

# Software4Nonprofits' DONATION

Designed to track donors and donations and  
issue charitable receipts

by Steve Hewitt

**S**ome software programs spring onto the market, while others start as a seed and grow over time. Software4Nonprofits' program DONATION is one of those programs that started small and has grown over time. Dan Cooperstock is the creator of DONATION, and he created it out of a need in 1994 when he was serving as Treasurer of his Quaker Meeting's Finance Committee. As treasurer, he was introduced to a commercial donation-tracking package that they were presently using, but he found himself frustrated by several drawbacks. He approached the company and asked for some improvements but was frustrated that they were never made. He asked other non-profits about their software packages but didn't find anyone completely satisfied. Since he also had programming background, he decided to create his own program.

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That first program was written in DOS. In 1998 when Dan rewrote DONATION as a Windows program, he started giving it away on the [www.freedonationsoftware.org](http://www.freedonationsoftware.org) website. At the time, Dan offered the program for free (donations were welcome) because he wanted to help smaller churches that couldn't afford a commercial package, and he didn't want a side business while he still worked fulltime.

This year, 2007, Dan started a complete rewrite of DONATION in order to add many long-requested features. He also decided that he could best serve the non-profit sector by working full-time on DONATION and would be able to provide even better support to his customers. Obviously, the first step was to change the domain from [freedonationsoftware.com](http://freedonationsoftware.com) to [www.software4nonprofits.com](http://www.software4nonprofits.com). However, Dan still offers DONATION on a shareware basis. Shareware in this case means you get to try a demo version for free after registering, but you must pay if you decide to continue using the program.

## Why Check Out DONATION?

First of all, I love the fact that Dan makes it clear exactly what he is providing. DONATION is primarily for tracking charitable donors and donations and issuing receipts. Few sites go out of their way to make it

clear as to what their product provides and what it doesn't. Dan tells you clearly on his site what DONATION will not do. I find that kind of honesty incredible. DONATION does not have special features for tracking your members, it doesn't pretend to be a Church Management Software package and Dan does not intend to turn DONATION into a full accounting system. In the feature list on the DONATION website, Dan states, "DONATION is best suited to situations with about 2,000 or fewer donors because of the way it organizes its data. Also, larger organizations might want a more full-featured and customizable program. Technically, however, it can store an unlimited number of donors." You have to love Dan's desire to make sure you understand what you are getting with DONATION. I have to give

him one of the highest “truth in advertising” ratings I have seen in many years. The fact is, DONATION fits a niche in the market by providing its needed services at a great price with a try-it-before-you-buy offer that is going to be a hit for a lot of non-profits.

Second, for what DONATION does provide, they have many features. For a complete list of features, visit <http://www.software4nonprofits.com/features.htm>.


However, here are some of the features I like most!

- Record names, addresses and phone numbers of donors. Use member or envelope numbers, if desired.
- Specify various categories of donor and donation.
- Record 3 user-specifiable fields about donors, plus a virtually unlimited-length comments field.
- Record an annual pledge amount for each donor.
- Record dates, amounts, donation categories and check numbers for individual donations.
- Use a special data entry form to speed entry of weekly collections for churches.
- Use an optional limited-entry password for volunteers to do entry without necessarily seeing full details on donors or donation history.
- Print over 30 different reports on donors, donations, receipts and categories.
- Save any report to various exported file formats, such as Excel or CSV (comma-separated value).
- Create mail merge letters for one, all or some donors
- Print numbered charitable receipts in a simple standardized format, plus mailing labels for those receipts
- Select different receipt formats for users in the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, and other countries.
- Print duplicate receipts (e.g. if someone loses one).
- Generate receipts in a format that you design, using the mail merge features.
- DONATION has context-sensitive help and a full manual online.
- Uses a powerful Sybase Adaptive Server Anywhere database, and thus the data can be accessed for other purposes (with appropriate tools).
- Has a simple option to backup all of your data to diskettes, your hard drive, or elsewhere (e.g. a writeable CD or USB memory key).
- Can be used to store donations for multiple organizations on the same computer.

Third, DONATION is easy to use. When you visit their site, be sure to read all of the testimonials posted. One of the common threads you see throughout the comments is that DONATION is simple to use, has an easy learning curve, and most state they were able to begin data entry immediately after installation.

## Conclusion

How can you go wrong by giving DONATION a try? If you need a simple program that allows you to manage the task of recording donations for your non-profit organization, visit [www.software4nonprofits.com](http://www.software4nonprofits.com) and give DONATION a try. Remember, you can download it and give it a test run before you have to commit to purchasing the product. Who could ask for a better deal? What is the price? DONATION is free for very small charities (under specified conditions), \$50-\$100 for the rest, depending on the number of donors!



**DONATION: Simple. Powerful. All you need.**

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DONATION is an affordable program used to track donors and donations and issue receipts, for churches or charities. It has over 4,000 registered users. It is very user-friendly and easy to learn, and has full documentation and great technical support. For more information, or to download your **FREE** Evaluation copy, go to:  
[www.software4nonprofits.com/ccmag](http://www.software4nonprofits.com/ccmag)

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