

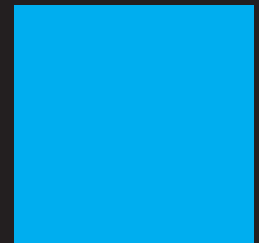
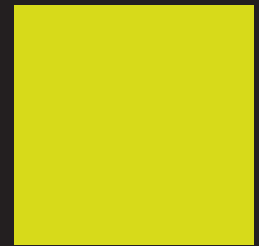
# 6 Simple Steps to Results-Driven Marketing Campaigns

A Guide to Effective and Affordable Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations

*Compliments of Allegra, your local full-service marketing and print resource*



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## Use the universal goal of marketing to solicit donations and build donor relationships

As a nonprofit professional, you're aware that during these tough economic times, your donors are being asked to support more and more charities and to do so more frequently. After all, the need is great. But just asking for support and expecting results is not enough.

For the greatest success, utilize the universal goal of marketing: Get the right message to the right people at the right time using the right medium.

As a nonprofit, you probably don't have a budget large enough to include all the marketing staff you could use. So this guide is designed to help you ensure your marketing campaigns are effective not only in raising funds, but in building the relationships that keep donors engaged as active supporters.

## 6 Simple Steps to Results-Driven Marketing Campaigns

### 1. Set your objective.

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The objective of nonprofit communications is to cultivate donors and solicit donations. A goal like that requires tapping emotional triggers that make donors and potential donors feel valued. A great technique to accomplish this is personalization. That's why fundraising pros always include a letter, the most personal of all print communications.

Personalized campaigns fare better. According to PODi (Print on Demand Initiative), relevance generates a 300% better response! So address your communications to a living, breathing person, and include content that's relevant to them. That's a great step in getting them interested. And once you have their attention, make sure you emphasize the importance of their contribution.

### 2. Define your market.

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The key word here is targeting. Targeting the right people. Who and where are they? What do they think of you? Who else is competing for their dollars? Targeted campaigns are always preferred over blanketed advertising, and they are easier on a tight budget, which as a nonprofit, you undoubtedly have.

Your best targets are:

- Current donors
- Old donor file
- Prospective donors

When developing your final mailing list, use demographic information such as age, income, occupation, etc. Or, to get more detailed, use psychographic data (lifestyle characteristics like boater, pet owner, charitable donor, etc.) gathered through personal interviews, focus groups or questionnaires.



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### 3. Determine the right media mix.

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Base your choice of media on the frequency you can deliver your message with the least amount of waste. (We'll define waste as communications that were not received or read because they were not targeted to the proper audience or address)

Direct mail is best for targeting because it's highly personable and offers great flexibility for testing several different formats. According to a study by the Direct Marketing Association (DMA), 91% of nonprofit organizations use direct mail. And for good reason: 78% of all donations to nonprofits (about \$8 out of every \$10 received) are generated through direct mail. An added benefit of using direct mail is that as a nonprofit organization, your standard postage rates are typically 40-50% less than commercial rates, provided you follow all U.S. Postal Service guidelines.

Half of the nonprofits in the DMA survey also used email. Email is an inexpensive way to stay in touch in a proactive way that can help you build long-term equity with your target audiences. Direct mail and email can work independently or together, which is when they pack a more powerful punch.

Personalized URLs (PURLs), while a newer media, are great for creating a personalized giving site, building two-way relationships, deepening understanding of donors, gaining instant feedback and adding measurability. According to a DMA study, one of three direct mail recipients prefers to respond online. The Cygnus Donor Survey shows that 51% of respondents said they plan to give online in the next year.

While direct mail, email and PURLs are all effective, there are other media you can add to your mix: magazines, phone calls, inserts and search engine marketing. All have their plusses and minuses, so remember to determine the right combination to create the least waste.

### 4. Deliver the right message.

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No matter what message you're sending – a request for donations, a message to volunteers or something else altogether – all messages should include:

- A clear call to action
- A sense of urgency
- Multiple response mechanisms

Some thoughts for different fundraising messaging include enclosure of free information or a free gift, a pledge program or monthly giving club, an emergency appeal, charter membership and friend-get-a-friend programs, matching gift or memorial gifts, and popular seasonal requests. There are other possibilities, so try out your audience and track your results. You can always repeat the most successful ideas.

The Cygnus Donor Survey shows strongly that donors want to know their money is being used responsibly, and they want to know the results of their last donation before they're asked to make additional donations. One way to deliver messages about your effectiveness is with a frequently updated website that specifies:

- Why you're raising money
- How funds will be raised and applied
- Clear and articulate outcomes



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- Your recent track record with gifts – what has been accomplished with funds raised in the past year, etc.
- How donors can make a gift – show all options, not just a link to another page on the website

There's no reason you can't also use newsletters, emails and thank you's to share this type of information, but websites make for easy, more frequent updates.

## 5. Identify the right time.

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Sometimes intense marketing at the right time can generate a better return than marketing throughout the entire year. Loads of factors can be considered, but what your donors want should always be prominent. When would they want to receive an appeal? An emergency request? Is it possible you have some donors that only want to receive requests once a quarter or once a year?

The Cygnus Donor Survey shows reason to be cautious with over-solicitation: 75% of donors aged 65 and over and 65% of donors aged 35 – 64, either reduced or stopped support of charities that over-solicited. Survey respondents defined over-solicitation as “being asked to give again before satisfied about what happened with the last gift.”

With this in mind, consider scheduling some of your campaigns after releasing results or after the release of your annual report.

## 6. Analyze the results.

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One of the most important reasons for tracking your results is to gain knowledge about how you can improve your future marketing campaigns. Before you can begin, you'll need to know what you're measuring. Take a look at your entire communications stream and all communications channels and ask yourself how many times you solicit, thank, inform and invite.

Here are some commonly-used benchmarks:

- The number of inactive donors re-engaged
- The number of donations
- The dollar amount of the average donation
- The number of referrals
- The number of likes on Facebook
- Website traffic
- Overall revenue

## Discover how Allegra can help with all of your marketing and print projects.

As you can see, there are many marketing options open to you. But you also face a growing list of challenges: fewer inside resources in people, time and dollars, and increased competition in the marketplace can influence the development of a successful marketing program.

That's why the help of an experienced full-service marketing and print provider like Allegra can be a vital asset when you're planning and executing a marketing plan. Sit down with one of our experienced consultants to determine the best strategy for turning your marketing plan into long-term relationships with volunteers and donors.