

120-Day Fundraising Plan For Small Nonprofits

Calendaring • Cultivation • Message Development • Channel
Selection • Segmentation • Launch • Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

How to Use This Plan & Recommendations

To make impact, we have to think small.

Ask any executive director who is trying to balance a budget and stabilize their programs and they'll tell you it's very difficult – and they are right. Nonprofit organizations in the United States are now being challenged by major demographic, economic, technological, and social factors outside of their control.

Large, established organizations have many of the resources to address these challenges, but the vast majority of nonprofits do not have the ability to easily adapt to changing in funding or new demand for services. Consequently, most face significant financial hardship, an uncertain future – and don't know what to do.

These same small nonprofits, with operating budgets of less than \$2 million, spend roughly \$33,000 each year on consultants, training, conferences, and software, all in hopes of raising more money. Not only do 77% miss their budgeted revenue goals, but they are actually raising less money than the previous year. That means that even with all of the products and people being invested in, the majority of organizations are actually losing ground.

Nonprofits don't just need software, they need help and support.

In the last fifteen years, Network for Good has helped over 125,000 “tiny giants,” organizations making big impact with small budgets, raise more than \$1 billion with its online training and resources. We're proud of this milestone, but it's only our first.

In 2015, we asked ourselves, the organizations we serve, their boards, and funders, “What do small nonprofits need, but don't have or can't afford, to effectively raise more money?” We took those answers, arrived at some big conclusions, and with all of our data and determination, built a suite of next-in-class products to address the biggest problems faced by small nonprofits and the executive directors who lead them.

In addition to creating a unique suite of products designed just for small nonprofits, we've also created a right-sized plan for your organization to help you tap into the more than \$30 billion that will be given to nonprofits in the next four months.

Why Annual Giving, Now?

For most nonprofit organizations an annual fundraising campaign serves as the primary source of unrestricted cash donations. Annual campaigns are typically the foundation of a comprehensive fundraising strategy, providing revenue for on-going operational expenses and offsetting any deficits in the current operations budget. An annual campaign should also be a central component to your donor retention strategy.


As a broad-based fundraising function engaging a large number of potential donors and volunteers, a well-executed annual campaign delivers strong, consistent impact and revenue results, capitalizing on a predictable base of support while stimulating a group of established donors for future fundraising and volunteer opportunities. In addition to sustaining an organization's operating budget or defraying any budget deficits, an annual campaign solidifies an organization-wide commitment to fundraising while recruiting, maintaining and expanding the donor base.

Annual campaigns deliver a consistent, compelling message across multiple communications channels to achieve a single fundraising goal. It is not an event, but a process—a well-orchestrated series of activities, conducted every year for a specified duration of time. Benefits include:

1. Relating your message to donors using their preferred method of contact
2. Optimizing and expanding your organization's reach through multiple channels
3. Maximizing your fundraising strategy
4. Generating more revenue than stand-alone fundraising appeals
5. Benefiting the entire organization, regardless of their size or status

A majority of individual donors initiate their relationship with a nonprofit organization through an annual campaign. Donor retention and recognition efforts can create a stable constituency or donor base from which prime prospects for major gifts and endowment campaigns can emerge.

Annual campaigns offer an array of options to compel first-time donors and long-time supporters to advance your organization's Mission. Successful annual



campaigns should be both donor-centric and data-driven, aligning with and promoting your organization's comprehensive strategic plan, values, Mission, and Vision.

Regardless of what other fundraising activities your organization is piloting or has recently conducted, it is imperative that once an annual campaign has been inaugurated, it be consistently sustained year after year.

Few organizations have the capital and human resources necessary to allocate a special team dedicated exclusively to the development and implementation of an annual fundraising campaign. Most organizations must rely on their Board, leadership, staff and/or volunteers to organize and manage a successful annual campaign in addition to their other Mission-driven organizational duties and responsibilities. It is critical, therefore, to maximize the ROI of each and every annual campaign.

