

The Top Five Things You Can Do Today

to get your online fundraising and eMarketing on track quickly

In the busy world of nonprofits, sometimes it's difficult to know where to focus your time and efforts. Your seemingly endless list of projects can feel crushing, and the outcome of attending an industry conference or seminar – that is supposed to help – can leave you feeling overwhelmed and unsure of where to begin. So instead of suggesting that you conquer the world, Blackbaud has boiled down the most practical and important tasks involved in getting your online fundraising and eMarketing on track quickly. Based on 25 years of experience working with more than 24,000 non-profits and implementing more than 5,000 websites and online strategy plans, we've identified things to do today to be more successful right away.

Blackbaud's "Top Five" white paper – where we share the top five things you can do today to ensure your success in integrated fundraising, effective eMarketing, successful social media, impactful peer-to-peer fundraising, and online fundraising – provides practical advice to help you kick start your online marketing. But as you're reading through the top five, remember, it's important your organization is prepared and willing to act on these in the near term. Organizations that have been successful in implementing the top five typically have three things in order:

1. Leadership engaged and supportive of the efforts and investment
2. Personalization of the Top Five tips for their organization
3. The needed infrastructure to support these efforts

Integrated Fundraising

To make the most of multi-channel integration, get started with these five steps:

1. Identify and prioritize donors into clusters based on similar behavior. Start with the groups of donors who you communicate with regularly and from whom you ask for a donation. Assign a value to the cluster groups so you learn where to spend the appropriate amount of time and effort.

- Smart Analytics can help! Check out Blackbaud's The Giving Score™.

2. Have an interdepartmental marketing / communications meeting. It's important to break down the walls of the silos. Bring everyone together to create an annual plan and clearly discuss and agree on when and what types of communications are to be sent.

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3. Develop the message platform - the actual message or theme you will use with different groups of supporters- by creating it to fit targeted clusters. Your organization may want to create a message platform for your major donors, monthly donors, and/or lapsed donors, as examples. Be consistent across channels. Your message should be consistent across the organization no matter what channel is used.

4. Create an annual schedule that includes a test plan. Determine what your organization wants to test such as: “do we want to find out if these donors will give us \$5 more for a new program?” or “do we want to find out if these donors will enlist other people?” Think about the questions your organization wants answered from each of your key audience segments.

5. Watch and analyze the competition. Observe and track trends. Donors tend to give to affinity organizations. A donor who gives to one type of organization (i.e. Human rights, shelters, food banks) is likely to give to multiple organizations of the same type.

Effective eMarketing

Follow these five tips and tricks to get clicks:

1. Audit one of your emails for strong content. Rely on the “four P’s” to build a strong message. Make sure your email describes your “product” in a compelling way – the promise of a warm, fuzzy feeling can be very motivating! Use “place” and “price” effectively so the reader knows exactly what you need and how to take action. And “promote” your mission effectively, so the reader understands what makes you unique and valuable!

2. Plan a single item to test in your next email. The subject line is easy and sometimes has dramatic results. Make an attempt to shorten it and pull keywords to the front of the line.

3. Check your emails in different browsers. At a minimum, your email needs to be tested in Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, and Google Chrome before you hit “send” to ensure the majority of your readers are seeing what you intend for them to see.

4. Write (or rewrite) your “Welcome” email. If you’re not sending an acknowledgement to each person who subscribes to your enewsletter you’re missing a valuable marketing opportunity. Your “Welcome” letter should offer something interesting (e.g. a report, photos, or interview transcription) to keep the new subscriber thinking of you. It should also motivate a next action – you don’t have to make an overt request at this time, but why not suggest they forward your email to a friend?

5. Create a new segment to test in your next campaign. Now is the time to send a completely unique message to people who’ve given their email address but have never taken action. Don’t be afraid to be creative – you’ve got very little to lose with this group until they become a supporter!

Successful Social Media

Do these five things to begin “listening” and analyzing your social media presence.

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1. Choose and focus on 3 platforms. Simplify by focusing on the “big 3”. Focus on putting great content on your website on a regular basis- it is the face and home of your organization. Content is currency in the social media world.

