

The Power of Direct Mail: Building Brand Awareness and Affinity for Nonprofits

Jamie McQuin and Meredith Piemme, Production Solutions

Do you think of direct mail as only an antiquated, expensive channel? You may want to think again. The inherent measurability of direct mail has long been a driving force behind its significant role in nonprofit fundraising strategies. Beyond this traditional role, direct mail is a potent top-of-funnel branding tool that not only drives direct response but also increases brand awareness and affinity. In this article, we'll explore why you will want to harness the power of direct mail for integrated brand building.

Cut Through the Digital Noise

In a world where inboxes are flooded with emails and social media feeds are crowded with influencers and ads, direct mail offers a refreshing change. It arrives physically, grabbing attention in a significantly less crowded space (the mailbox), in a way digital communication simply can't. Eye-catching, a piece of direct mail has the potential to create a lasting impression on recipients, providing a tactile connection between your nonprofit and your audience.

Personalization and Targeting

Innovative technology in direct mail production allows for a high degree of personalization, moving us ever closer to true 1:1 donor communication. You can segment audiences and craft tailored messages and creative that resonate with each donor segment. The distinctive touch of receiving a physical letter or postcard can evoke a sense of importance and appreciation in donors and prospects. The right message, delivered to the right donor, enhances brand affinity by showing that you understand and value them as individuals.

Storytelling and Emotional Connection

One of the most powerful tools in branding is storytelling, and direct mail offers a unique platform to tell your nonprofit's story. Through letters, newsletters, impact reports, and brochures, you can share stories of need and of success, highlight the impact of your work, and convey the passion and dedication behind your cause. The use of emotion and authentic storytelling creates brand affinity as donors develop a deeper relationship with your mission and values. Let's not forget, the research shows a typical donor requires up to seven touchpoints before being moved to make a donation.

Tangible Brand Collateral

Direct mail isn't just about the message; it's also about the medium. Well-designed mailers, newsletters, and freemiums/premiums serve as tangible brand collateral that recipients can hold and keep. These physical reminders can find their way onto water bottles, refrigerators, or desks, creating a constant visual presence for your nonprofit. Every time recipients encounter these materials, it reinforces your brand and mission.

Think Differently About Measuring Results

With more donors heading online to research and donate, nonprofits should explore alternative methods to gauge the branding effectiveness of direct mail campaigns. One helpful approach is to employ match backs on direct mail campaigns. These can help measure how direct mail influences online giving, as well as inform future campaigns and channel investment.

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Message from the President

Dear Friends and Fellow DMFA Members,

I hope this newsletter finds you well!

I am honored to be writing you today as I begin my term as DMFA President. I would first like to acknowledge the enormous contributions of our most recent past president, Cara Marinelli, whose leadership and dedication over the past two years and passion for fundraising not only helped ensure the DMFA's success but grew our organization amidst an uncertain environment. I am humbled to follow in her footsteps to work alongside our amazing board of directors to continue to move this great organization forward.

As fundraisers, we understand that the landscape is constantly evolving which requires our strategies to change as we look for ways to continuously connect with our members and donors. In keeping with the DMFA's mission to deliver important educational content to fundraising organizations, this newsletter is packed with useful information centered around the theme of the impact of brand awareness and its influence on fundraising in a more complex world. I hope you find this content helpful as you navigate decisions concerning your organization. Additionally, I urge you to take special notice of the article from the Nonprofit Alliance *Take Action to Protect your Donors' Privacy*.



In closing, I wanted to share several upcoming educational experiences you will not want to miss as we head into the new year:

- How Ethical Creative is Changing Fundraising Best Practices—January 16, 2024
- Data Privacy Legislation: What to expect in 2024—January 30, 2024
- 15 Cost Saving Ideas to Deploy in the Face of Rising Costs—March 12, 2024
- Leveraging Cultivation and Stewardship to Build your Mid-Level Program—March 26, 2024

The DMFA is excited to begin a new year and be here as a valuable source to the industry, helping our members move their fundraising programs onward with success.

I look forward to connecting with you at an upcoming event!

Best,

Kristen Shank Finn
President, DMFA

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Another out of the box option is to analyze the correlation between the timing of in-home mail delivery and spikes in digital channel activity such as: search engine queries, social media engagement and website traffic for your brand. You can tap into valuable metadata to attribute the surge in online activity to direct mail's reach and influence. A more comprehensive understanding of the impact and success of direct mail initiatives beyond traditional response metrics is critical.