To optimize the ROI of your organization's annual campaign while streamlining the method, the following is a fail-safe 15-step process to generate the most revenue possible with the least amount of man hours, dollars and stress. Although the amount of time you may have available to launch an annual campaign varies, the following processes are based on a four-month (16-week) period. All of this can be adjusted to accommodate more or less time depending on your situation.

The Implementation Calendar

Analyze Fiscal Status

120 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Between monthly Board meetings, grant reporting, and the fiscal accountability functions nonprofits are mandated to perform, taking additional time to review your budgets and accounts prior to an annual campaign may seem redundant. Nevertheless, it is a crucial first step for the Board and organizational leadership to provide a realistic perspective of what budgetary shortfalls or surpluses mean relative to your Mission, operations, comprehensive strategic plan, current and future capacity building.

Clear knowledge of your organization's fiscal status will empower your organization at various critical phases as you further develop and execute the annual campaign. Since most annual campaigns coincide with the end of the calendar year, its effectiveness will impact two calendar and operational years, and, depending on how your organization's fiscal year is structured, possibly two fiscal years as well.

1. The fiscal analysis should answer the following questions:
2. How has the organization's financial snapshot changed in the last year?
3. What unmet financial needs exist within the organization?
4. Are there any unmet financial needs for individual programs?
5. How will current and future operations be affected by the annual campaign?
6. How can the annual campaign advance the Mission?
7. How will the revenue generated impact current or future capacity objectives?
8. What details of the organization's fiscal status should be shared as part of the annual campaign?

Review & Update Case for Support

110 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

To get the most out of your campaign, you'll want to evaluate the current status of each component vital to your organization and its operations. The integral relationship between day-to-day budget requirements and operations determines not only the fiscal goals of the annual campaign, but also the tactical prerequisites needed to implement capacity building strategies.

In reviewing the current operations relative to any capacity building objectives, The Board and organizational leadership must consider the current effects of fundraising underperformance or revenue surplus. Comparing the annual strategic plans against the actualized operations should reveal any gaps in performance versus objectives.

Three key criteria to consider prior to designing an annual campaign:

- If the Mission is truly driving operations as well as advancing the strategic plan, how much revenue is required to maintain the momentum?
- If there is a surplus, where can funds from an annual campaign be applied to amplify services and programs or expand capacity?
- Are additional actions plans needed to maximize the impact of a successful annual campaign?

Complete analysis of the organization's fiscal status, operations and comprehensive strategic plan will be the foundations of a well-planned, highly effective donor-centric designed annual campaign.

SMART Planning

100 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Equipped with quantitative and qualitative data about your organization, it's time to move forward with the annual campaign planning. Determine your precise financial goal using the SMART formula:

Specific • Measurable • Achievable • Realistic • Time-bound

Consider the following questions:

- At this point in the organization's operations, what are you trying to accomplish?
- How would you quantitatively define a successful annual campaign?
- Should the campaign pursue funds that are needed, desired or a little of both?

Once the Board and organizational leadership have agreed to a specific dollar amount as a fundraising goal, use it to develop an effective concept, strategy and implementation plan for your annual campaign.

Obviously, the primary objective of an annual campaign will always be to increase revenue by ensuring current and new donors contribute. There are other goals and objectives to consider as well, such as:

- Branding and marketing the organization
- Expanding donor base through new donor acquisition
- Retaining donors and/or members
- Cultivating current donors
- Attracting and developing volunteers
- Mining prospects for future giving
- Engaging base and constituents
- Establishing foundation for future capital or endowment campaigns
- Raising public profile

Establish Action Plans

90 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Your imagination is the only limit to the wide array of annual campaigns you can design. To produce the most compelling annual campaign that will generate the greatest impact, financial and non-financial, consider your fundraising and ancillary objectives, then answer the following questions:

- What would the ideal results look like?
- What are you trying to accomplish?

- What call to action would motivate your donor base and target audience?
- Whom are you trying to target?
- What do you most want them to do for your organization?
- Would a one-time donation or recurring gift raise the most funds?

