



DIRECT FORUM

VOLUME 5. ISSUE 10

* * * * OCTOBER 2009 * * * *

Direct Forum is a free e-mail newsletter containing useful direct marketing tips, news updates and how-to information. It's convenient, informative and I am not trying to sell you anything!

This month's topics include:

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THE NEW RULES OF ATTRACTION FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Recently, we've heard a lot about how we should be using social media to appeal to the younger generation.

However, much of the focus has been about the tools and how they work, **but little about how and why they appeal to the younger generation.**

First, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z are all quite different from their parents. They respond differently. This generation demands closeness with the cause they support.

Charities that utilize Web 2.0 will be more successful because they offer this group what they really need: **control, interactivity, networking and community-building opportunities.**

Also because this generation donates in a public common forum, the majority also appreciates being thanked in the public commons forum.

They definitely don't want or expect a thank you note from the cause they support for the \$5 or \$10 donation they gave on a social networking site.

They would rather be thanked and complimented for their effort online in a public commons media like **Facebook Causes or Change.org** for all their networking friends to see.

They do give smaller amounts but they tend to give to many causes that they may never have heard of before they saw them on **Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Change.org, etc.**

In short, if your organization isn't on these sites, then your organization is not on their radar screens.

Finally, when they donate they only provide their e-mail address and opt out of providing your organization their mailing address. They are smart enough to know that their contact info could be bought, sold, or traded many times over.

How do I know?

I teach more than 150 kids every year and when I give them a cause related marketing project they really shine. During the last two semesters two student groups generated over \$100,000 each for a cause.

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAY, IT'S HOW YOU SAY IT

I think in my last few newsletters I have stressed often enough **that your off-line donors should be thanked promptly and warmly.**

One cannot exist without donors. Donors regard how you use their money as the most important factor in their giving, but running a close second is how you treat them. The quality and promptness of how they are treated has a huge impact on ensuring a donor's loyalty.

One of the easiest things to craft should be that **'thank you note'** to your donors but it's amazing how many charities completely miss the mark.

Take for example a typical thank you note that I received and how easily it could have been improved.

On the next two pages is the original followed by my version.

Original

<Date>

<Name>

<Primary address>

<Address line 2>

<City Prov.>

<Postal code>

<Country>

Dear <Primary salutation>,

(1) On behalf of XYZ Charity of Canada I would like to thank you for your very thoughtful donation of <amount>. It is truly appreciated.

At XYZ Charity of Canada, research has always been our number one priority. (2) We are the only national health organization dedicated to fighting ABC disease. For decades, our Canadian researchers have been world leaders in the search for the causes, cure and treatment of ABC disease that affect 10% of all Canadians.

(3) Although, there is no cure as yet, we are getting closer to discovering the real causes of ABC disease. Thanks to donors like you, there is hope that one day a cure will be found.

(4 & 5)

Thank you again for your gift.

Sincerely,

President & CEO
XYZ Charity of Canada

My Comments & Rationale

- 1) 1) A 'Thank you on behalf of' sounds like 'corporate speak' and not a genuine show of appreciation. Start with an engaging lead. Just like you would in a fundraising letter.**
- 2) Demonstrate quickly how the donation is helping. This is what the donor wants to hear and this is where a non-profit organization has a chance of being 'donor-centric'.**
- 3) 3) A thank you letter should make the donor feel good, so stay positive. Besides, if your writing isn't personal then neither can your message be personal.**

More comments below...

Comments, continued...

- 4) 4) Add an 'update and contact' sentence, so that a donor knows, when and how you'll update him/her on further results and who to contact if they wish to interact with you in the future.**

- 5) Add a P.S. Even if it means simply directing the donors to your website.**

My version

<Date>

<Name>

<Primary address>

<Address line 2>

<City Prov.>

<Postal code>

<Country>

Dear <Primary salutation>,

(1) Behind every person with ABC disease, there are thousands of compassionate people dedicated to helping, Thank you for being one of them with your donation of <amount>.

The other compassionate people dedicated to helping are the researchers and Canadian doctors, working tirelessly to find the causes, treatment and a cure for ABC disease.

(2) A portion of your gift has already helped play a great role in providing care-giving support to those affected by this disease. The other half will help speed up our search for a cure.

(3) We will continue to update you with progress reports in our upcoming newsletters. Until then please feel free to call us at 1-800-000-0000 with any questions you many have or email our Director of Development, Jane Doe at jdoe@xyzcharityofcanada.ca. We would love to hear from important donors like you.

