Fundraising Campaign Workbook

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Introduction

This Fundraising Campaign eBook was created to compliment the Online Fundraising Bootcamp presented by Nonprofit R+D (www.nonprofitrd.com/bootcamp), they really do go hand in hand. The Bootcamp covers in much more detail best practices, resources, and strategies to increase your fundraising campaigns. Utilizing the tools and examples below, along with the Bootcamp, you can build a very successful fundraising campaign and have it launched in a very short time.

This document is divided into three sections to match your steps in the planning process.

Fundraising Campaign Planning

The campaign planning section lays out a timeline and schedule of tasks to launch your fundraising campaign. This timeline is only a suggested plan to help you see how the various parts fit together. You can modify the plan to fit your organization’s needs and current situation. Many groups are able to launch their campaign in less time than we have outlined here with focused effort.

Email Templates

The email templates included in this section are designed to give you ideas of how to structure your emails and help get you off the dreaded “white page”. Please remember that these are just suggestions and guides, designed to get you started. It is very important to think about how each task or suggestion fits into your organizations planning and materials. We strongly believe that the content must be written in your organizations voice. This is much more authentic and compelling and helps create a stronger connection with your supporters.

Sample Campaign

The Sample Campaign section includes a completed Campaign Planning Worksheet as well as written examples of each email in the series. They are written using a fictional organization focused on childhood hunger (Food for Thought).

It is our hope that these examples will spark ideas for your own appeals. We do not recommend copying them word for word as you know the best way to speak to and connect with your donors.

Best of luck in your fundraising campaigns!
# Fundraising Campaign Planning

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## Days 1 – 10: Brainstorm, Research, and Schedule your Campaign

- Review your previous campaign(s)
  - What worked? What did not work?
  - What do your stats tell you?
  - What has changed for your org in the past year
- What are your organizations goals this year?
- What programs, events, or accomplishments can you highlight?
- Complete the Fundraising Campaign Planning Sheet (Below)

## Days 11 – 25: Design, write and prepare communications

- Draft the email series
  - See Timeline and Template downloads
- Design the look and feel of the campaign
  - Create email templates – content and graphics
  - Create landing pages – similar content and graphics
  - Contextual giving
Days 26 – 30: Finalize all communications and test the campaign

- Have multiple staff members review all campaign content
  - Emails, landing pages, donation forms, etc.

- Have the campaign approved by appropriate individuals or groups

- Run multiple tests of the entire campaign
  - Run a few tests yourself pretending to be a donor
  - Ask volunteers or others less familiar with the campaign to run through it as well
  - Email >> Landing Page >> Donation Form >> Thank you
  - Edit or fix any issues

Day 31: Launch the campaign

- Appeal 1 – Campaign Kickoff
  - Sets up campaign and tone
  - See template – Appeal 1

- eCard / Reminder / Update
  - Gentle reminder about the campaign / Stay “Top of Mind”
  - Can also update them about a success or progress
  - See template – eCard

- Appeal 2 – Follow up / Last Chance
  - Sense of urgency / time is running out
  - See template – Appeal 2
Fundraising Campaign Planning Sheet

1) What is the most serious issue/need your organization is currently addressing?

2) How will the money raised during the Fundraising Campaign be used to tackle that issue/need?

   The answers to these first two questions should guide your answers to the questions below.

3) What is the overall story of your campaign?

   What current events can you include in the story to show that your issue/need is timely?

   Is there an individual whose story you can share with potential donors to illustrate the issue/need?

4) What is your campaign theme?

   What are related subject lines you can use for campaign emails?
5) What is your campaign title?

**Email Templates**

(Note: Editable Word documents are available for download inside the lesson “Fundraising Campaign Templates”)

**Appeal 1 – Campaign Kickoff**

Subject: _____________

Dear [Prospect’s First Name],

[Short description of the issue/need your organization is currently working to address. This is the issue identified in the Campaign Planning Sheet.]

[Simple Call-to-action: include a link to the donation form on your organization’s website]

[Short paragraph describing the history and/or background of the issue your organization is addressing. Make sure to add a few sentences to make the issue timely and relevant.]

[Provide a description of how donations will be used to address the issue raised above. The more detailed and specific you can be, the better story you will be able to create. Remember to focus on examples or stories of individuals and how their donations will help them.]

[Description of what your organization can accomplish with specific dollar amounts.]

- [have amounts increase over the bullets] $X will __________
- $XX pays for __________
- $XXX supplies 3 children with ______

Thank you in advance for your support!

[Signature]

[Link to Donate]
eCard – Reminder / Update / Acknowledgement of Support

The eCard is designed to be a gentle reminder about the campaign and a way to stay “top of mind” with your supporters and prospects. It can also be a great way to update them about any successes or progress with the campaign.

If this is an End of Year Campaign, then this can easily be a holiday card depending on your organization and supporters (Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice, etc.)

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[Include photos from the campaign, program or successes.]