BUDGET: As specific ideas emerge and evolve, you will need to establish a budget for your annual appeal. Many nonprofits already have an amount budgeted for their annual appeal in their annual budget. If this is the case, verify that it is sufficient to produce the annual campaign concept that you have devised. Should more funds be required to create the type of annual campaign you have envisioned, are those funds available? Can your Board Members or gift-in-kind donations for services or products close the gap between your proposed annual campaign and the amount initially budgeted for it?

If your organizational budget did not include funds for the annual campaign, are there resources available? If not, you can seek funding from your Board, gift-in-kind donations, an individual donor, corporate sponsor or online campaign such as Kickstarter or Crowdfunding. Keep in mind that if your annual campaign concept was going to rely on Kickstarter or Crowdfunding, it may be counterproductive to use these to raise funds to launch your annual campaign.

SCOPE: Since there are literally no fixed limits to an annual appeal, determine where the focus of the annual campaign will be to generate the best results.

- Who will you target?
- When and for how long?
- How will you engage prospective donors?
- What communication channels will you use: direct mail, email, social media, and/or through newsletters and traditional media?
- Will it be a one-time appeal or will follow-up be required?
- What response systems will need to be in place for it to be effective?
- How will follow-up and thank you messages be managed?

- What metrics are required to quantify the effectiveness of the annual campaign?

TIMELINE: Often the budget and calendar year or fiscal year will dictate the optimum timeframe for your annual appeal.

Keep in mind that 30% of the projected \$380 billion in total annual donations to nonprofit organizations are made in the month of December, and 10% of that (\$30 billion) is donated during the last 48 hours of the year. These year-end donors are usually comprised of a mix of long-time donors to your organization and first time supporters. The introduction of #GivingTuesday enables organizations to engage new donors while extending the traditional end-of-year/holiday giving season.

Generally, annual campaigns range from several weeks to several months, significantly shorter in duration than capital or endowment fundraising efforts. And even with the best of planning and intentions, they almost always exceed the designated time period because of the number of solicitors involved, delays in connecting with individual donors, or follow-up required. For the best results, your annual appeal should not exceed 6 weeks in duration.

TEAM: Now that you've defined your annual campaign objectives, concept, budget, scope, and timeline, you will need to accept or delegate the role of a campaign lead to coordinate the myriad functions necessary to seamlessly launch and implement it. Depending on the size of your organization, Board and staff, it may be necessary to recruit volunteers as well, particularly if certain tasks require specialized skills or your solicitation process requires a high volume of hours and labor to effectively execute and follow-up.

Once a campaign lead or team has been designated, clearly and enthusiastically communicate all of the annual campaign details. Make sure that they have all of the necessary resources, which may possibly include special training, available. Now is the time to assign responsibilities, clarify expectations and communicate standards of accountability.

Choose Focus of Theme

80 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

In choosing a theme, the focal motivation or inspiration of your call to action for prospective donors, you must be as donor-centric as possible.

You and your prospective donors realize an annual campaign is about fundraising, yet communicating your organization's financial needs will not succeed in attracting donors or dollars. Most likely it will have the exact opposite effect as people are less likely to contribute to an organization that is perceived to be stressed beyond its abilities either because of an overwhelming cause, Mission or financial sustainability.

When selecting a focus or theme for your annual campaign, keep in mind that potential donors are much more likely to donate to make dreams happen than to solve problems. Your theme must be compelling and inspiring enough to capture their hearts if you hope to attract their dollars. Create a theme that spurs an emotional as well as intellectual response.

It's all about storytelling. You want to perfect your theme with a captivating narrative, whether it's about your organization's recent achievement or a program participant's rise against all odds.

Relating a narrative to a single incident or individual person is more likely to resonate on the emotional level than hurling heartbreaking statistics at your prospective donors.

Since an annual campaign is such an incredible opportunity to connect and engage with your donors, it's tempting to share everything that is wonderful about your organization. Don't. Even if the content is so well done people actually read every single word of your never-ending saga about the previous or upcoming year, by time they do, the urgency of your call to action will have faded by the time reach they reach the end of your litany.

