

Ten Communications Tips for your Nonprofit During Tight Times

When times are tight, it is more important than ever to continue your marketing communications efforts. Below are ten easy to follow tips to keep you on your road to success!

- 1. Conduct "unofficial" market research.** Ask every person who calls or comes to your office how they learned about you. Thank referral sources with a handwritten note. Identify new target markets. Create a report from the results; if newsworthy share with your stakeholders & the press.
- 2. Be concise.** Keep newsletters tight & timely. Use photos and graphics. Don't forget to include contact information. Use newsletters to thank current donors and sponsors. Invite others to join you in supporting your organization. Be sure and post an electronic version on your website and send e-mails to invite people to view.
- 3. Really use your website.** Use creative electronic mailers. Use email teasers that direct people to the fuller message on your website. Don't forget to identify an action step - register now; make a donation; respond to a petition.
- 4. Focus on your brand.** Your brand is who you are. Be clear. Be direct. Be consistent. Upgrade but don't change your brand.
- 5. Take a reporter to lunch.** Tell your story one-on-one and cultivate relationships that will carry you to the top during any economic climate.
- 6. First impressions still matter.** Make sure everyone in your office is professional on the phone; and take some time to spruce up your workplace. Don't let your "inside image" undermine your outside one.
- 7. Talk, talk, talk!** Get your message out by speaking up about your organization and the great things you are doing. Whether it's presenting to a group or a conversation in the grocery store, tell your story whenever you can.



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8. Follow up. Successful marketing is all about building relationships. Follow up promptly to every request, every question and every gift. The telephone should be your best friend, followed closely by email.

9. Target your marketing efforts to those who count most. Focus on donors, volunteers and clients. Your internal targets are your best prospects. Clean up your mailing lists and email lists to get rid of the "clutter." Send a postcard with a return address so you can track people who have moved.

10. Maintain marketing flexibility. Be ready and able to seize new opportunities as they arise.



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