
How to Build a Business Case for Volunteer Management Software

A practical guide for volunteer managers in Australia and New Zealand

When you invest in your volunteers, you amplify your impact and unlock greater possibilities.

About this guide

This guide helps volunteer managers in Australia and New Zealand build a business case for volunteer management software (VMS). Learn why investing in a VMS matters in 2026, how to assess your organisation's digital readiness, calculate return on investment (ROI), compare providers and successfully implement a new system.

Each chapter ends with a checklist, and free worksheets are linked throughout so you can take your business case from first draft to leadership sign-off.

DEFINITION

What is volunteer management software?

Volunteer management software (VMS) is a platform that manages the full volunteer lifecycle in one place: recruitment, onboarding, screening and compliance, training, rostering, communication, recognition and impact reporting. It replaces spreadsheets, email chains and disconnected tools with a single source of truth for volunteers and the staff who coordinate them.



At a glance

01

**Costs are
outpacing revenue.**

Australian charities' expenses grew 8.6% in the latest reporting period, faster than revenue at 7.5%. Admin time is one of the few costs you can [\[1\]](#) directly reduce.

02

**Volunteer numbers
are growing.**

Registered charities reported 3.9 million volunteers, the highest count on record, with 2.5 volunteers for every paid employee. More volunteers [\[1\]](#) means more coordination.

03

**Spreadsheets are a
privacy risk.**

Human error caused 37% of data breaches notified to Australia's privacy regulator in the first half of 2025. [\[2\]](#)

04

ROI wins the room.

Put a dollar value on the hours your team spends on manual tasks and your business case speaks the language leadership and finance already use.

05

**Rollout matters as
much as selection.**

A stakeholder map and a communication plan that starts eight to ten weeks before launch reduce resistance and speed up adoption.



[\[1\]](#) ACNC, Australian Charities Report 12th edition, 2026.

[\[2\]](#) OAIC, Notifiable Data Breaches statistics, January to June 2025.

Foreword

Costs are rising, resources are stretched and demand for services keeps growing.

Today's volunteers expect the same experience from you that they get from their favourite apps and online services: quick sign-up, clear communication, personalised updates and everything at their fingertips on mobile.

That shift puts pressure on every part of your organisation, from operations and IT to communications, fundraising and frontline service delivery. It widens the skills gap and makes it more urgent to adapt so you stay relevant and effective.

Why we created this guide

At Rosterfy, we've supported hundreds of organisations through this change, from global sporting events with thousands of volunteers to national charities running programs across dozens of sites.

We believe the future of volunteering is connected, digital and impact-driven, and that future is already here. Whether you're exploring volunteer management software for the first time or looking to scale the system you have, this guide walks you through every step: making the case for change, assessing your readiness, choosing the right technology and embedding it in a way that sticks.

Digital transformation doesn't mean losing the human touch. It means giving your people the tools to do more, with less, and do it better.

Let's get started.

 **The Rosterfy Team**

01

CHAPTER 1

Build your case for change

Why do volunteer programs need a business case for change?

A business case turns day-to-day frustrations into a decision leadership can approve. You may already feel the pressure of rising demand, tighter budgets and higher volunteer expectations, but others in your organisation may not. Clearly explaining why change is needed, what it costs to stand still and what success looks like is the first step in bringing people with you.

What is driving the need for change in 2026?

1 Costs are rising faster than revenue

Australian charities generated \$239 billion in revenue in the latest reporting period, up 7.5%. Expenses rose even faster, up 8.6% to \$231 billion, as wages, insurance and utilities climbed and more people turned to charities for support. Every hour of admin you remove is an hour you can give back to your mission. ^[1]

7.5%

revenue growth, to \$239 billion
^[1]

8.6%

expense growth, to \$231 billion
^[1]

3.9M

volunteers reported by
registered charities, the highest
on record ^[1]

2 More volunteers, same number of coordinators

Registered charities reported 3.9 million volunteers, the highest count the ACNC has ever recorded, and 53% of charities operate with no paid staff at all. Growth is good news, but every new volunteer needs to be onboarded, screened, rostered and kept engaged. Without the right systems, that work lands on the same small team. ^[1]

^[1] ACNC, Australian Charities Report 12th edition, 2026.