- a. Blogs or website where you are producing content on a regular basis.
- b. Facebook
- c. Twitter

2. Listen. It is important to turn the megaphone around and listen to what people are saying. Active listening will allow you to understand what people are saying about your organization and allow you to respond in a timely manner when appropriate. Listen for: Organization Name, Names of Key Staff, Program Names, Campaign Names, Events, Key words, Local Content.

3. Use these helpful tools to listen:

- a. Search.twitter.com for monitoring search content
- b. SocialMention.com for monitoring across the entire Internet for everything
- c. IceRocket.com for monitoring blogs
- d. BoardReader.com for monitoring discussion boards
- e. BackTweets.com to see everybody linking to your organization's website on twitter
- f. Google Alerts

4. Create a listening dashboard in iGoogle by just using RSS feeds. Use it on a daily basis to make sure you're not missing any social chatter and share the link with people across your organization.

5. Find out how well you are listening today and where you have room for improvement by completing this Social Media Listening Exercise at: <http://www.slideshare.net/chadnorman/skilbuilding-listeningwithsocialmediapartii>

Impactful Peer-to-peer Fundraising

Build a plan to harness the power of people with these five things:

1. Reward online registration - Online registration is a must-have. Online should be the first way you promote your event and it's the best way option to offer for registering for the event. People who register online raise 6x more than those who do not use online fundraising tools

- a. Have the online tools needed
- b. Offer discounts or incentives

2. Encourage everyone to join or start a team. Encourage teaming as the best way to participate. Let participants know they'll have fun and have a better chance of making a difference for your organization if they are a part of a team. People who participate as part of a team are more likely to set and surpass their goals and have better retention rates.

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3. Focus on team captains. Team captains bring in 33% of peer-to-peer event fundraising revenue. Team captains also recruit and motivate other participants, making them critical to the success of your event, and to the likelihood of you achieving your fundraising goal.

4. Provide samples of everything. In the off-season spend time as an organization creating an online resource center where you give them examples of “support me”, “join me”, “thank you” samples. Provide examples across different channels including email, mail, social, phone and face-to-face.

5. Use incentives to motivate. Friendly competition and recognition is a good thing. Think creatively about the types of incentives you can offer.

Online Fundraising

Act on these five recommendations to maximize your online giving:

1. Audit your web presence with a critical eye. Would your site design, functionality, and security win the confidence of a potential new donor?

2. Search for yourself on major search engines, by organization name as well as by key words you expect to be searched. Is your site optimized for visitors to find through search engines? If not, add content-rich key words to your home page, giving overview page, and an “about us” page ASAP.

3. Audit last year’s end-of-year online campaigns. Are you fully embracing the opportunities provided by year-end giving spikes? How can you message more effectively for your upcoming end-of-year or special event campaign?

4. Analyze your site’s information architecture, navigation, and content. Is your site built to achieve your visitors’ priorities or your internal priorities? Can each key audience group easily accomplish the goal of its visit within 3-5 clicks? If not, choose a visitor persona and improve navigation for that type of visitor today.

5. Review the “ask” strings on your donation forms. Are you consistently receiving gifts at the top or bottom of your string? Are you outperforming or underperforming industry averages? Is there an opportunity to ask different types of visitors for different amounts?

We hope you find these tips extremely helpful and encourage you to put them into practice as soon as possible. Of course we’re here to help answer any questions and provide additional information you might need so don’t hesitate to contact us.

About Blackbaud

Blackbaud is the leading global provider of software and services designed specifically for nonprofit organizations, enabling them to improve operational efficiency, build strong relationships, and raise more money to support their missions. Approximately 24,000 organizations — including The American Red Cross, Cancer Research UK, Earthjustice, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Lincoln Center, The Salvation Army, The Taft School, Tulsa Community Foundation, Ursinus College, the WGBH Educational Foundation, and Yale University — use one or more Blackbaud products and services for fundraising, constituent relationship management, financial management, website management, direct marketing, education administration, ticketing, business intelligence, prospect research, consulting, and analytics. Since 1981, Blackbaud’s sole focus and expertise has been partnering with nonprofits and providing them the solutions they need to make a difference in their local communities and worldwide. Headquartered in the United States, Blackbaud also has operations in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. For more information, visit www.blackbaud.com.

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