Omnichannel Integration

Direct mail doesn't operate in isolation. When used strategically, it should complement your nonprofit's digital marketing efforts. Include QR codes or personalized URLs in your direct mail pieces to drive recipients to your website or social media platforms. Bookend a CTV campaign with a direct mail postcard or co-target your email campaign with a direct mail package. And don't forget the valuable USPS Informed Delivery program, a free digital touch for your direct mail campaigns. This integration creates a seamless multichannel experience that reinforces your brand message across various touchpoints.

Long-term Brand Building

While direct mail can yield short term results in terms of file growth, revenue and retention, it also plays a crucial role in long-term brand building. Consistent and thoughtful direct mail campaigns build trust and credibility over time. With that trust and credibility, nonprofits can acquire more, and *more loyal*, donors. As donors receive regular updates on your work and progress, they become more invested in your cause and are more likely to retain, increasing their lifetime value.

Direct mail should not be regarded as an antiquated and expensive channel; rather as a powerful tool for nonprofits to invest in to build brand awareness. By leveraging its unique attributes—personalization, storytelling, and tangibility—nonprofits create a lasting impact on their audience. When brand is integrated with **all** facets of marketing, including fundraising, it can become a driver that supports not only direct response but also the long-term growth and sustainability of a nonprofit organization. Don't underestimate the power of direct mail—it might just be the key to unlocking greater brand success for your nonprofit. 

The Need for Media Mix

Taryn Myers, TrueSense Marketing

I've heard it many times, internally and from clients, "This channel doesn't have a strong ROI, so we should cut it." Or "SEM brings in all of our paid media revenue—why are we wasting money on all these other channels?"

The reality is, these low or no ROI channels make a significant difference in the overall success of your paid media. And it is why you need to look at your media as a whole in projecting anticipated revenue rather than projecting by channel.

Have you ever noticed that when you set a budget for paid search (SEM), you can't seem to spend the budget no matter what you do? The search volume simply isn't there, especially on your branded terms. But only a few months ago, you were limited by budget on these exact same campaigns. How can that be? SEM was doing so well that you pulled back on display and CTV to focus your efforts on that high performing SEM channel. If you weren't seeing any revenue from CTV or display anyway, it would be better to focus your budget on the high ROAS channel of SEM—right?

Wrong! Upper funnel channels have a purpose in your marketing mix. True, you will not see high volumes of donation revenue directly attributed to those channels. But that drop in your SEM search volume is a direct result of cutting CTV and display in the scenario above.


A lot of people don't realize the impact that upper funnel media channels have on their lower funnel tactics. And then they try to put all of their media budget into the low-funnel channels that

drive the bulk of their ROAS. However, how are they feeding their funnel in order for the lower-funnel channels to work?

We have a current client who has been hesitant to layer on upper funnel media channels like CTV, display, and native advertising. But then they want to know how much they can increase their SEM budget and still maintain a positive ROAS. The answer is none. We cannot increase their SEM budget and maintain a positive ROAS because we've maxed out their brand awareness effect. Their branded keywords cannot support additional SEM budget. And non-branded keywords tend to have a lower ROAS.

Instead, we suggested that they add some spend to their upper-funnel media. In this case, we recommended adding budget in programmatic display, and the client agreed. After introducing display into their media mix, their SEM started to perform better. Their SEM ROAS went from an average of \$0.70 to an average of \$1.57, with their overall media mix ROAS going from \$0.56 to \$1.20.

As another example, we have a client who ran an integrated media mix for an anniversary giving ask. The campaign ran over the course of a few months in early 2023 and proved very successful. The campaign yielded an average full media mix ROAS of \$1.03. All subsequent campaigns have been SEM only and average a ROAS of only \$0.41.

Even if you are currently only running lower funnel tactics and seeing great success with that direction, remember that the low hanging fruit will dry up at some point. A successful media mix will always include some upper funnel tactics to ensure that the funnel is always being replenished. 

Influencing the Top of the Funnel

Nick Ellinger, Moore

America's younger generations are more zealous than ever about doing good in the world. Millennials and Gen Zers have more trust in nonprofits than older generations do, and three fourths of young Americans say they care deeply about helping people in their communities.