Use imagery to capture the essence of your narrative. Imagery can be powerful in driving home your message, especially if it is a clear photo of one person or one animal piercing the camera straight on.

Content, messaging and copy paired with imagery that delivers impact will also distinguish your annual campaign from others. This is particularly important for end-of-year and holiday annual campaigns which have a lot of competition from other nonprofit organizations.

A donor-centric approach to your selected theme can be portrayed by a photo, video, slogan or dynamic content. Avoid overwhelming people with a crisis and empower them with options to make a real difference.

Segment Lists

75 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Segmentation of your donor lists is the key to highly effective engagement with your donor base and prospects. Segmentation will also be key to a successful annual campaign.

An [easy-to-use donor management system](#) will enable you to quickly identify and target your donors and prospects with an effective, personalized message. A clearly delineated, well-segmented database will also empower your post-campaign assessment.

Basic segmentation should be done by giving date – or divided into current donor, lapsed donor, and non-donor (prospect). To personalize your appeals, you will need the following:

- Name (first, last, title)
- Address (including City, State, Zip)
- Email Address
- Last gift amount (if any)
- Gift rating, score (if any)

You can optimize your annual campaign by tailoring your message and personalizing follow-up and thank you letters to individual segments. Since two-thirds of your recurring donors are likely to respond and contribute to your annual campaign, you may want to engage them first if your actual campaign budget is less than its projected budget.

Segmenting your list of potential engagements for your annual campaign will enable you to target the individuals most likely to support this campaign and your organization in the most effective method. It will also enable you to receive their maximum donation.

New organizations may be challenged in contacting enough prospective donors for their first few annual campaigns because of a limited or small donor base. Obtain qualified lists that provide potential donors based on your organization's existing donor base demographics, geographical location, and/or giving history. Another alternative to expanding your reach is to incorporate a [peer-to-peer campaign](#), which allows your current donors to reach out to their networks and fundraise on your behalf.

Identify Target Market

70 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

The next step is to identify and select the people most likely to support your organization and this campaign. Researching and analyzing your existing donor base is essential to successfully attract new donors or increase donor sights. Segmentation allows you to decide on your key audience before designing materials and launching your annual campaign.

Identifying your target audience will optimize both your overall fundraising results and the ROI of your annual campaign.

Develop Giving Levels

60 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Your annual campaign needs to explicitly state recommended donations. Your recurring donors may be familiar with and supportive of your organization, but may not know what is expected or needed to sustain it. New prospects may be inspired to contribute, but they have no idea what would be an appropriate donation.

There are a number of ways you can guide your potential donors while increasing the likelihood of achieving your fundraising goals without alienating any donor because of the amount they have available to give. Failing to provide specific gift amounts is the single most detriment to a successful annual campaign and the most common mistake organizations make when conducting an annual campaign, particularly newer, smaller or grassroots organizations.

Always list various donation amounts on your response or pledge card, whether it is part of a direct mail piece or part of your [online donation page](#). And always, always, always include a blank donation amount that will enable donors to participate without feeling discounted because their donation falls below or above the amounts you have listed. Knowing your overall fundraising goal and the number of targeted prospects you will be contacting directly, basic math will provide some guidance in selecting the gift ranges.

Don't just ask you donors to "renew" their annual gifts, either. This approach fails for a number of reasons, when considering donors:

- May not recall their previous gift(s)
- May not have time to look-up the amount they donated last year
- Personal circumstances or financial situation may have changed
- May be unaware of new needs, capacity building your organization has planned or underway
- Fail to consider changes in the economy, which may make a \$100 gift a smaller donation than it was last year.

A simple way to identify giving levels is to review the giving levels from your donor base to determine whether there are set points, i.e., \$100, \$250 or \$500, which your current donors usually contribute. Compute these amounts times the number of prospects your campaign intends to reach and engage, then compare that amount to your fundraising goals to formulate giving levels for an effective campaign strategy.

