

Grassroots Fundraising Journal

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20 Years of Growing Farmworker Activists

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For twenty years Student Action with Farmworkers has worked to bring together students, community members, and farmworkers in the Southeast to work for justice in the agricultural system. Our feature article shares the secrets of SAF's successful volunteer-led online fundraiser.

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I Can See Clearly Now

By Priscilla Hung

*I can see clearly now the rain is gone
I can see all obstacles in my way
Gone are the dark clouds that had me down
It's gonna be a bright bright bright bright sun shiny day*

It's summertime. That wonderful time of year when fundraising and programs slow down a bit. We get a chance to relax and recharge. In between sunny picnics and barbecues, it's also a great time to take stock of our fundraising infrastructure—the behind-the-scenes people and systems that make the fundraising possible.

Read how Student Action with Farmworkers conducts a volunteer-led fundraising campaign that takes place all online. Stephanie Roth raises the question in the back of many of our minds, “Is it time to hire a dedicated grassroots fundraiser?” and provides a clear guide to help you come up with the best answer for your own organization. The fundraising database rears its head, with a simple way to help you figure out whether you need one database for your organization or many, with a few case studies of what other groups did. We round out this issue with our fundraising technology column on how to make online video work for you.

Many of you know that I stepped down as executive director of GIFT last year to move to Southern California and have been serving as interim editor for the *Journal* since then. In the midst of my first real summer here in many years, I am loving living near a beach where it's actually warm enough to swim in the ocean. As I relax and recharge, now is the right time for me to step down as interim editor.

I am thrilled to announce that Ryan Li Dahlstrom will be the new editor of the *Grassroots Fundraising Journal*. Ryan Li has been on staff at GIFT for over a year and is assuming a new role as movement building director, part of which includes leading the *Journal*. Ryan Li brings the perspective, experience, and connections that have made the *Journal* your go-to source of grassroots fundraising information the past 30 years. I am confident that, under his editorship, you will continue to get the practical, accessible, and relevant information you need. GIFT's longtime communications director, Jennifer Emiko Boyden, will continue working alongside him. I will continue to be part of the *Journal* by serving on the Editorial Board.

Ryan Li, Jennifer, and I, along with hundreds of others—hopefully you, too!—will be at GIFT's conference, Money for Our Movements, in Oakland this August. Please say hello (and let us know what you would like to see in future issues of the *Journal*)!

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SAF board and staff receiving \$100,000 grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC Foundation in celebration of its 10th anniversary. Photo Credit: BCBSNC Foundation

“Soy Safista”

Turning Community Ownership into Community Dollars

By Heather Yandow & Meredith Emmett

STUDENT ACTION WITH FARMWORKERS (SAF) has a saying: Soy Safista. Everyone is SAF, and everyone can tell the story of SAF. That ethos is at the core of the organization’s successful volunteer fundraising campaign where SAF alumni and Board members share their SAF stories and ask friends and family to support the organization.

SAF developed this campaign after taking a closer look at their fundraising strategies. The organization was in a situation in which many nonprofits find themselves—their fundraising program was doing okay, but not flourishing. The organization had dozens of different fundraising activities spreading themselves thin in their efforts to raise money. SAF needed to streamline their strategies and grow their revenue. So they turned to us at Third Space Studio. Third Space Studio partners with nonprofits around the country to help them become more focused and strategic.

We worked with SAF board and staff to determine the organization’s strengths, analyze their current fundraising strategies, and identify which strategies should be abandoned. After letting

go of labor-intensive events and a few other low-performing strategies, the organization began to think about new strategies that would build on their strengths and efficiently raise money for their work.

Over their 20-year history, SAF has chosen to focus on individual donor contributions to ensure they have ample unrestricted funds to work with undocumented students, engage in advocacy, and organize students to improve conditions for farmworkers. As Melinda Wiggins, Executive Director of SAF says, “We don’t want to be limited as to what we do, who we do it with, and how we do it.”

Given SAF’s focus on individual donors, a large base of alumni, and its “Soy Safista” mantra, a volunteer-driven campaign was a natural fit. Through the campaign, SAF wanted to build relationships with donors who care about the work of the organization as well as work toward its mission by developing the leadership skills of young people and Latinos, two key groups of volunteer fundraisers.