These facts should spark hope for nonprofits. But to harness younger people's giving nature, we need to speak their language, not complain that they don't speak ours.

That starts with meeting them where they are. That means engaging with online influencers. HubSpot found that about 30% of people 35 and under have purchased a product on the advice of an influencer, compared with 13% of those 55+.

For-profits already use influencer marketing for top-of-funnel digital acquisition with audiences that are already highly engaged with creators and may not be easily reached through other channels. And some forward-thinking nonprofits are already exploring this space.

Last year, Moore worked with a disabilities rights organization to start a national dialog about the lack of accessible air travel. Influencers ranging from disability advocates, care givers, veterans, and reality stars rallied their followers in Instagram and TikTok to sign a petition for legislative change. The campaign reached over 3 million individuals, garnered over 3 million plays, clicks, shares, likes, comments, and delivered tens of thousands of petitions signatures.

Likewise, an international development organization leveraged influencers to jump start a food waste challenge campaign. The influencers, ranging from chefs, food bloggers, and food influencers, demonstrated how followers could reduce food waste on Instagram and TikTok. The campaign reached over 1.1 million individuals, garnered over 472,000 plays, clicks, shares, likes, comments, and saves for an engagement rate of 7.8%.

This top-of-funnel awareness builds brand equity and donor trust, essential components for donations. When done right,




influencers use the credibility and trust they've built to build your credibility and trust with that audience. They authentically speak on your behalf to their followers, which makes it vital to identify influencers and their audiences whose beliefs and values mirror your mission.

An influencer marketing campaign should be highly structured, focused on building brand loyalty and generating leads that result in giving. It starts with the campaign design to outline strategy, planning, and goals.

Once you have set strategy and goals, you should identify well-suited influencers. This can be an arduous process. Each influencer will need to be vetted to ensure that their content will perform well and properly align with your organization's brand and messaging. That means conducting a comprehensive review of their post history and past sponsorships, constantly managing back-and-forth communication, and even running creative tests with them.

While the influencer may (and likely should) have an affinity for your nonprofit, being a content creator is their job. It's important to remember they must be paid for the content they create. Once you have identified your influencers, you must also convince them to work to support your cause; you may not be the only organization that wants to partner with your chosen influencer.

This structured approach takes discipline (or a disciplined partner) but the results are well worth it. Harvard Business Review highlights that the ideal campaign works with influencers who share 9% of your organization's followers, meaning that you are reaching 90%+ new people who have an affinity for your mission and are persuadable.

Influencer marketing, and other strategies like it, are vital for nonprofits looking to reach people where and as they are. Only then can we attract the next generations of passionate Americans to the joy of giving. 


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Is It Time to Change Fundraising Appliances?

Sarah Harris, The Harrington Agency



It's time to move away from the same old funnel and curated linear journeys. Instead, create an environment where prospects and donors are exposed to surround sound treatment at every step of their journey. Brand Awareness and fundraising campaigns should not be mutually exclusive campaigns. Both should support and promote the other.


Consider adding one or two more ingredients to your direct response campaigns and programs.

Over the past year, The Harrington Agency has deployed support campaigns including an exotic selection of ingredients including Connected Television (CTV), and radio ads, Face to Face Canvassing, digital signage, PerformanceMax and YouTube. All have promoted the organization's brand, building awareness and creating that surround sound and also included an ask. These support campaigns flanked or ran concurrently with traditional direct mail and online campaigns.

Adding new channels is a great way to spice up results. We've seen website visits grow 25% while support campaigns ran. And an impressive 15% increase in new donor conversion while branded multi-channel efforts were active. Branded awareness is a great option for organizations looking to optimize spend while supporting philanthropic giving and brand awareness.



It's important to allow for sufficient planning time when rolling out these initiatives. Consider allocating a percentage of your budget or request additional funds for new channel testing when building annual projections. Development teams and agency partners should work closely with their organization's marketing and communications teams in these efforts. Collaboration with key stakeholders and across departments is a crucial component for success.

Looking forward, we're excited to carry on with testing and exploring new opportunities to continue these efforts. Are there any new testing opportunities you're excited about? Let us know! 

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Amplifying Brand Awareness to Boost Donor Lifetime Value

Todd Bemis, The Lukens Company

Gone are the days of a simple donation funnel. In today's more complex world, donors are participating with nonprofits in a multitude of ways, making the donation funnel more akin to a bowl of spaghetti. And within that big bowl, every noodle is a distinct journey that each donor takes to connect with a nonprofit's cause.