3 Funding is competitive and expectations are higher

Government funding makes up around 49% of Australian charity revenue, and donations and bequests just 6.2%, so every dollar is hard-won. At the same time, funders, donors, volunteers and partners expect more transparency, faster responses and better impact reporting. As a volunteer manager, you're being asked to do more with less. ^[1]

4 Reactive vs strategic

Too many organisations operate in a reactive state: fighting fires, responding to short-term needs and making decisions based on out-of-date data. Reactive decision-making leads to inefficiency, burnout and poor planning, which puts long-term programs at risk.

49%

of Australian charity revenue comes from government funding ^[1]

6.2%

comes from donations and bequests ^[1]

5 Digital gaps exclude the very people you serve

Around one in five Australians are still digitally excluded. If registering to volunteer, finding information or engaging with your cause isn't simple and accessible, your mission is out of reach for some of the people you most want to involve. ^[4]



^[1] ACNC, Australian Charities Report 12th edition, 2026.

^[4] Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2025, RMIT University, Swinburne University of Technology and Telstra.

6 Privacy obligations are getting stronger

Volunteers trust you with sensitive personal information. In Australia, a new statutory tort for serious invasions of privacy commenced on 10 June 2025, and from 10 December 2026 organisations must explain in their privacy policies how they use automated decision-making. In New Zealand, a new Information Privacy Principle (IPP 3A) took effect on 1 May 2026, covering personal information collected from someone other than the person concerned, such as referees. Good data governance isn't optional. It's a requirement. [\[5\]](#) [\[6\]](#)

AU 10 June 2025 Statutory tort for serious invasions of privacy commenced	NZ 1 May 2026 IPP 3A took effect, covering indirect collection such as referees	AU 10 December 2026 Privacy policies must explain automated decision-making
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7 Attracting talent means keeping up

The systems you use signal the kind of organisation you are. Manual, outdated processes can put off skilled staff and volunteers from joining or staying. Digital tools are now a differentiator in both recruitment and retention.



[\[5\]](#) Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024 (Cth).

[\[6\]](#) New Zealand Ministry of Justice, Privacy Amendment Act 2025.

What should a business case for volunteer management software include?

A strong business case for volunteer management software includes eight elements: an executive summary, the problem and blockers, SMART project goals, a solution synopsis, costs and expected ROI, a risk assessment, an implementation plan and the KPIs you'll use to measure success. Keep it concise and lead with the numbers leadership cares about.

1

Executive summary. Keep it to 200 to 500 words. Cover the overall goal, the challenges you face, the proposed solution and how you'll measure success. Many readers will stop here, so make it count.

2

The problem and blockers. Describe the challenge your organisation faces and the risk of not acting. Highlight anything that could affect the project, such as other initiatives already underway or challenges on the horizon.

3

Project goals. Define what the project needs to achieve. Make your goals SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound.

4

Solution synopsis. Go beyond naming a software provider. Explain why they're the best fit to help you meet your goals.

5

Cost and expected return on investment (ROI). The cost is what you pay. The value is what it returns. Detail the initial investment, ongoing costs and how costs scale as you grow. ROI is what grabs leadership's attention, so calculate your efficiency savings and any potential financial impact (see Chapter 2).

6

Risk assessment. Outline the risks and their potential impact on your services or teams. For example, larger implementations may need several team members to be trained, which affects their availability.

7

Implementation plan. Summarise the steps to implement the solution. Your VMS provider should supply estimated timelines, milestones and the commitment needed from your team.

8

Key performance indicators (KPIs). Define what success looks like and which metrics you'll use to measure it.

SUMMARY CHECKLIST

Chapter 1: The case for change

- ☐ Identified the core reasons your volunteer program needs to evolve
- ☐ Mapped current blockers or past barriers to progress (technology, process, culture)
- ☐ Started building a compelling case using data, volunteer stories and risk mitigation
- ☐ Drafted the eight key elements of your business case



02

CHAPTER 2

Understanding what digital transformation means for your organisation

What does digital transformation mean for a volunteer program?