This campaign has been successful for some of the same

reasons SAF began the campaign: a large base of alumni willing to volunteer to fundraise, and the ability of everyone involved to tell good stories about the organization. The campaign also succeeded because of SAF's strong fundraising culture, in which fundraising is an integral part of programmatic work. All program participants—interns, fellows, youth, and student organizers—fundraise as part of their leadership training. SAF also has an evolution mindset, meaning that each year SAF evaluates and changes the campaign, tweaking big and little things about how it worked. As a result, SAF has continually raised more money and found more donors.

The Campaign

SAF's campaign is a short, volunteer-based online fundraising campaign that happens once a year.

- **Short:** The campaign period, including training and online fundraising is only two months. Volunteer fundraisers pick a two-day to one-week period to complete their campaign.
- **Volunteer-based:** 15 to 20 SAF alumni and board members participate, and staff support their work.
- **Online:** SAF uses an online platform that accepts donations and tracks fundraising progress (see more about technology options below).

After several campaigns, SAF has developed a timeline for preparing and carrying out its online fundraising campaign:

- **Two months before the campaign,** SAF focuses on recruiting volunteer fundraisers through both broad appeals and targeted conversations. They also review and update existing materials and create any new materials they will need to train their volunteers, carry out the campaign, and thank donors.
- **One month before the campaign,** SAF confirms their volunteer fundraisers, sets up a date for a group training, and shares materials about the campaign with fundraisers.
- **Two weeks before the campaign,** SAF hosts an in-person training (with online options for those far away) for volunteers that covers the basics of the technology and fundraising skills needed for the campaign. Volunteers are encouraged to set up their online fundraising websites during this training. SAF staff also follow up with those unable to attend the training to provide personalized support.
- **During the campaign,** SAF spends a significant amount of time coordinating the campaign. This includes sending weekly updates to volunteer fundraisers with donation

totals, tips, and success stories. Staff also personally contact each volunteer fundraiser before their individual fundraising period begins. In addition, they work to fix technology glitches and process all donations coming into the organization. This can be a huge task; SAF had as many as 100 gifts come in during a four-day period at the end of 2011.

- **After the campaign,** SAF sends out the final campaign results and asks for feedback on successful strategies and suggested improvements.

The goal of this campaign is not only to increase individual donor funding for the organization, but also to increase the number of people who know about and support the organization. By asking volunteer fundraisers to reach out to their communities, SAF is broadening its reach and increasing the number of people who know about its work and join its mailing list.

The Technology

SAF uses an online database and fundraising tool called NEON by Z2 Systems. Although there were some bumps in getting the database up and running, SAF staff have found this fundraising tool indispensable in their work. In particular, NEON has a feature where volunteers can create personalized fundraising pages that include their stories and fundraising goals. The donations made on these pages are logged directly into SAF's database, making donor tracking extremely simple.

Volunteer fundraisers found the system relatively easy to use once SAF staff trained them. In particular, the ability to create professional looking pages and track their fundraising progress online enabled volunteers to run successful campaigns.

Several other comparable online systems exist that allow organizations to do what is often called peer-to-peer or social fundraising. These tools include:

- CauseVox: causevox.com
- Chip In: chipin.com
- Razoo: razoo.com
- FirstGiving: firstgiving.com

For more information, tips, and suggestions, check out Idealware's article on tools for "friend-to-friend" fundraising: idealware.org/FGTOnlineDistributedFundraising.php.

The Success

SAF has now completed its online fundraising campaign three times, raising more money and finding more new donors each year. In its 2011 campaign, SAF raised \$23,965 through online volunteer fundraising, a 75 percent increase over the

course of three campaigns.

What has caused this growth? While the number of volunteer fundraisers and average gift amount has stayed steady, the volunteer fundraisers have become more effective. The average volunteer fundraiser raised \$1,331 in the 2011 campaign, up 64 percent from the first year. The number of donors secured by each volunteer fundraiser has also grown significantly. In 2011, each volunteer collected gifts from an average of 21 donors, up from 15 in the first year.

