

## FACT Conference Presentation Outline

- This presentation will be a quick guide to creating a multi-faceted fundraising and donor loyalty strategy. Any one of these topics could be expanded into day-long presentations, but we're just going to give you the basics. Additional information on most of these topics is available on the resources listed in your handout.
- A sustainable FR strategy needs to be multi-faceted
  - Mail
    - The bread and butter of most charities – easiest way to keep in touch with a donor base, big or small
  - Face-to-face/over the phone
    - Particularly important for high donors and community groups
  - Online
    - Not a huge money maker, but still extremely important
    - Plus... it's (mostly) free! In this economy, charities need to tighten their belts even more so than for-profits.
  - Events
    - Galas are no longer a sustainable method of fundraising (economic crisis is making people weary of lavish charity events), instead organize a team for your local marathon, team up with local bands/comedians to host benefits, host charitable cocktail hours at local bars (obviously this would only be appropriate for certain types of organizations – you're not going to host a happy hour if your organization is aimed at combating alcoholism – make sure events mesh up with your cause)
- Improve upon conventional fundraising
  - DM marketing
    - Communicating with your donors by mail is still very important, even if this increasingly "paperless" world. I would suggest any organization with over 1,000 supporters/potential supporters to mail at least 6 times per year. You can't raise money unless you ask, and this is the most effective way to ask.
      - Organizations with smaller mailing lists don't even have to outsource their printing... it can all be done in-house. Software like Microsoft Publisher makes putting together attractive letters easy. Folding/envelope stuffing are easy jobs for volunteers.
    - Before you begin any marketing or fundraising campaign, you must first make sure that you have a clear message and a clear "brand"
      - Identify your organization's main goals? Why do you exist? What are you trying to do? Sum your mission up in 1-3 sentences and make sure that it's clear and concise.
        - Sometimes it's difficult for people that are very involved with the programs to be sure that the message is clear as they know

too much about the organization already. It is helpful to ask someone who knows nothing about your programs and projects if your message is clear and, if not, what should (or shouldn't) be addressed.

- Make sure that everything in your communications with your donors sticks to this mission... don't get off topic or your donors will lose interest
  - Understand that your donors could be getting up to 10 charity mailings per DAY
    - Make sure yours stands out... or that it doesn't
  - Personal stories always work better than facts/figures... include photos as well!
  - Encourage donors to interact with your program personally ...
- Communicate with your donors in a personal way
  - Make sure that they feel like they have a say in your program/project
    - This will encourage donor loyalty
    - Motivations and values are changing
      - People are giving to charities less and less out of guilt and more and more because they feel inspired by the cause and are convinced that they can make a real difference.
      - Engage your donors in a way that will make them feel like they're a meaningful part of the solution your program is working towards.
  - Encouraging personal communication will attract donors that will have a greater lifetime value and will act as a steward for your organization
  - Invite donors to see your programs, arrange open houses, marathon/bikeathon teams, etc.
  - Encourage donors to interact with your project
    - Knit hats for newborns, send back Christmas cards with messages for the kids/families you support, etc.
    - Include a (carefully monitored and spam-free) comments forum on your website in which donors can share their personal stories, etc.
    - Keep up with social media (to be discussed later on)
- Legacy
  - In 2008, legacies brought in a total of \$22.7 billion for the nonprofit sector. Though this only constituted 7% of the sector's total annual income, it is a growing trend that could greatly benefit your organization. The typical bequest is worth 400 annual gifts.
  - Donors considering leaving money to charity in their will want to know that the charity 1) will still be around years down the road, and 2) have programs that are made to last and to continue helping people (or animals, the environment, etc.) for a long time.
  - Even if your organization doesn't have a set planned giving strategy, it is always worthwhile to encourage donors to include your organization in their wills or insurance policies



- Not a strong fundraising device, but important to have a presence for reference purposes
  - Even the charities with the best online presence still only get 2-10% of their contributions via the web
- Website:
  - Example of a good website: [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org)
    - Not only is it short and sweet, it includes all of the major components of a great website: clear organization, personal stories, explanation of the program, suggestions for action other than donating, donate button multiple times on homepage alone, short homepage, resources not only for donors, but for *beneficiaries* as well (“Get Help”), “Contact us” (proves that you’re a legitimate organization and makes donors feel like you’re accessible)
  - Websites should be updated at LEAST weekly. Daily is even better, especially for search engine optimization purposes (to be discussed later).
    - If potential donors go to your webpage and see only information from years ago, they’ll tend to think that your organization isn’t on top of things.
  - make sure your webpage is easy to navigate. If starting from scratch, draw out a sitemap before getting started.
    - If you’re not sure how user-friendly your site is, have someone unrelated to your program click through your site and give you feedback.
    - Keep all pages short and sweet. Provide as much information in as few words as possible. The internet has severely depleted the world’s collective attention span – make sure that you’re cognizant of this.
  - Encourage any other organizations or businesses that you work closely with to put a link to your website on theirs – the more links to your website, the better your search engine results will be (SEO will be discussed later)
  - A website isn’t enough anymore – in order to compete in today’s digital-media-happy charity world, you must have other online resources as well, here are some suggestions to increase your online presence...
- “Social media”
  - Won’t go too much in depth on social media as it’s not really a “fundraising” tool as much as it’s a way to stay connected to your donors and your beneficiaries and to keep them engaged with your cause
  - Engagement is vital in the internet age when people’s attention spans are extremely short and require instant gratification
  - Social media outlets like Facebook, twitter, blogs, etc. allow users not only to get a better sense of the “personality” of your charity, but also allow them to upload their own photos and videos, comment on your posts, and really feel like

they're a part of your organization – though this may not result in direct income, the loyalty that will be built through these mediums is invaluable