So, if today's donor journeys are a giant bowl of spaghetti, what is the component we need to take it from a mess of bland pasta to an indelible meal? It's the sauce! And that sauce is storytelling.

The art of storytelling holds a profound key to unlocking increased donor engagement and, subsequently, amplifying donor lifetime value. Beyond the simple conveyance of information, stories possess a unique ability to evoke emotions, forge connections, and inspire action. When utilized strategically, storytelling not only fortifies brand awareness, but also serves as a catalyst for the expansion of donor networks and the long-term sustainability of crucial initiatives.

Let's delve into a tried-and-true recipe that can revolutionize your nonprofit's approach to storytelling and donor engagement, ultimately paving the way for enhanced donor lifetime value.

1. **Craft authentic narratives:**

Authenticity is the cornerstone of effective storytelling. Develop narratives that not only resonate with your organization's mission and values, but also create real human connections. Think about the emotional response you're aiming for, be intentional in your messaging, and showcase real-life examples of your organization's impact—this will help foster genuine connections with your audience.

2. **Empower donors as heroes:** As you craft your story, position your donors as the heroes. Illustrate how their contributions, whether big or small, have made a tangible difference. Highlight the positive change that their support has brought about, emphasizing the significance of their ongoing involvement and even how it aligns with their personal values and aspirations.

3. **Show transparency and accountability:** Foster trust and credibility by presenting annual reports and demonstrating the concrete results of donors' contributions. Call out the allocation of funds, measurable impact achieved, and outstanding goals to fulfill your mission. And if possible, quantify exactly how any and all future donations will be utilized (e.g., \$10 = 1 hot meal, \$25 = 2 medical kits, etc.).

4. **Create consistent and personalized communications:** Establish a consistent communication strategy that keeps donors informed about the impact of their contributions. Employ personalized messages that acknowledge each donor's unique role in the journey. Regular updates, personalized thank-you notes, and progress reports can help foster a deeper sense of involvement and investment.

5. **Leverage various media formats:** Diversify your storytelling mediums to cater to a broader audience. Engage in the creation of compelling videos, immersive podcasts, and visually captivating infographics that narrate your nonprofit's journey and the lives you touches. These mediums can be powerful tools for conveying complex messages in a compelling and easily digestible manner.

By incorporating these actionable takeaways into your nonprofit's storytelling, you can elevate your brand awareness, cultivate more donor engagement and a sense of belonging within your community, and ultimately enhance the lifetime value of your donors. Remember, every story holds the potential to inspire change and foster a community of passionate advocates dedicated to making a lasting impact. ■■



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- 12/12/23, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EST)
How to Get Beyond One Size Fits Nobody Messaging

SPEAKERS:

Casie Duplechain, *Chief Philanthropy and Engagement Officer, City Park Conservancy*; Kevin Schulman, *Founder, DonorVoice*; Amanda White, *Vice President Nonprofit Data, Epsilon*

JANUARY

WEBINAR (Zoom)

- 01/16/24, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EST)
How Ethical Creative is Changing Fundraising Best Practices

SPEAKERS:

Mary Abeson, *Marketing Officer, Women For Women International*; Zoe Clarke, *Senior Account Executive, Mal Warwick Donordigital*; Bonnie Catena, *Connector-in-Chief, Catena Connects*

WEBINAR (Zoom)

- 01/30/24, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EST)
Data Privacy Legislation: What to Expect in 2024

SPEAKERS:

Shannon McCracken, *CAE, CEO, The Nonprofit Alliance*; Britt Vatne, *President, Account Management, Adstra*

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To better serve you, we've officially closed our LinkedIn group and have transitioned to a new company page: www.linkedin.com/company/74004924. This is where you'll find all the DMFA updates you'll need, and they will now be easy to share in your feed! Just visit the URL and click on "Follow."

Take Action to Protect Your Donors' Privacy

Robert Tigner, The Nonprofit Alliance

BACKGROUND:

SCOTUS Decides Donor Protection is Paramount

In July 2021, the U.S. Supreme Court determined in a 6-3 vote in *Americans for Prosperity Foundation v. Bonta, Attorney General of California* (“*Bonta*”) nonprofits are not required to submit their IRS Form 990 Schedule B list of donor names and addresses to the State of California. Schedule B is a federal tax form, part of a nonprofit organization’s annual Form 990 filing, that requires listing name, address, and amount of gifts for all donors giving \$5,000 or more in the reporting year. (The requirement for organizations with substantial income is slightly different: donors who make gifts equal to or greater than 2% of contributed income.)