For a volunteer program, digital transformation means using the right tools to deliver your mission more effectively, not adopting technology for its own sake. In practice, it usually means moving recruitment, onboarding, rostering, communication and reporting out of spreadsheets and inboxes and into one connected system, supported by an implementation partner who knows the volunteer sector.

Digital transformation often comes with a perception of disruption, and depending on the scale and complexity of your program, that may be true. But with support from your colleagues and a trusted implementation partner, meaningful change is not only achievable, it's worth it. The result is a program that engages volunteers more meaningfully and is ready for whatever comes next.



What are the common myths about volunteers and technology?

MYTH

"Young people aren't volunteering."

29.7%

of Australians aged 18 to 24 volunteered formally in 2023

REALITY

29.7% of Australians aged 18 to 24 volunteered formally through an organisation or group in 2023. That's around 680,000 young people, and the first rise in youth volunteering since COVID-19. Younger volunteers are also more likely to volunteer in the field or online, which makes a strong digital experience essential. [\[7\]](#)

MYTH

"You can manage volunteers with a spreadsheet."

37%

of notified breaches caused by human error, January to June 2025

REALITY

Spreadsheets and email make human error easy, and human error is a leading cause of data breaches. It caused 37% of the data breaches notified to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner between January and June 2025. In the previous six months, 42% of human error breaches came down to personal information emailed to the wrong person. One misdirected spreadsheet can expose every volunteer on it. [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#)

MYTH

"Older volunteers aren't tech savvy."

18.2 pts

Digital Ability gain among people aged 75 and over, 2023 to 2025

REALITY

Older Australians are building digital skills faster than any other group. Between 2023 and 2025, Australia's national Digital Ability score rose 8.7 points, and the biggest gain (18.2 points) was among people aged 75 and over. Gaps remain, so choose a platform that is simple, accessible and works on mobile, and keep a supported option for anyone who needs help. [\[4\]](#)

[\[7\]](#) Volunteering Australia, Youth Volunteering Key Statistics, July 2024.

[\[2\]](#) OAIC, Notifiable Data Breaches statistics, January to June 2025.

[\[3\]](#) OAIC, Notifiable Data Breaches Report, July to December 2024.

[\[4\]](#) Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2025, RMIT University, Swinburne University of Technology and Telstra.

Should you start small or go all in?

It depends on the complexity, scale and readiness of your organisation. A single, centralised program can often modernise everything at once. Organisations running multiple programs, sites or entities usually do better with a phased approach, starting with high-impact areas like onboarding or rostering, then expanding to other programs and integrations.

A single or centralised program.

You may choose to go all in and modernise your entire volunteer and supporter engagement process at once.

Multiple programs, sites or entities.

A phased approach may suit your team and volunteers better. Start with areas such as rostering or onboarding, then scale out to other programs or integrations with other platforms.

Whatever your pace, keep the long-term vision in mind. Even if some teams aren't involved in the first phase, keep them updated and invite their feedback. This builds alignment and reduces resistance later.



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Readiness assessment

Activity: Assess your organisation's readiness for digital change using a measurable framework across:

- Leadership support
- Digital skills and training
- Data management
- Existing systems and integrations
- Change appetite and culture

Guide to practical exercises: This guide includes a series of hands-on exercises. Use our ready-made Google Sheets templates. Just click "Make a copy" to create your own team worksheet.

[GET THE READINESS ASSESSMENT](#)

How do you align technology with your program's requirements?

Start with your mission, not the software. Before you define your ideal future state, work out what your volunteer program must do to deliver your mission, such as screening for high-risk roles, protecting sensitive data or connecting volunteers with fundraising. Then map where you are today against where you need to be. Choosing technology in isolation risks paying for the wrong tools or missing critical capabilities.

ASK YOURSELF:

Do we need robust screening for high-risk roles?

For example, reference checks, Working with Children Checks in Australia or Police vetting in New Zealand.

Are we collecting and storing sensitive information responsibly?

What data do we collect, and who can access it?

Is there a fundraising element to our volunteer program?

Do we have volunteers who are also donors, or donors who could become volunteers?