“I’m amazed at what our volunteers have been able to accomplish,” says Melinda Wiggins. “Three years ago, an online volunteer-driven fundraising campaign was just an idea. Now, we’ve got a sustainable annual fundraising campaign that brings in significant revenue and supports our mission.”

SAF made a conscious decision to find more effective fundraisers. In particular, they look for people who:

- are close to the organization—mostly alumni and board members;
- have strong connections in their own communities;
- are active online, mainly on Facebook; and
- are comfortable with online technology such as email and donating online.

These four factors make for an ideal online fundraiser who can tell compelling stories about the organization and get those stories out to their community, through online social networks and otherwise. SAF also looked to create a pool of fundraisers with geographic diversity to minimize competition for donors.

Tips for Volunteer Fundraisers

As mentioned above, the online campaign has grown over the years due to volunteer fundraisers becoming more and more effective. If this is a strategy your organization wants to try, here are some tips for your volunteers:

- **Set a stretch goal for yourself.** Set a realistic, yet aspirational goal for your campaign. This goal will help focus your efforts and motivate potential donors. Be sure to mention your goal—and how much you have left to raise—in your online and personal appeals for support.
- **Make your own significant gift.** It’s hard to ask other people for gifts if you have not given. Be the first person to make a gift to your campaign.
- **Create your story.** Donors will be motivated by the story of why you care about the organization’s work. Wiggins says this story can often be found through three questions: 1) What is your first memory of the organization? 2) What is your connection with the mission? 3) What difference has the work of the

organization made in your life? SAF alumnae Michelle Lozano Villegas stated, “I was really nervous about fundraising at the beginning, but I got really excited remembering the work I did with SAF. I know that donors aren’t giving money just for me, but because SAF deserves it!”

- **Get creative about your pool of potential donors.** Think about all of the social connections you have: friends, family, co-workers (current and former), teachers (current and former), mentors, members of your faith community, neighbors, gym buddies, etc. “You never know who is going to give,” said SAF Board member Andrea Kells. “I got a donation from a friend I hadn’t seen since high school and from someone I’d only met once through Facebook.”
- **Do the math on your asks.** Once you have determined your fundraising goal and list of potential donors (or at least groups of donors), you can start to identify the number and size of gifts you need. To raise \$500, you could find five gifts of \$100 or 100 gifts of \$5—whichever is right for you. One great tool for this is the donor pyramid—a simple table of how many gifts you need at each gift level.
- **Communicate regularly with your potential donors.** The most successful volunteer fundraisers posted on Facebook at least once a day and sent at least one email a day to all their potential donors, including those that had already given during the campaign. These emails included updates on progress toward the campaign goal as well as stories about the organization’s work. Because you are keeping the campaign short (under a week), the emails and Facebook posts are unlikely to become overwhelming for your potential donors.
- **Make a personal ask to your potential donors.** The old fundraising adage is still true: people give to people, even online. Email, call, or meet in-person with donors to make a personal ask. Be sure this ask includes the amount you are requesting (as determined by your planning) and a story that is relevant to what you know about the potential donor. You may choose to focus on different aspects of the organization or your work with them depending on the potential donor’s interests or your connection with them. For example, one alumnae of SAF focused on how her internship taught her to be a better nonprofit staffer when she asked former co-workers for donations. “My personal connection to SAF was what motivated my donors. They really wanted to support

something I was working on,” says Lyndsey Beutin.

- **Unrelated rewards generally are not worth it.** Several volunteer fundraisers used rewards unrelated to SAF’s mission, such as a silly prize for the biggest donation or an embarrassing task for the volunteer fundraiser if they reached their goal. These activities usually took a lot of work and didn’t make a big difference in the volunteer’s success. However, rewards that are directly related to the work of the organization can have a significant impact. Board member Irene Godinez talked a lot about food—and the farmworkers that helped to grow it—during her fundraising campaign. The granddaughter of farmers in Mexico, Godinez’s reward was rooted in her personal connection to SAF’s work and was directly related to food. “My best strategy for recruiting donors was to offer a homemade Mexican meal at my mother’s house for the biggest donor,” says Godinez. “Within a couple of hours, I had lots of new donors. The winner and his family came to a huge gathering at my mother’s house and it was wonderful to be able to tell everyone why they were there. My mother loved it and wants to do something else for SAF now. She had never been a donor before.”