The IRS considers Schedule B sensitive, confidential, and protected information. The one portion of the IRS Form 990 is redacted from public disclosure. Nonprofit organizations are specifically instructed to remove it before publishing it on their websites or otherwise making it accessible. However, four states—California, New York, New Jersey, and Hawaii—were collecting Schedule B as a required submission from nonprofit organizations registering to fundraise in those states. That includes many national organizations as well as organizations physically located there.

What about all the donor information collected before the Court ruled that, in effect, it should not have been collected in the first place?

The Court’s 2021 ruling declared California’s systematic collection of individual donor information to be an unconstitutional violation of First Amendment rights of association. Loosely translated: Any reason a state might offer for collecting Schedule B forms, including having them on hand in case state regulators ever want to investigate potential wrongdoing, were outweighed by the risk posed by intentional or unintentional disclosure of that information.

There were two prevailing arguments against the state’s claim for collection among concerned nonprofit sector observers. First, there were specific instances of Schedule B data being published despite assurances that it was kept protected and confidential. Second, an organization’s Schedule B or the information listed on Schedule B is attainable by state charitable regulators in due course of an investigation, albeit with additional effort required beyond opening their file drawers. In short, protecting donors’

identity and contact information, particularly for partisan causes on both sides of the aisle, was paramount.

California promptly stopped collecting the information, and the three other states collecting Schedule B soon followed suit.

FAST FORWARD TO TODAY:

Your Donors’ Information is Still at Risk

Two years later, in July 2023, the New York Attorney General posted a notice on its website announcing that a “small number” of organizations had Schedule B information temporarily disclosed on the AG’s website in public view. Neither the identity nor the number of affected organizations was made public. Presumably, this was a case of human error, as were the many hundreds of exposed donors documented in the *Bonta* case.

Regardless of the cause, the lingering vulnerability was made clear: What about all the donor information collected before the Court ruled that, in effect, it should not have been collected in the first place? As far as is known, an archive of Schedule B forms amassed prior to the Court’s ruling remains intact in four states. Clearly, that is so in New York. As long as it exists, there is a risk of it being published by error, as the New York instance demonstrates. This doesn’t even speak to the vulnerability of hacking or accidental or intentional sharing by state personnel.

Given the Court’s decision, it is reasonable and prudent for states to dispose of all the previously collected Schedule B donor information to mitigate this unnecessary risk.

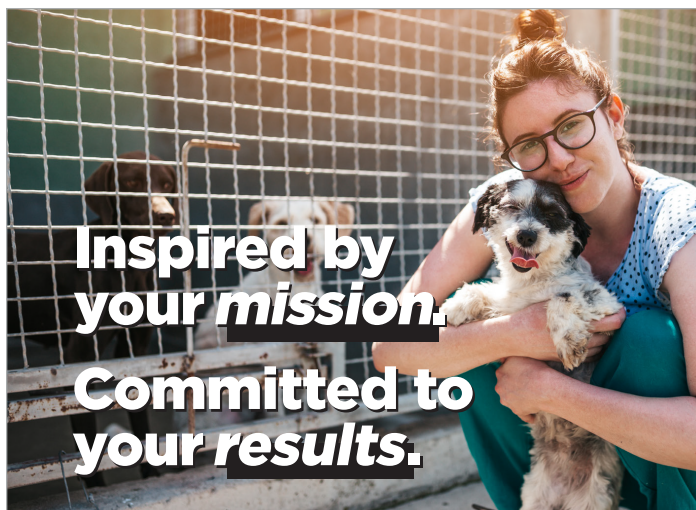
TAKE ACTION

Nonprofit organizations that filed a Schedule B in New York as part of the registration process prior to the July 2021 decision are invited to sign a joint letter to the New York Attorney General’s Office asking for the destruction of all donor names, addresses, and contribution amounts collected from the Schedule B. The more organizations sign, the more it will be apparent to New York and the other states that the concern is widespread. At a minimum, New York may delete the information of those who have signed this letter. More optimistically, the letter may persuade them that it is better for all concerned to dispose of all the Schedule B information collected in the years preceding the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision, which outlawed the practice.