Use the opportunity annual campaigns provide to not only increase the size of your donor base and donors' contributions, but also to advance these vital relationships with a progressive giving level and participation level. Attributing names or titles to the various levels can make this even more effective, such as bronze, silver, gold and platinum or friend, associate, sustainer, leader. Be creative with the titles of your giving levels, tying them to the organization or its Mission whenever possible to emphasize the importance of each gift while reflecting the value of your organization and appropriately recognizing donors.

If the demographics of your donor base and prospects warrant, you can maximize revenue generation by creating distinct, elite categories such as Benefactors League, Founders Society, and President's Circle, which would be recognized in your annual report, and possibly your website and marketing materials as well. Again, taking a donor-centric perspective that relates directly to your organization, its Mission and strategic plan will create optimal results through the use of giving amounts and levels.

Gifts or benefits related to the various giving levels may not only spur donations but provide for ancillary promotion, branding and marketing opportunity. Using tote bags, t-shirts, season tickets or other accessories that include your organization's name and logo expands your presence and reach long after the annual campaign. This option will be based on the organizational products you have on hand and/or annual campaign budget; they will also require more time and energy to fulfill post-campaign.

Keep in mind that donors will contribute primarily because of the value and relevance of your organization, not the baubles you offer in exchange for their donations. Unless it is a very prestigious gift, then keep gifts and perks simple but mindful. Make sure your annual campaign is a membership drive and not a marketing fulfillment operation.

Select Communication Channel(s)

50 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Annual campaigns are typically comprised of a series of activities to deliver your inspiring message to as many targeted prospective donors as possible using the full spectrum of media and communication channels. Which channels you choose to use will depend in part on the resources – time, talent, and money – available for the campaign. The review and analysis of your donor base segments should have revealed their preferred method of being engaged and donating.

There are benefits and disadvantages to each communication method. Your choice of delivery or integration of multiple delivery methods will always be secondary to presenting a compelling, cohesive message to generate a unified fundraising goal.

Social media and peer-to-peer campaigns are the fastest growing area for nonprofit organizations because it provides instantaneous response and donation capabilities as well analytics in real time. [Network for Good's peer-to-peer](#) is simple to use, and doesn't require any previous knowledge or tech-savvy to implement.

You will also want to establish analytics for your social media and online fundraising. Monitor the following statistics and calculations:

Click-through rate (from your email provider)

- Percentage making an online gift
- Percentage making a gift through another channel (such as mail)
- Overall response rates (through any channel)
- Total number of gifts
- Total amount of gifts
- Average gift
- Response rate

Direct mail can be costly in dollars and time, requiring materials to be printed and postage, but it may deliver the largest response, particularly if your targeted market is an older demographic; primarily recurring donors; or your giving levels are larger gifts. Materials used for direct mail campaigns should reflect the value of your organization and quality without being so lavish it would indicate poor stewardship. Direct mail annual appeals usually consist of the following pieces:

- Letter on organizational letterhead and stationery, standard 8.5" x 11" size
- #10 Envelope, is the standard for mailing everything at once
- Remittance Envelope, post-prepaid #6 or #9 size for donors to complete and send back with a donation check or pledge card

The greatest challenge with direct mail, especially for attracting new donors, is to get people to open it. Here are some options.

- **Plain Envelope:** Without an organization logo or name, a simple, plain envelope

with only a return address can intrigue recipients enough for them to want to open it. It is particularly effective for renewal and warm prospecting annual appeals but not as effective with new donor acquisition.

- **Colored Envelope:** It may or may not match the organization's colors or logo, it may not even be consistently used unless that is part of your organization's overall branding or part of its marketing strategy. Brightly colored envelopes simply stand out in a mail box, creating sufficient interest to be opened.
- **Oversized Envelope:** Conspicuous oversized envelopes also stand out in the mail, urging the recipient to investigate further. They require extra postage, which can reflect poor stewardship for an annual appeals campaign.
- **Envelope Teaser:** There is a wide range of options in using the envelope for valuable copy to either begin your message or generate interest with humor or impact. Use sound judgment before adding a teaser to your direct mail piece and ensure it aligns with both your targeted prospective donors and your organization's Mission.