Lessons Learned

- **Online fundraising requires a unique set of skills and trainings to develop those skills.** At first, SAF’s volunteer fundraising campaign included both online and offline activities, but they realized after the first year that the two needed different kinds of support. Now, the campaign is solely focused on online fundraising. The training for volunteer fundraisers includes not only how

to use the technology, but more basic training on how to make the ask for support and build relationships with potential donors.

- **Keep the timeline of the campaign short.** In the first year, volunteer fundraisers had campaigns that lasted as long as two months. SAF learned that it was hard to build and sustain excitement over that period—and donations suffered because of it. They also learned that most people gave at the beginning and end of the campaign, no matter how many days the campaign lasted. Now, volunteer fundraisers are encouraged to keep their campaigns to a week or less.
- **Work one-on-one with volunteer fundraisers.** SAF provides training and support for volunteer fundraisers as a large group and then reaches out to volunteers individually to check on their progress and help troubleshoot. It is this one-on-one support that has paid off over the years.
- **Include staff as fundraisers.** Staff can model best practices for volunteer fundraisers, reach out to lapsed organizational donors, or strengthen relationships with current donors. SAF’s executive director participates in each campaign, reaching out to her contacts and to the organization’s donors. “It’s a great way for me to engage our current donors to give more or move to online giving,” says Wiggins. “And I get to work alongside board members and alumni and build my connection with them at the same time.”
- **Track and share what works.** SAF collects feedback from volunteer fundraisers after each year’s campaign. The best fundraising strategies, as well as tips from past volunteer fundraisers, are shared with each new crop of volunteers.

READ MORE ABOUT ONLINE FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS

Visit grassrootsfundraising.org/archive for these articles:

Building Online Community: A Key to Fundraising on the Internet by Mary Ann McGivern

Meeting Your Match: Using Matching Gifts to Supercharge Your Online Fundraising Campaign by Nzinga Koné-Miller

Raising Funds—and People Power—Online by Brian Dever and Erin Barnes

Raising Money With E-Mail by Madeline Stanionis

Student Action with Farmworkers is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose mission is to bring students and farmworkers together to learn about each other’s lives, share resources and skills, improve conditions for farmworkers, and build diverse coalitions working for social change. saf-unite.org

Third Space Studio works with nonprofits big and small to help them become more focused and strategic. Through strategic planning, business model development, facilitation, and coaching, Meredith Emmett and Heather Yandow help nonprofits work smarter and be more successful. thirdspacestudio.com



Taking the Plunge

Is it Time to Hire a Grassroots Fundraiser?

Staff of Forward Together, a community-based organization that recently hired a dedicated grassroots fundraiser, at the General Strike in Oakland.

By Stephanie Roth

MANY ORGANIZATIONS THAT RELY mostly on funding from foundation or government grants struggle with the question of whether to hire a staff member to focus on raising money from individual donors. While grassroots fundraising should ideally be integrated into all aspects of an organization and all staff members' job descriptions (even if to a limited extent), there will likely come a point when your individual donor program will require dedicated staff in order to grow your number of supporters and, ultimately, your income.

First, a definition: I use the term "grassroots fundraising" to refer to any and all fundraising activities that involve building a broad base of individual donors to support your organization's work. This includes membership dues, special events, as well as major gift programs. Grassroots fundraising is not just about getting small gifts, or raising money from your membership. It is about raising money from the people who make up your broader community and care about your group—including constituents, members, clients, customers, allies, and friends. It's also about building relationships to secure donors for the long-term.

Consider the following scenario:

An advocacy organization working on issues of violence against women, primarily rape and domestic violence, was founded ten years ago. The founding director had years of experience as a feminist leader and community organizer and was well known by foundation funders in that city. She was successful at obtaining some foundation grants to get the organization off the ground, and over the next several years, the budget grew to almost \$500,000, 95 percent of which was from foundations.