You will find a letter drafted for this purpose here:

<https://bit.ly/Sched-B>.

To sign onto the group letter or with questions about the history of this issue and the expected course of action, please email The Nonprofit Alliance’s Regulatory Counsel, Robert Tigner, rtigner@tnpa.org. All sign-on requests should be sent from an organizational email account and explicitly state that the sender has permission to act on behalf of the organization. ■



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Midlevel Giving Spotlight

To Brand or Not to Brand, That is the Question

Jeff Muller, Crossroads Insights LLC

Behavioral science makes clear that, by nature, humans seek connection and belonging. This primal need sits at the core of how we should be thinking about engaging both current and prospective donors—and raises the question about how best to frame our relationships with them. This is especially important for those running mid-level programs, which are bridging between the expectations and experiences of low-dollar and major giving donors.

I recently sat down with four expert practitioners—Drew Elliott of the National Park Foundation, Stacy Mitchell of Project Hope, Vicky Montanaro of IFAW, and Jason Raby of Mercy Corps—to discuss how they are framing their mid-level programs to create the optimal donor engagement platform for their respective organizations. We talked about whether branding such programs is beneficial for their context and relationship-building model. Below I share some of their thinking and how it relates to leading philanthropy and scientific literature.

When Branding Makes Sense...

Two of the organizations in the conversation—National Park Foundation and Project Hope—have mid-level giving programs that are named and branded. While NPF has had a named program for years, following a recent review they decided to keep a name but rebrand the program. Drew shared how the mid-level program was previously called the Stewardship Circle, but the team didn't feel that name was sufficiently inspiring. In response, "we went through a process, including focus groups, to find a new name. We finally landed on the Champions Society, which was well received. I think that's because it has an aspirational value that acknowledges the active role the donor plays in our success."

At Project Hope, Stacy and her team just recently created their mid-level program. While Stacy's benchmarking research found that only half of the programs she examined are branded, she elected to follow suit because "I wanted to set our donor experience apart." In naming the program, Stacy identified that it was important to find one that speaks to their donors' values and engagement with the organization. "We ended up calling our mid-level society the Hope Circle. While there are a lot of 'hope societies' at other organizations, that word is at the core of our identity. Fortunately, we did our homework and discovered the name is sufficiently unique."

Creating a named platform to nurture a sense of belonging is backed by a wealth of behavioral research, including from Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary, who explain that the intrinsic

human craving for inclusion and association considerably impacts our actions and decisions. A 2018 *Stanford Social Innovation Review* article, "The Science of What Makes People Care", demonstrates how this plays out philanthropically. The authors make clear that eliciting emotions and facilitating a community spirit are pivotal in influencing charitable actions.

...and When It Doesn't

While there are clear benefits to creating a branded giving society, there are instances in which it may not be the right fit for the organization. Such was the thinking at both at Mercy Corps and IFAW, neither of which has a named mid-level giving program—although they each have other named giving societies. At Mercy Corps, Jason shared that "because we work on a continuum of giving with our high impact philanthropy team—whose program is not branded—we elected to do the same. This is especially important because movement between the two is more dependent upon identified capacity rather than a hard-and-fast giving threshold." This focus on continuity of treatment is supported by a 2022 study by the National Center for Charitable Statistics, which found that donors are less likely to continue giving at the same levels when they feel uncertain or confused by shifts in an organization's policies or procedures related to their gifts. The study found a 10% average decline in renewed donations among donors who reported a low understanding of administrative changes made by the charities they supported.

Vicky's experience at IFAW is a little different. They piloted a branded mid-level program several years ago but "the branded program didn't inspire donors to 'join' and giving didn't increase. Instead, we ended up decreasing our net income based on the additional costs of the branded program, so we abandoned it and went back to simply focusing our messaging on connecting donors to key program investments."

The Takeaway

The decision about whether to brand your mid-level program is dependent upon several factors, including your organizational context, your fundraising model, and your capacity to deliver on your program. As noted in the Lilly School of Philanthropy report "The Giving Environment: Understanding How Donors Make Giving Decisions," what matters most is your ability to engage donors in personal ways that will help forge a lasting relationship between the donor and the organization. ■



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Your Awareness Problem and What to Do About It

In Case You Missed *The Agitator* on November 8th ...

