 |
| 4 | Other (VOL.) | 1 |
| 7 | Don't know/Refused (VOL.) | 4 |