Digital Fundraising Playbook Series:

Planning a Multi-channel Campaign

Introduction and Program Overview

When you're thinking about launching a digital campaign, your first questions might be about which channels to use and how the campaign should appear across those channels. Every channel is a little different: Some of your audiences may see all of them and some supporters may only see one. You'll want to spend some time planning out your digital campaign so that you're using the right channels, getting your messaging and timing perfect, and having as much impact as you can with your efforts.

Program Composition

Before you start to write a single email or post a single image, you should sit down and plan your campaign. Ask yourself these questions:

What is the goal of my campaign?

> Is your goal fundraising, event registration, acquiring email addresses? Whatever your goal is, make sure you're clear on it. Don't try to do more than one thing with your campaign. Find your goal and stay committed to it. You're going to want to make sure it's represented in everything you do in your campaign.

Who will my audiences be?

> Audiences are just pools of donors or other supporters who share common characteristics. Although different channels (e.g., social media, email, web) might overlap, not all address the same audience. You might have a mix of people who are loyal donors or previous event attendees, as well as people who like your organization but have never engaged with it. So, write down who the audiences for your campaign might be. Think about how to make your messages feel relevant to them and look for ways to personalize messages whenever possible.

What channels will I use?

> For a typical campaign, plan to use email, website and Facebook. These are likely the three largest audiences that you have, and they will generate the vast majority of your results. You'll want your campaign to look consistent across all these channels to help supporters orient themselves and build on the repetition they'll experience, which is going to help your campaign be more successful. If you've already mastered these strategies, consider amplifying your message by adding channels like Instagram, asking staff and corporate or local influencers to spread your message, and adding [paid](#) digital advertising.

> You may also wish to cross-reference social channels if you're using more than one. For example, you could post this on your Facebook page: "Make sure to follow us on Instagram for additional photos and videos of [insert specific content reference]."

What stories will I tell?

Think about the goal you're trying to achieve.

- Are you asking people to donate?
    - What stories can you share from the work your organization is doing that will inspire those donations?

- Are you looking for event registrants?
    - What can you tell them about a previous event that will inspire them?
    - Are there testimonials, pictures and videos you can share to encourage people to register? Is there a keynote speaker or hot topic you can highlight?

Take an inventory of the assets you have available: images, quotes, video content. Do you have what you need to construct a solid, effective story?

Create a campaign brief

Once you've done some thinking about the general outline of your campaign, you'll want to write everything down in one place. This campaign brief is the key to running a successful multi-channel campaign.

Whether you're running it yourself or you have multiple people contributing to the campaign, writing down all the channel strategies, messaging points and timelines is absolutely necessary for executing your campaign correctly. By going through this process, you'll ensure that you have all the information you need to complete the campaign and not miss any details or get confused when you're in the thick of it. Here's what a good campaign brief includes:

- Campaign dates: What dates will the campaign run?

- Campaign description: Summarize the campaign in one or two sentences.

- Goal: Clearly articulate the goal. (If you can't do this, you aren't ready to run the campaign yet.)

- Channels to use: Write down the channels you will use to implement your campaign.

- Timeline: Develop your timeline by writing down each element, including emails, social posts, website updates and the date for any changes in any element. Don't forget about a date to remove any website information (banners, etc.) after the campaign is over.

- Key messages and call to action: Write down the key messages for your campaign and the call to action. The call to action must relate back to your goal. Do you need more foster volunteers? Do you need to raise funds with a specific amount in mind?

- Description of each campaign element: Figure out what needs to be in every part of your campaign. Here's an example:

    Email #1 (include date to send)
    - Messaging
    - Call to action
    - Signer
    - Personalization
    - Design details
    - Audience

Donation form
- Messaging
- Design details
- Confirmation page messages

Social media post #1
- Messages
- Imagery or video
- Include Facebook or Instagram fundraiser?
- Where to link to?

Reminders and updates (as needed)

Plan how you'll track campaign results

Once your campaign is over, you won't be able to go back and add tracking that wasn't there, so this is an important step to complete up-front if you want to track your campaign results.

Your donation management system may include the ability to add tracking to your campaign forms. Make sure you understand what your options look like ahead of time. It may be best to create a new campaign donation form, or you may be able to use an existing form with campaign tracking.

If you're using Google Analytics or another type of analytics tool, make sure you've generated a campaign tag for ALL your links, and that you're using it consistently.

Analyze the data and iterate

It's easy to overlook this last step in your campaign process (you've finally completed the campaign!), but it's an important one for continued learning and improvement. Run a report on how your campaign did and get curious about the results. Some questions to ask:

- How did each channel perform?
- Which channel was your strongest and which was your weakest?
- Who are the people who took action? Are they new to you? Are they your most loyal supporters?

When you ask these questions, you may realize that you're not completely certain of the answers. Stay positive and get curious. Now you have an opportunity to find out how to answer them in the future. Maybe you'll want to add something new to your email lists to identify audiences or maybe a new flag in your donor database (aka constituent management system or CRM).

Take time at the end of your campaign to reflect on what you could have done better. That will help you learn how to improve the next campaign and enhance your success rate.

Conclusion

Multi-channel digital campaigns are all about planning and coordination. Taking the time up-front to plot out all the aspects of your campaign and making sure you have what you need will ensure that your campaigns are as consistent and effective as they can be. Every time you run a campaign, look at the

results of your previous campaigns. See what you learned and what you'd like to try to make your next campaign even better. The opportunities are limitless!

Resources

- [Google Analytics for Beginners](#)
- [8 Surefire Ways to Run a Successful Fundraising Campaign](#)