Direct Mail / Major Gift Tug of War

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Direct Mail still lives and works!

- Acquisition
- Renewals
- Year end campaigns
- Thank you’s
- Newsletters
- Upgrades
Direct Mail’s position in the marketing and fundraising model

Why direct mail still works?
- People still love paper
- Comprehension is better with paper vs a computer screen
- More time spent with mail
- Story telling is possible
- Cute pictures are possible
- Demographics are in our favor
- Very targeted
- Can develop long term relationships with letters and appeal
- People enjoy it!

Direct Mail builds our files
- Best method of acquisition of donors
- Cost effective way of renewing donors
- Allows for the creation of databases of donors with transaction histories
- Allows for analysis, model building, predictive analytics
- Direct mail is a feeder for Major Gift Work - not a tug or war at all!
- Direct mail is the haystack - Major Gift finds the needles!
Direct Mail’s position in the fundraising process

Craig DePole, Sr. Vice President, NewportOne

At the center ..............
The Middle Donor

- “Too good” for DM and “Not good enough” for exclusive major donor relationship.
- Dance with the one that brung ya!
- Hybrid program provides the bridge
- Why?
  - 1% of donors = 20% of revenue.
  - Prime major giving feeder.
Identifying Middle Donors

- All organizations will vary:
  - Staffing level
  - Giving history
  - Cumulative vs. single gift
  - Utilizing wealth screening and other qualifying overlay data
  - Donor preferences/requests
  - Downward migration from Major Donors

Don’t stop talking to Middle Donors

... or asking!

- 8-10 appeals per year
- 2-3 cultivations
- 1 renewal (at least)
- E-communications and solicitations
- Personal emails, phone calls

Personalize, personalize, personalize

- Direct mail to communicate the need and make the ask
  - Higher touch techniques and production values, if possible
- Personal Concierge or Liaison
  - Include your business card
  - Make communication natural and easy
  - Build in exclusivity
- Online
  - All regular emails
  - Additional personal emails
Impact Report

Outcomes

► More upgrades
► More revenue
► More time to focus on truly Major Donors
Shelly Stuart CFRE, CAWA

I Love Direct Marketing!

Why the Tug of War?
Because everyone has goals to meet
So what's the plan?

You have a Gold Mine and a pipeline
Direct marketing is where most of our major donors COME FROM IN THE FIRST PLACE.
Why exclude donors from direct marketing in the first place?

- The donor asks to be removed from direct mail and/or email appeals—suggest reducing the frequency.
- Major gifts officer has developed a substitute communications and solicitation strategy.
- The donor passes away

How to Decide and Who Decides:

Get Key Team Members Involved

- Team Leader - Director of Development
- Major Gifts Team
- Annual Giving/Direct Marketing Team
  - Direct Mail
  - Online Giving
  - Data Base Manager
  - Sponsorship
Make it a Team Effort

Is it really all or nothing?

- Consider reducing (but not stopping) all DM appeals for donors who have been transferred to a major gifts officer.
- Don’t assume donors wants all this to stop.
- Utilize mid-level DM strategies.
- Remember to continue non-ask communications.