Kevin Schulman, DonorVoice and DVCavass

All but the largest charity brands are mostly unknown by most people. We all fish in the same pond for the same donors over and over. And most fundraising professionals believe a dollar not spent on conversion is a dollar wasted.

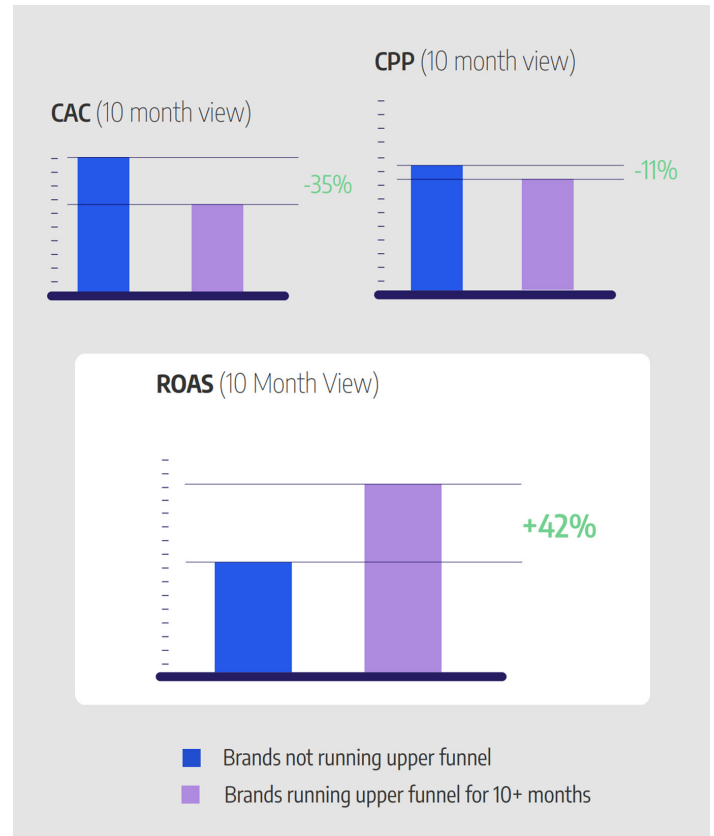
But how to break out of the doom loop of rising costs, lower performance and fewer donors when all the spend is aimed at the same people and evaluated on the same conversion metrics?

It's seems silly to say but people can't give to you if they don't know you exist. Awareness matters and the only way to increase awareness is to increase Reach. Every person who goes from 0 to 1 on exposure to your brand has been reached. And because of what's dubbed the mere exposure effect, people reached are predisposed to have a favorable view of your brand.

And who should pay for this Reach and Awareness building? Fundraisers and within your existing budget.

This data is from Fospha, one of the many attribution platforms on the market. What is this showing?

- Upper funnel advertising is ads bought with awareness goals, usually priced at cost per thousand and very cheap to run because there's less competition as everyone's incorrectly focused on only bottom of the funnel conversion.
- The blue bar is those brands running Reach and Awareness ads in addition to conversion ads.
- The purple bar is brands running only conversion.
- Look at the difference in ROAS. A 42% increase by redirecting some of your fundraising budget to the activity you likely thought was either a waste of money or someone else's job.



What's the catch? If you only run this experiment for 2 or 3 months you won't see a positive return. Your cost to acquire and ROAS will be worse, not better. It takes a bit of time for Reach and Awareness spend to deliver down funnel.

But it will deliver. And the best news? You only need to divert 10% of your conversion fundraising spend to likely see positive returns, though plenty of brands go higher and reap more reward. 🍀

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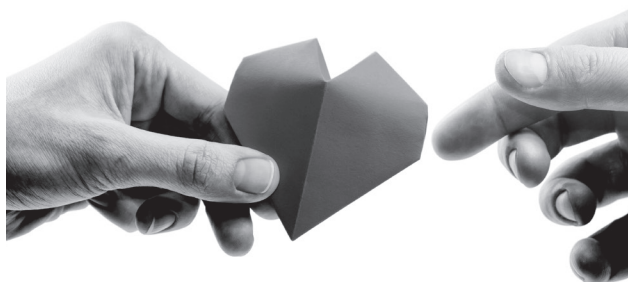
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Our Newest 2023-2024 Board Members



Rayna Clarke, *Account Manager, Lautman Maska Neill & Company*

Rayna has 12 years of experience in direct response fundraising—from strategy and copywriting to data segmentation and production management—and is passionate about bringing the donor to the heart of the mission. As an account manager at Lautman Maska Neill & Company, Rayna is responsible for executing dozens of integrated fundraising campaigns for multiple clients each year. She is a long-time member of the DMFA.