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Mapping current capabilities vs your future state

Activity: As a team, rate where you are now and where you want to be across the key functions of a modern volunteer program:

■ Awareness

■ Training

■ Retention and reward

■ Recruitment

■ Scheduling and attendance

■ Insights and impact

How do you calculate the ROI of volunteer management software?

Use this formula: ROI (%) = (total benefits minus total costs) divided by total costs, multiplied by 100. Total benefits include staff time saved, better volunteer retention, increased recruitment and stronger reporting for funding. Start with staff time savings, because it's the easiest benefit to measure and the one leadership trusts most.



ROI FORMULA FOR VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

$$\text{ROI (\%)} = ((\text{Total benefits minus Total costs}) \div \text{Total costs}) \times 100$$

VALUE GAINED CAN INCLUDE:

Staff time savings	hours saved per month × hourly staff cost × 12 months
Volunteer retention value	increase in volunteers retained × average value of a volunteer
Increased volunteer recruitment	additional volunteers acquired × average value of a volunteer
Improved reporting and funding opportunities	estimated value of better data for grant applications, acquittals and compliance

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

\$26,000

Illustrative example: if your team saves 10 hours a week on manual admin at a staff cost of \$50 an hour, that's $10 \times \$50 \times 52 = \$26,000$ a year in staff time alone, before you count retention, recruitment or reporting benefits.

How do you put a dollar value on a volunteer hour in Australia?

Australian volunteering peak bodies calculate replacement cost using the average hourly part-time wage for a volunteer's age group in their state, plus 15% employer on-costs such as superannuation and payroll tax. Their free calculators use this method and are compliant for reporting the fair value of volunteering under accounting standard AASB 1058. [\[8\]](#) [\[9\]](#)

Beyond the numbers, show the improvements in program outcomes, compliance and risk management that come from streamlined operations. Effective volunteer management software helps you do more with less, amplifying the impact of every volunteer hour while reducing the admin burden. Quantifying these benefits clearly and confidently is the key to leadership buy-in.



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Discover the ROI of investing in your program

Activity: Put a dollar value on the hours your team currently spends on manual tasks, such as:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ■ Application administration | ■ Onboarding |
| ■ Training | ■ Sending emails and other communications |
| ■ Rostering volunteers | ■ Recording volunteer hours |
| ■ Creating reports and manual data entry | ■ Background checks and verifying credentials |
| ■ Internal communication about the volunteer program | |

Our template includes the estimated time savings experienced by organisations using Rosterfy.

TRY OUR FREE ROI CALCULATOR

[\[8\]](#) Volunteering Queensland, Volunteer Replacement Cost Calculator.

[\[9\]](#) The Centre for Volunteering (NSW), Value of Volunteering Calculator.

SUMMARY CHECKLIST

Chapter 2: Understanding digital transformation

- ☐ Defined what digital transformation means for your organisation
- ☐ Assessed your digital readiness
- ☐ Used the capability mapping tool to compare your current and future state
- ☐ Identified priority areas for improvement (for example, onboarding, reporting, communication)
- ☐ Reviewed how a VMS fits within your broader digital ecosystem
- ☐ Calculated the ROI of volunteer management software for your program



03

CHAPTER 3

Choosing the right volunteer management software

How do you choose the right volunteer management software?

Start with your own gaps, not a vendor's feature list. Once you know your current capabilities and future goals, shortlist three to five providers, score them against the same criteria (feature fit, ease of use, integrations, support, value and data security) and ask every vendor the same questions. The right VMS solves today's pain points and scales with your program.

The right VMS isn't just a rostering tool. It's a strategic enabler that should help you overcome today's challenges while setting your program up for long-term success.

Struggling with volunteer recruitment and onboarding?

Choose a VMS that integrates with your website and offers a smooth journey from first interest to first shift. Look for:

- Branded volunteer portals
- Embedded opportunity listings
- Automated profile creation and onboarding workflows

EXAMPLE



Children's Hospital Foundation

By adopting Rosterfy, Children's Hospital Foundation replaced manual recruitment and onboarding with automated workflows, reducing the admin burden and improving the volunteer experience. Volunteers can now register and complete onboarding in their own time, in a process that is streamlined, efficient and compliant with health sector requirements.