By the organization's 10-year anniversary, it was raising about \$20,000 a year (about 4 percent of the budget) from individual donors, mostly from a special event and an end-of-year mail appeal. It had increased its paid staff to six, including a full-time development director. The job description of the development director included everything from seeking foundation grants to special events and other individual donor activities. However, because of the demands of grant-seeking, reporting and research, when it came to grassroots fundraising, she had little time for more than the occasional mail appeal or fundraising dinner.

In the wake of the 2008 recession, some of the organization's long-time foundation supporters changed their funding priorities, which resulted in a 20 percent decline in revenue. As staff scrambled to figure out ways to replace the loss of foundation funding, they wondered if they could find a few individual major donors to fill in the gap. It didn't take long to realize this was wishful thinking, since it takes significant time, attention and resources to build a grassroots fundraising program that includes substantial income from major gifts.

Stories like this have become all too familiar in the past few years. Unfortunately, they sometimes end with organizations having to close their doors, or, at the very least, make significant budget cuts—at a time when their work may be needed more than ever.

One of the reasons many organizations struggle to raise even a small percentage of their budget from individual donors is because they put the vast majority of their staff fundraising time into grant-seeking. If your organization is one that could

be supported by a broad base of individual donors (which would be true of most readers of the *Grassroots Fundraising Journal*), then you have to make it a priority in how you allocate staff time and resources as well as how you engage with members, volunteers and board members.

Assessing the Need

As you consider whether it is time to hire a dedicated grassroots fundraiser for your organization, here are some questions to explore:

1. Do you believe that it is important and possible for your work to be supported primarily by a broad base of individual donors?

Many nonprofit staff confess that even though they wish their funding came from a broad base of individual donors, they don't believe it is possible. They don't think that the relatively large grants they receive from foundations could ever be replaced by individuals.

The reality is that many organizations have always raised most of their funds from individual donors, including membership organizations like the ACLU, human rights groups like Amnesty International and Jewish Voice for Peace, faith-based organizations, and organizations that are structured as 501(C)4s (to be able to do lobbying and other electoral campaign work). You should only consider hiring a dedicated grassroots fundraiser if you are in it for the long haul and are willing to invest in staffing and other resources needed to create a successful individual donor program.

2. What are you not able to accomplish at this time (without this staff position)?

- Are you missing opportunities to raise money from individuals, such as including a fundraising component in your organizing campaigns or just making a point of regularly asking people close to the organization to give?
- Are there people in your community and wider networks who would be likely to give if you asked them?
- Are you already doing all you can to raise money from individual donors, but your program just isn't growing from one year to the next?

If your answer to these questions is yes, you might want to consider hiring a grassroots fundraiser on staff.

Getting Started

If you have decided to take the plunge, you need to think about what it will take to create the right position as well as the right environment for a grassroots fundraiser to succeed in their job.

What is the job of a grassroots fundraiser?

When you consider the range of activities required to build a base of individual donors who will support you year in and year out (rather than just making a one-time gift), it becomes clear that it requires focused and ongoing attention as well as organizational

resources. Here are some of the key responsibilities and tasks of a grassroots fundraiser:

- **Coordinate the annual fundraising planning process.** In partnership with other development staff, set goals that are tied to programmatic goals and budget needs and evaluate past performance, including donor retention rates, growth (or decline) in numbers of donors, and efforts to build stronger relationships with donors.
- **Manage individual donor campaigns.** For example, plan and implement an end-of-year appeal, which includes writing the appeal, designing the package, editing the appeal for online/email solicitation, securing and/or segmenting your mailing list to deliver appropriate messages to different people (i.e. long time donors versus those who have not yet given), and coordinating follow up calls and visits with major donors.
- **Oversee the development of stronger relationships with donors.** Send timely thank you letters, communicate with donors throughout the year, and engage donors in other aspects of the organization's work.
- **Organize special events.** Plan anything from an annual large-scale gala to house parties, small events to engage major donors, or donor and volunteer appreciation events.
- **Manage fundraising data.** Capture donor information, and produce reports that allow you to analyze trends in response rates to appeals, donor retention rates, growth of monthly giving numbers, as well as the histories and relationships you have with specific donors that will inform how to engage with them in the future.
- **Maintain online visibility and communications,** including through relevant social media networks.
- **Help build a fundraising team(s) to implement campaigns, events and other activities.** These teams may include board members, volunteers as well as other staff.