As with social media and online appeals, you will want to gauge the results of your direct mail annual campaigns. Prior to sending it out, set up a system to measure:

- Percentage sending a gift via traditional mail
- Percentage making a gift through another channel (such as online)
- Overall response rates (through any channel)
- Total number of gifts
- Total amount of gifts
- Average gift
- Response rate
- Demographics of respondents

Phone solicitations can be used as the primary method of engaging donors or as a follow-up action plan subsequent to emailing or sending a direct mail piece out. The clear advantage is that a phone solicitation is very personal,

enabling authentic engagement with your donor base and prospective donors.

Although they should never sound like it, phone solicitations should always be scripted, providing responses to any possible objections and a list of organizational contacts that can directly address more complex conversations or concerns.

Even if your team or volunteers have experience with phone solicitation, provide a training session outlining the fundraising and ancillary objectives of this particular annual campaign. Empower your team with simple but effective techniques to deliver the message enthusiastically, professionally engage donors and prospects, and consistently close the call with a donation. If the phone solicitation is a follow-up to direct mail and/or online appeals, make sure that the solicitors are very familiar with the materials that were sent out, ideally having copies available as they make calls.

Again, be certain that systems are in place to monitor the effectiveness of phone solicitations in terms of fundraising and ancillary objectives, measuring results against attempted calls, call times, and individual solicitors.

It is rare but not unheard of that in-person presentations are employed as part of the annual campaign. If there are special donors or prospects who warrant an in-person meeting, then do so in a way that is consistent with the fundraising goal and ancillary objectives of the annual campaign, using the direct mail pieces along with a lap top to accept their donation.

The most crucial aspect of the communication method or methods you incorporate into your annual campaign is that the messaging be consistent, even if the verbiage varies for various target demographics. When using multiple methods always make certain the different modalities are in sync, a cohesive message focused on a unified fundraising goal, so an email can produce a donation submitted by mail or a direct mail piece can just as easily yield an online donation via your organization's website.

Create Appeals

40 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Regardless of the communication channel(s) used, the design of your appeal is the heart and soul of your annual campaign, and will directly effect results. To create a compelling, cohesive message that will achieve your fundraising goal, an annual appeal must have:

1. Donor-driven content
2. Innovative, inspiring content
3. Use the inform-engage-invite technique
4. Feature a relevant narrative that climaxes with an emotive hook
5. Highlight donors as superheroes
6. Specify a call to action with a sense of urgency
7. Use valuable real estate provided by a P.S. (post-script)
8. Initiate or cultivate a relationship
9. Images and materials that demonstrate value and quality
10. A coordinated thank-you messages ready to send

Equally important is what not to do when designing your appeal:

- Don't use the opportunity to explain every facet of every program
- Don't make the organization appear desperate or the cause overwhelming
- Don't make assumptions about what is known about your organization
- Don't portray the donations as the ultimate goal

Engage and Invite Technique: One of the most successful presentation methods to use is the Inform, Engage and Invite Technique. Inform the prospective donor of the Mission in a personalized, relatable way. Engage them by asking rhetorical questions. Finally, invite them to be part of the organization, part of the solution, by making a donation or otherwise responding to your call to action.

Branding & Socializing the Campaign

30 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Every activity and product related to a donor-centric annual campaign automatically becomes a part of its branding and marketing. You can garner an even greater public profile by creating a marketing strategy exclusively to promote your annual campaign featuring donors and your Mission. Marketing your annual event will also enhance the results.