(4) Your gift sends a powerful message of hope to those who live with ABC disease. Thank you once again.

Sincerely,

President & CEO
XYZ Charity of Canada

My Comments & Rationale

- 1) By linking the donor with other important people, like researchers and doctors who help those with ABC disease, you are elevating the donor.**
- 2) Keep the message focused on the donor, you are thanking them and showing them where the donation will be used.**
- 3) By adding updated information and a real contact person, you help the comfort level of the donor and show you care about them.**

Also, indent the paragraphs for better legibility

More comments below...

Comments, continued...

- 4) Wrap up the letter with a warm message**
- 5) The P.S. will help deepen the relationship by directing them to your accomplishments on your website.**

(5) P.S. For the latest research updates visit our website at www.xyzcharityofcanada.ca.

NEWSLETTERS: A HIDDEN GOLDMINE FOR CHARITIES

Newsletters are the perfect way to keep in touch with donors because you can show them how their donations are being put to good use. They are also a great way of generating additional revenue.

Informing your donors about how their money has been spent is easy, providing news about your charity is the hard part.

Writing news stories is radically different from crafting a direct response letter. The very fact that it is called a newsletter requires that the information you provide should be newsy.

Think of what daily commercial newspapers do to get you to read their articles. Their format and structure are different.

How do they make sure what you read is different but also newsworthy?

Let me demonstrate with a simple example of the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood' that we have all heard as children.

On the next page, is how it could have transpired if written in newspaper style.

FUN RAISING TIMES

WOLF CAUGHT NAPPING IN DEAD WOMEN'S BED

Intended victim narrowly escapes

A cunning wolf was finally captured by the local police in an old lady's bed as he lay in it, after having eaten her. What seemed equally bizarre was that he was also wearing her clothes when the police nabbed him. A police spokesperson said, *"I am not surprised because wolves are very sly and often try to disguise themselves."*

Red riding hood was really the intended victim

Earlier in the day the wolf had followed Red Riding Hood to the old lady's house. Miss Hood, granddaughter of the elderly woman, had made an apple pie and was going to deliver it to her beloved granny. The wolf confessed that the reason he was following her was because he really intended to eat the succulent Miss Hood and her pie.

Artfully dodging behind trees and using stealth tactics, the wolf preceded Miss Hood into the house, gobbled up the sleeping granny, donned her nightie and was snuggled under

the covers when Miss Hood arrived.

Investigators claim that the following conversation took place between the wolf and Miss Hood.

MH upon awakening her granny: *"Grandmother, what big eyes you have."*

W: *"The better to see you with, my dear."*

MH: *"Grandmother, what sharp teeth you have."*

W: *"The better to eat you with" as he lunged at the girl.*

However, Miss Hood had youth on her side, plus the fact she had not just eaten a huge meal, so she

scampered away into the forest yelling for the police who were closing in accompanied by the animal control division.



Quick thinking by Little Red Riding Hood saved her as she ran from the wolf's jaws screaming. She will receive an Order of Merit for her bravery in helping bring this long sought predator to justice. She told reporters she will accept the medal in tribute to her departed grandmother. ■

Headline: Be as intriguing as possible by playing with the theme in the article in a bold and captivating manner. It must summarize the key message in as few words as possible.

Qualifying Line: Explain the content of the article by giving meaning to your intriguing conceptual headline.

Opening Paragraph: It must explain the main story as to what happened and its key features, accurately and clearly, and promise what's coming up in the article. It must connect the headline to the content you are about to present.

Sub-Head: They help you break up your text into bite sized sections to lure skimmers into the story or make the story more palatable for the reader.

Following Paragraphs: They present the full details in order of priority, explaining each new point in a new paragraph in a logical manner as to why it happened. Use a variety of sources if necessary;

Picture & Caption: They help clarify and ensure the story makes sense.

Conclusion: Highlight the point you are making. Draw a conclusion, include an editorial commentary or lead the reader to additional sources, if relevant.

OPT IN, OPT OUT, OPTIONS:

- To unsubscribe, send me an e-mail simply saying, "Please, remove".
- To participate, send me an e-mail with your suggestions.
- To post a comment, please include your name, e-mail address and your thoughts.

Let me remind you again that your name and/or e-mail address will never be shared, sold, circulated, or passed along to anyone else.

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