Kim Coloma-Gomez, *Senior Manager of Integration and Donor Experience, Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)*

As part of the Integrated Channel Marketing team, Kim leads project management, channel integration, and content strategy collaboration, working with first level, sustainer, midlevel, major donors, planned giving, foundations and corporations audiences. Prior to joining the MSF-USA team, she was the Senior Manager of Membership Marketing and Content Strategy at The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).



Jennifer Honadel, *Vice President, Account Management, Epsilon*

Jennifer is currently the Vice President, Account Management in the Data Solutions division of Epsilon. In this role, she manages a team of consultants that work in close collaboration with Epsilon Data, Database, and Agency clients focusing on the analysis and execution of data strategies to help nonprofits build stronger relationships with prospects and constituents. Jennifer has been with Epsilon since 2004 and served in various positions. Prior to joining Epsilon in 2004, she was the Director of List Brokerage for 21st Century Marketing working in the non-profit, commercial and Hispanic markets.



Meredith Piemme, *Business Development Director, Production Solutions*

Meredith has had print production in her blood since a very young age (maybe something to do with pulling staples out of a commercial print shop carpet as her very first paid gig). Now with over 25 years of experience in graphic design and print, and over 10 years of experience in the nonprofit direct mail space, she continues to grow her love of all things print and mail. Since joining Production Solutions in 2018, Meredith strives to bring passion, kindness, humor, and ambition for investing in success to all of her work.

Welcome!

It's Time to Pay Attention to Attention

Raella Rayside, True North Inc.

We've all been there. We've launched a brand-new dynamic campaign optimized for donations or leads. The "results" are mixed at best: the clicks and impression numbers are rising, but concrete conversions are low, and revenue is stagnant. But there's a lingering doubt in our minds. Is our audience really receiving our ads? Do people care about our message at all? Are the clicks real, or is every click from a bot? Are we wasting money optimizing for immediate conversions? What does "awareness" even mean anymore, anyway—is it a credible metric?

When it comes to ROI for campaigns, goals like awareness are becoming harder to assess. Fraudulent clicks and low viewability standards make ensuring quality impressions a challenge. Cookie-based lookalike modeling has become even less viable and more unreliable.

In short, tracking and attribution are tougher than ever—and can lead to more questions than answers.

As an agency, it's our job to make sure that every dollar spent on digital marketing is aiding brand awareness, that every impression is a real impression, that each campaign builds genuine interest in an organization with new (real) prospects.

And that's where attention metrics come in.

Given this climate, we need new and different ways to target and optimize for mid- and upper-level donor prospecting. By optimizing for attention, we can make sure that ads are being delivered to the environments where they're getting noticed

Is our
audience
really
receiving
our ads?



and improve website metrics. Attention metrics also help us optimize for the most quality awareness—thus avoiding things like bot clicks and empty impressions. After all, reach and impressions only matter as long as they're meaningful—and without a way to measure that meaning, it becomes harder to assign value to any campaigns or determine how effective they truly are.

Attention and emotion-based measurement is essentially a way to measure reactions to ads; how long they were watched or looked at for and how people reacted. Systems are now in place to measure not only genuine ad performance, but attention volume, uninterrupted attention, and inspired action as well.

Emotion-based measurement can determine how sad, happy, confused, or frustrated an ad made someone; it can determine empathy, recall, and fatigue as well.

Based on feedback from these platforms, agencies and companies can tailor creative and media placement strategies for specific audience segments and reach the right people, with the right messaging, at the right time, on the right platforms.

Attention measurement isn't limited to programmatic digital—it's penetrated the likes of Facebook, YouTube, OTT, and even audio as a reliable unit of measurement.

Your digital fundraising is only as good as your intelligence—and without the right information, you may find yourself in a vortex of uncertainty. Focusing on attention will help you build a digital program that attracts **qualified prospects**, avoid wasted clicks on junk impressions, and optimize for the right people on the right platforms and limit overspending. ■■

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