Annual campaigns provide wonderful opportunities to issue press relations, social media announcements, and blog updates. Effective marketing can be done at key points throughout your annual campaign, including:

- Goal announcement
- Narrative selection
- Campaign kick-off or launch
- Benchmarks toward fundraising goal
- Homestretch or last minute end-of-year reminders
- Matching gifts opportunities
- Spotlight program participants
- Thank and recognize donors
- Announce final results

#GivingTuesday is also a powerful, built-in national day of giving that can be used to kick off or reinvigorate your campaign marketing activities.

Maximizing the marketing of your annual campaign serves as a foundation to cultivate donors for future capital, major gifts or endowment drives.

Follow-Up Appeals

BEGIN 3 DAYS BEFORE CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

As with all strategic fundraising, the post-launch activities and follow-up to your annual campaign should focus 80% of your energy and resources on the 20% of donors who are going to champion your cause and give larger

amounts. These donors and prospective donors should have been identified while segmenting your donor database and lists and then again as target prospects were selected.

The range of follow-up is unlimited so it is best to be guided by the most popular contact methods categorized by your segmentation process. Here are some effective follow-up options to accelerate your annual campaign:

- Post card reminders to direct mail appeals are very effective for traditional, more mature (older) donors and potential donors.
- Phonebanking can also be performed as part of a prompt, personalized follow-up to your annual campaign launch to generate excitement while providing positive, personalized engagement with donors and prospects, reiterating the urgency of a call to action.
- Social media, including blogs, can instantly create impact provided the same cohesive message is being used to reach the fundraising goals. Social media, including Facebook, Instagram, twitter, Pinterest and LinkedIn can target specific demographics, typically younger donors and prospects.
- Website integration should focus your organization's home page or landing page on the annual appeal. In addition to restating the messaging and urgency of the call to action, your website can provide updates, third-party endorsements, testimonials, charity ratings, and security systems, especially on the donation page, which would increase confidence with online donation processes.
- Recognition should be bestowed on donors and team members who significantly advanced your annual campaign.
- Deliverables, if part of giving levels, should be promptly sent to donors.

Launch Day

THE DAY OF YOUR CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Successful launch of your annual campaign will require the coordinated implementation of staff and volunteer functions; online and social media presence; strategic and prompt follow-up mechanisms; marketing activities; and robust delivery systems, all with strong, active support from Board Members and organizational leadership.

The extensive planning conducted prior to the launch of your annual campaign will enable the annual campaign to advance the messaging and marketing, which will in turn amplify the campaign itself. Leverage this momentum to increase giving levels, encourage donors to connect their personal and professional contacts with the campaign, and offer future opportunities to engage current and new donors.

Send Thank-You Response, Recognize Donors

1 DAY AFTER GIFT IS RECEIVED

Always send a personalized thank you message to donors as soon as absolutely possible. The thank you message should simply and clearly express gratitude, recognizing the impact of the donation. Whenever possible, explain exactly how their gift will be used to address the cause. Although you can welcome and recognize donors as a vital part of your organization, do not include their donation history or any additional appeals as part of the thank you message.

A prompt, personalized thank you is an integral part of the relationship building process. Recurring gifts or monthly sustainers need to receive steady but unique acknowledgment and thank you messages for their ongoing commitment to your organization and its Mission.

Designating annual campaign donors should be part of your organization's overall recognition program or strategy, using press releases, websites or other organizational materials to reflect their generous support. Larger donors can and should be recognized with certificates, wall plaques or major PR appropriate to their donation.

Measure Results & Refine Plan for Spring Appeal

10 DAYS AFTER CONCLUSION OF CAMPAIGN

From the launch of the campaign, you will want to track the results for each target segment and communication method so the data can be analyzed to update your donor base as well as garner the best results and then repeat them.

Once all of the data on the results of the annual campaign has been collected, conduct a SWOT analysis to develop your fundraising strategy and develop your team, building on effectiveness and implementing continuous process improvements accordingly.

After Board and organizational leadership have reviewed and analyzed the final results of the annual campaign, all staff, volunteers and program participants impacted by a successful campaign should also be de-briefed as soon as possible. Lavish praise for successes and provide empowering training and resources for deficits.