Is poor attendance costing you?

For some programs, a no-show costs more than lost time. It may mean paid staff have to fill the gap, and that adds up fast. A robust VMS can:

- Send automated reminders and confirmations
- Track attendance patterns
- Improve shift fulfilment through smart rostering

EXAMPLE: GOLF AUSTRALIA

92%

Using Rosterfy, Golf Australia achieved 92% shift fulfilment during a recent event, reducing operational risk on event day.



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Vendor scoring matrix

Now that you've reviewed your internal capabilities and identified your gaps, apply the same lens to potential VMS providers.

Activity: Use a scoring matrix to compare vendors across:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| ■ Feature fit | ■ Ease of use |
| ■ Integration potential | ■ Support and training |
| ■ Value for money | ■ Technical capability and data security |

GET THE VENDOR SCORING MATRIX

What questions should you ask a volunteer management software provider?

Ask every provider how their platform supports the full volunteer lifecycle, how it scales and integrates, where your data is stored and protected, whether the mobile and desktop experience is consistent, and what's included in the price. Comparing answers side by side shows which vendor genuinely fits your program and which will create hidden work or costs later.

1 How does your platform support the full volunteer lifecycle, from recruitment to reporting?

Why it matters: You need more than rostering. You need tools to attract, engage, manage and retain volunteers. Volunteers want one system and one place as the source of truth for their volunteering.

2 Can the platform scale with our ambition and integrate with our existing tools?

Why it matters: As your program grows, so will your technology needs. Look for open APIs and integrations with your CRM, HR and fundraising systems to future-proof your investment.

3 Where is our data stored, and how is it protected?

Why it matters: In Australia and New Zealand, your organisation remains responsible for protecting personal information from unauthorised access, loss or misuse, even when it's stored offshore by a provider. Recent reforms raise the stakes: Australia's statutory privacy tort commenced in June 2025, and New Zealand's IPP 3A took effect in May 2026. Ask whether data can be hosted locally, which security certifications the provider holds, and whether they support single sign-on and multi-factor authentication.

4 Is the mobile and desktop experience consistent and synced?

Why it matters: A fragmented experience frustrates users. Volunteers should get the same intuitive experience on every device, and your team shouldn't have to duplicate content or steps.

5 What is the pricing model, and how do we avoid hidden costs?

Why it matters: Budget transparency is vital. Clarify what's included and what isn't when it comes to implementation, training, support and upgrades. It's not just about cost. It's about predictability and sustainability.

SUMMARY CHECKLIST

Chapter 3: Choosing the right VMS provider

- ☐ Assessed internal needs and pain points
- ☐ Researched VMS providers and created a shortlist of three to five
- ☐ Completed a vendor scoring matrix
- ☐ Prepared tailored questions to ask each vendor



04

CHAPTER 4 Implementing your VMS successfully

You've chosen your vendor. Now it's time to prepare your people and execute the plan.

How do you manage resistance to a new volunteer management system?

Treat volunteers and internal stakeholders as different audiences. Volunteers need to hear what's in it for them, with simple training and peer champions. Staff and leadership need to be involved early in planning and decisions, with clear roles, timelines and measurable early wins. Tailored communication for each group turns hesitation into ownership.

FOR VOLUNTEERS

For volunteers, resistance often comes from unfamiliarity, or a worry that technology will make things more complicated or impersonal. You might hear "Why do we have to change what we're already doing?" or "This is the way we've always done it."

Ease the transition by clearly explaining the "why" for volunteer leaders and end users. Show how the VMS will make volunteering easier, with simpler shift sign-ups, better communication and more recognition for their contributions. Offer short, accessible training and extra support for anyone less confident with digital tools, such as quick videos, online troubleshooting sessions or reverse mentoring. Introducing the system through a pilot group of enthusiastic volunteers builds peer-led momentum and trust.