- Facebook – Causes page (<http://www.fundraising123.org/article/starting-cause-facebook>)
  - Encourage donors to become a fan of your page and re-post any news that you post – peer pressure works, your donors are one of your most powerful tools – if they talk about you to their friends, your credibility is strengthened
  - Facebook allows you to collect donations directly from your causes page
- Blog (Wordpress, blogger.com)/twitter
  - Blogs/twitter may seem overwhelming because you don't really have THAT much to share with your donors and can't see yourself posting everyday (blog), 5-10 times a day (twitter)... it doesn't matter. If you don't have any news on your own project, post links to relevant articles, videos, or even other blog posts. Even if your followers aren't reading about things that are specifically about your organization, you're still the ones engaging with them, you'll stick in their minds
  - Many charities are now using blogs as the platform for their websites. The blog formats are customizable and, best of all... it's free! Check out comicrelief.org to see a great example of one such website.
- Youtube (Animoto), flickr
  - Make sure you're linking to these things from your website!
  - Video is important and easy to create
    - YouTube is the web's #2 search engine
    - Film your special events, interview beneficiaries
      - Your staff may not have the know-how to edit videos yourself, but it's a great job for an intern/volunteer with some AV background!
      - You don't have to have that much original material to create an effective page... you can "favorite" videos related to your cause that were created by others as well
    - If you don't have any footage, or don't have the capacity to film events, use Animoto to turn still photos into professional-looking videos
      - Animoto has a nonprofit program that allows for free access to their premium subscription
      - Doesn't require an EIN, good for small organizations
    - Don't think that videos need to be professional quality, either. Shorter, more "organic" videos tend to do very well on Youtube, so even capturing short clips with your digital camera or cell phone is worthwhile. If you want to get into something slightly higher quality, consider investing in a Flip video camera. These small, inexpensive cameras (about \$100 each) come with basic video editing software

making it easy for anyone to create short, meaningful clips. Furthermore, flip offers nonprofits special benefits through its Flip Video Spotlight program. For more information visit [www.flipvideospotlight.com](http://www.flipvideospotlight.com).

- And don't forget, a picture is worth a thousand words! Use the website flickr to create online photo albums to share with your donors. People LOVE pictures... the more you give them, the more connected they will feel with the people/communities that your organization is helping which, as we said before, is extremely important
- Having all of these other online resources linked back to your site will not only provide new access points for your donors (and potential donors), it will also help your search engine rankings
  - Quick explanation of search engine optimization
    - Encourage others to link back to your site and re-post your videos, blog posts, etc.
    - Use keywords abundantly – think of a way to sum up your organization in a few words and use that phrase often - if your program is aimed at helping the homeless, make sure you use that phrase “helping the homeless” throughout your site in text bodies, headers, etc.
      - Most website software also has a place where you can enter “tags” or “keywords” – use these spaces and enter search terms that you think surfers who may be interested in your cause would use
        - E.g. our charity BWA is aimed at helping grassroots organizations in Africa, but we can't just put “Africa” as one of our tags, need to be more specific otherwise we'd be wasting our time advertising to surfers who may be interested in African animals or African safaris or African colonialism – instead we use keywords like “Africa water project,” “Africa orphan care,” etc.
- Google Grants, Youtube Nonprofit
  - Google grants: Google is one of the foremost champions of nonprofits online. Their program “Google Grants” offers selected nonprofits to utilize their online ad campaign services free of charge for a total value of up to \$330 per day (or \$10,000 per year). This program is extremely selective due to the high volume of applicants, so any nonprofit that decides to apply should set aside ample time to read (and re-read) the instructions to get a sense of exactly what Google is looking for. It can take upwards of 8 months from application to actually getting an ad campaign off the ground, but it's worth the wait!
  - Youtube nonprofit: Youtube is also making it easy for charities to enjoy premium benefits free of charge through its Youtube nonprofits program. In order to apply, your charity must already have a Youtube page up and running.

After that, the application process is quick and very easy (only takes about a week). If accepted into this program, you will be able to add a Donate button directly to your youtube page so that visitors inspired by your videos can donate immediately!

- Online tools:
  - Fundraising is changing quickly and drastically in the digital media age – even experts don't have it all figured out yet. Best way to keep up with everything is to follow fundraising blogs
  - If you don't have a Google account I suggest you get one – great for nonprofits
  - Google analytics
  - Blogs : Google Reader
    - Fundraisingcoach.com
    - nonprofitmarketingblog.com
    - Donorpowerblog.com
    - Fundraising coach.com
    - Stepbystepfundraising.com
    - Chronicle of Philanthropy website (philanthropy.com) has a great Blogroll which borrows from all of the best fundraising blogs and puts everything in one place (under the Community tab on their website)
  - Network for good's online fundraising how-to: fundraising123.com
- Team up!
  - Team up with other charities/organizations with complementary programs and projects. Many of these things are time consuming, expensive, or both. Though we're all vying for the attention of the same potential donors, there's no such thing as "competition" in the charity world – we're all trying to do as much good as possible and sometimes that requires some help. Working with other organizations on special projects, events or campaigns not only helps spread out the work load, it also allows for invaluable idea sharing. Don't be afraid to ask for help... we all need it sometimes!