[General thank you for support during the year and/or holiday greetings.]

[Short message reflecting on the year, thanking them for their support and your hopes for the new year]

[Link to Donate] [Link to Tell a Friend]
Appeal 2 – Follow-up/Reminder

Subject: __________

Dear [Prospect’s First Name],

Today is your last opportunity to [brief description of the campaign and impact those donations will have on those effected]. Remember, any gift you give today is still tax-deductible for 2011 [or brief statement about why they need to donate today – before school year, before winter sets in, etc.].

[Brief paragraph discussing your organizations accomplishments during the year. A bulleted list of some of those accomplishments works well, and provides another example of what the donors support can help achieve]

[Brief paragraph discussing the plans for the new year and how their support will help that happen.]

[Call to action – Asking them to give one last gift this year.]

[Closing sentence about the New Year.]

[Signature Name]

[Link to Donate]
Sample Campaign – Food For Thought

Appeal 1 – Campaign Kickoff
Subject: Food for Thought’s Holiday Food Drive

Dear [Prospect’s First Name],

The number of children and families facing food insecurity, which is uncertainty of having or being able to acquire food, has grown significantly over the past five years. The most recent study of food insecurity in America revealed that 16.2 million children lived in food-insecure households. For these families, the question isn’t, “What’s for dinner tonight?” but, “Will we have dinner tonight?”

To ensure that every child has access to the nutritious food needed to help him or her grow into a healthy, productive adult, Food for Thought is launching a Holiday Food Drive. The food and funds collected will help provide baskets of nourishing ingredients to low-income children and their families during school holidays, a critical time for low-income children since they do not have access to subsidized school breakfasts or lunches.

These baskets will help children like Marie, who attends pre-K at Springfield Elementary. Recently, Marie’s teachers explained to her class that they wouldn’t meet for two days so that their parents could learn what they had been studying. Marie burst into tears upon hearing this news. A talk with Marie, who qualified for the school’s Free and Reduced Lunch program, revealed that she had been saving a portion of her lunch for her younger brother and her to eat for dinner. She had cried because she was worried they would not have anything to eat for dinner during the break.

You can help Marie and other children just like her. The Food for Thought Holiday Food Drive will be collecting both food and monetary donations, which will then be used to purchase items for food baskets through special partnerships with local food producers. You can, of course, help by donating food or money. You can also help by spreading the word and telling your friends and co-workers about Food for Thought’s Holiday Food Drive. A little can go a long way – a donation of just $1 will provide a child a healthy breakfast while a donation of $75 will provide nutritious meals for four children for the entire holiday break.

Children should not have to worry that they won’t have anything to eat for dinner. You can take away that worry. Can you think of a better holiday present?

Thank you for your time and your support.
eCard – Reminder / Update / Acknowledgement of Support

The eCard is designed to be a gentle reminder about the campaign and a way to stay “top of mind” with your supporters and prospects. It can also be a great way to update them about any successes or progress with the campaign.

If this is an End of Year Campaign, then this can easily be a holiday card depending on your organization and supporters (Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice, etc.)

[IInclude photos from cooking workshops with captions identifying donation location.]

“I can no other answer make, but, thanks, and thanks.” – William Shakespeare

As 2011 draws to a close, we have been reflecting on the impact you and other Food for Thought donors have made this year.

Thanks to your generosity, families across Arkansas have received food baskets, instruction in healthy cooking techniques, and have been connected with nutrition programs in their neighborhoods.

The delighted smiles shown here happened because of your thoughtfulness.

Thank you!

[Link to Donate] [Link to Tell a Friend]
Appeal 2 – Follow-up/Reminder

Subject: Please support Food for Thought

Dear [Prospect’s First Name],

Today is your last opportunity to donate to Food for Thought’s Holiday Food Drive. Remember, any gift you give today is still tax deductible in 2011.

This year Food for Thought distributed food baskets to over 300 other low-income children and their families, all of whom were facing food shortages. At the distribution events, Food for Thought provided hand-on demonstrations of healthy cooking techniques to help families fully leverage the contents of their food baskets. Food for Thought also partnered with local health groups and connected families to neighborhood nutrition programs so that this support can continue.

Marie and her family received both a food basket for her school’s holiday break and an introduction to a food bank located near her family’s church. Now Marie and her family are able to have dinner every night – no exceptions.

In the upcoming year, Food for Thought has already planned to increase the number of distribution events by 15%. With our current partners, Food for Thought will also host two Cooking Camps to help caregivers learn how to cook healthy meals and snacks with their children and to expose children to new foods.

We’re very excited about our plans for 2012 but first want to make sure that 2011 has a happy ending. Please take a moment to support Food for Thought’s Holiday Fundraising Drive in whatever way is best for you. Gifts of non-perishable food or money are greatly appreciated, as are efforts to spread the word.

Thank you for your support and all the best to you and yours in the New Year,

[Signature]

[Link to Donate]

[Link to Tell a Friend]