FOR INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

For internal stakeholders such as program managers, coordinators and leadership, resistance may come from concerns about disruption, extra workload or losing control of existing processes. Involve them early in planning, writing communications (such as FAQs) and decision-making. Show how the VMS supports organisational goals, improves efficiency and reduces risk, so they can articulate what's in it for them. Be clear on roles, timelines and expected outcomes, and make space for feedback. Celebrating early wins and showing measurable impact reinforces the value of the change and keeps support strong.

Choose the easiest and most engaging update format for each group, whether that's an announcement at a weekly staff meeting, a colourful infographic emailed once a fortnight or a recorded message from the project lead once a month.



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Stakeholder mapping

Activity: Identify the stakeholder groups affected by your new VMS. Map each group by its influence on the project's success and the impact the change will have on it. This shows you how to engage and communicate with each group throughout the project.

Plot groups by department, service area, seniority or any structure that suits your organisation. The goal is clear accountability, with each group getting the right level of communication, support and involvement.

TIP

Keep your map flexible. As the project evolves, stakeholder involvement and expectations may shift. Revisit and adjust your map regularly.

When should you start communicating about a new volunteer management system?

Start eight to ten weeks before go-live. Brief internal stakeholders first, then announce the project to volunteers, train key users, share how-to guides and finish with celebration and feedback after launch. Working backwards from your launch date gives everyone time to understand the change, ask questions and feel supported.

Launching volunteer management software takes clear, thoughtful communication with both your volunteer community and internal stakeholders. There's often real excitement about a new tool, but it's natural for some people to feel uncertain about the change. Open, consistent communication builds anticipation and addresses concerns early, so everyone feels supported through the transition. Use the timeline below to plan key activities, audiences and channels at each stage.



COMMUNICATION TIMELINE

TIMEFRAME	KEY ACTIVITIES	AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVES	CHANNELS
8 to 10 weeks before launch	Announce the upcoming VMS project. Share why the change is happening. Introduce the timeline and goals.	Internal stakeholders, department leads	Build awareness and internal buy-in	Email, internal meetings, intranet
6 to 8 weeks before launch	Announce the project to volunteers. Share benefits and what to expect. Recruit pilot testers or champions.	All volunteers, partners	Generate early excitement and involvement	Email newsletter, social media, posters
4 to 6 weeks before launch	Begin training key users (staff, team leaders). Offer preview or demo sessions. Share success stories from pilot users.	Staff and volunteer leaders	Build confidence using the system	Live demos, FAQs, video tutorials
2 to 4 weeks before launch	Share how-to guides and login instructions. Host drop-in Q&A sessions. Send go-live date reminders.	All users	Ensure readiness and reduce last-minute confusion	Email, website updates, webinars
Launch week	Go live. Share celebratory messaging. Provide real-time support contacts.	All users	Maximise adoption and reduce friction	Email, SMS, Slack or Teams, helpdesk
1 to 2 weeks after launch	Request feedback. Share early success metrics. Continue support and check-ins.	All users	Encourage engagement and continuous improvement	Surveys, social posts, check-in calls
1 month after launch	Report impact. Highlight user stories. Promote ongoing improvements and training.	Senior leaders, volunteers, wider organisation	Reinforce success and support long-term use	Email reports, blog post, team meetings

“

"Volunteer Managers are a lot like Marketing Managers in that communication is key. Understanding your audience and tailoring your message in a way that resonates and feels authentic is crucial to ensuring cut through and engagement!"

Alice Turnbull
Head of Brand and Content, Global, Rosterfy

Should you launch your volunteer management software in phases or all at once?

Choose a phased launch if you run multiple teams, regions or programs, because it lets you test, gather feedback and adjust before scaling. Choose a full launch if your program is smaller or centralised, because one go-live date creates a clear, unified moment of change. Whichever you choose, commit fully and communicate consistently.

Phased approach:

roll out the software gradually across teams, regions or functions. It gives you more control and lets you test features in real-world conditions, gather feedback, make adjustments and build momentum as you go. This suits larger or more complex programs.

Full launch:

introduce the software to your whole volunteer community at once. It's often more efficient for smaller or centralised programs, and a single launch date can build excitement and focus everyone's attention on the change.

Whichever approach you choose, commit fully to the plan to avoid confusion or inconsistent experiences. Be proactive in sharing updates, timelines and feedback, and highlight early successes and volunteer stories to build confidence and drive adoption.

SUMMARY CHECKLIST

Chapter 4: Keeping everyone informed

- ☐ Mapped stakeholders to a communication plan
- ☐ Reviewed your communication timeline
- ☐ Decided on a phased or full launch approach

Frequently asked questions

What is the difference between volunteer management software and a CRM?

A CRM is built to manage donors, members or customers, and its volunteer features are usually an add-on. Volunteer management software is built specifically for volunteer operations, including onboarding, screening, compliance, rostering, check-in and impact reporting. Many organisations use both and connect them through an integration, so each system does the job it was designed for.

How long does it take to implement volunteer management software?

It depends on the size and complexity of your program, how many integrations you need and how much data you're migrating. A single program with a simple setup moves faster than a multi-site rollout. Ask each provider for an estimated timeline, key milestones and the time commitment needed from your team before you sign.

How much does volunteer management software cost?

Pricing varies by provider, program size and the features you need. Some charge per volunteer or per user, others by platform tier. When comparing quotes, check what's included for implementation, training, support and upgrades, so you can compare total cost over the life of the contract rather than the headline price.

Can older volunteers use volunteer management software?

Yes. Older Australians are building digital skills faster than any other age group, according to the Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2025. ^[4] Choose a platform with a simple, mobile-friendly experience, offer short training and peer support, and keep an assisted option available so no volunteer is left behind.

How do you keep volunteer data secure?

Move volunteer records out of spreadsheets and email into a secure system with role-based access. Ask providers where data is hosted, which security certifications they hold and whether they support single sign-on and multi-factor authentication. Make sure your privacy policy reflects current Australian and New Zealand privacy obligations.

Who should be involved in a volunteer management software business case?

Involve everyone who will approve, fund, use or support the system. That usually means leadership, finance, IT, program managers, coordinators and a group of volunteer representatives. Involving them early surfaces requirements and risks sooner and builds the support you need for approval and adoption.

^[4] Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2025, RMIT University, Swinburne University of Technology and Telstra.

What are the key steps to building a business case for volunteer management software?

Build your case for change, assess your digital readiness, map your current and future capabilities, calculate ROI, score and question potential providers, then plan your stakeholder engagement, communication timeline and launch approach. Following these steps gives leadership a clear, evidence-based reason to invest and gives your team a clear plan to make the change stick.

Introducing volunteer management software is a strategic decision that can significantly improve the efficiency, impact and experience of your volunteer program.

In this guide, we've walked through how to build a compelling business case, from understanding your organisation's current and future needs to identifying the challenges and opportunities software can address. We've covered how to review your existing systems and processes, ask the right questions of providers and communicate the value of change across your organisation.

Most importantly, choose a provider that not only has the experience to support a successful implementation, but can partner with you in building a strong case for change and delivering a seamless, rewarding experience for your volunteers.

With the right approach and tools, you'll be well placed to elevate your program and unlock its full potential.



Ready to build your business case?

Book a call with our team at rosterfy.com

BOOK A CALL

Extra resources

FREE WORKSHEETS (LINKED THROUGHOUT THIS GUIDE)

- **Readiness assessment template:** assess your organisation's readiness for digital change
- **Vendor scoring matrix:** compare volunteer management software providers side by side
- **ROI calculator:** estimate the return on investment of volunteer management software
- **How to choose the right volunteer management software:** our step-by-step guide

Sources

1. ACNC, Australian Charities Report 12th edition, 2026.
2. OAIC, Notifiable Data Breaches statistics, January to June 2025.
3. OAIC, Notifiable Data Breaches Report, July to December 2024.
4. Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2025, RMIT University, Swinburne University of Technology and Telstra.
5. Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024 (Cth).
6. New Zealand Ministry of Justice, Privacy Amendment Act 2025.
7. Volunteering Australia, Youth Volunteering Key Statistics, July 2024.
8. Volunteering Queensland, Volunteer Replacement Cost Calculator.
9. The Centre for Volunteering (NSW), Value of Volunteering Calculator.