What needs to be in place for a grassroots fundraiser to succeed?

While the tasks listed above are time-consuming enough to keep many staff members busy, it is extremely important to keep in mind that no organization—even one with a large development department—depends on the fundraising staff alone to raise money. Here are some key elements of successful fundraising that you will want to have in place, or at least in process, before bringing in your first grassroots fundraiser:

- A board of directors that understands its role in fundraising and is willing to be involved
- An executive director or equivalent staff leader(s) who also plays a leadership role in fundraising
- Technology, even if most of it is “on the cheap,” including relatively up-to-date computers and software, a fundraising database, and a functional website
- A commitment to include fundraising in all staff members' job descriptions

Case Studies: Forward Together and Community Voices Heard

Hear from two organizations that hired dedicated grassroots fundraisers. We interviewed Maria Nakae, development director at Forward Together (FT), and Michelle Perez, director of administration & institutional giving, and Talia Schank, individual giving coordinator, at Community Voices Heard (CVH):

Why did your organization decide to hire a grassroots fundraiser?

FT: The decision to take the plunge was motivated by a variety of factors that all came together. First, the economic downturn and funders cutting grant budgets convinced us to increase the percentage of our budget coming from individual donors. Second, our programmatic work was expanding, and the launch of a new initiative broadened our audience, providing an important grassroots fundraising opportunity. Finally, we were experiencing staff transitions, opening the possibility of hiring new development staff.

We didn't experience pushback for wanting to invest in fundraising rather than program staff. Three development staff out of 15 staff feels like a good ratio. Our eventual goal is that our grassroots fundraiser raises enough money to cover her salary, but we know that takes time.

CVH: 90 percent of our funding was foundation grants and we knew we had to diversify our funding base to stay stable. We also knew we weren't really tapping into our base. Our capacity at the time was not enough to reach both funders and donors. At the time, it was only Michelle—splitting time between grants and administration—and the executive director.

Actually, when we first hired the person, they were responsible for both communications and fundraising. Just this year we moved communications to another position where it would get more attention. So this is the first time we have a full-time dedicated staff person just focused on individual donors. This frees up Talia to focus on moving up donors that we've already brought on and connecting with allied donors who are not part of our base.

Describe your development team now.

FT: We have a development director that oversees all fundraising and works on major donors with the executive director; a development manager that handles all of the grantwriting and reporting for our 25 funders; and a grassroots fundraising coordinator who manages efforts to reach our 400+ donors and expand the donor base.

I feel like we finally have enough capacity to raise our \$1.5 million budget. Before, we didn't have much of a focus on grassroots fundraising because we didn't have capacity. Now we have someone who can run with ideas and take care of the coordination, cheerleading, and one-on-one support that it takes.

CVH: It's just the two of us. Our budget is \$1.1 million and we have 14 staff. We're responsible for about 25-30 funders and 545 individual donors. Our goal is to raise \$60,000 from donors and \$25,000 in events. We also just started our own 501(c)(4), which is extremely dependent on donors. We have 180 dues-paying members, but that work is the responsibility of the organizing team.

Talia works on building a culture where fundraising is an organization-wide effort and she has really helped the whole organization focus more on fundraising. She helps the board feel comfortable with gift solicitation, works with the staff, and with our solidarity board.

It can be hard to find the right person for this kind of job. How did you approach it?

FT: “Grassroots fundraiser” is not a job announcement you see all the time. We got a ton of applications from people that didn’t fit the position. We strongly believe in building and investing in the leadership of our staff, so we advertised for a junior-level position that someone could grow into. We chose the person we hired for her leadership experience, communications skills, and political analysis—because she was an overall fit for the organization—not necessarily because of her fundraising experience.

CVH: This person doesn’t need to have a lot of donor contacts. It’s more important that they know how to manage up, are a good communicator and writer, and know how to connect people. Talia started as a community educator and organizer. These skills are incredibly transferable to donor fundraising. 90 percent of fundraising in a community-based organization is organizing.

What advice would you give groups interested in doing this?

FT: Make sure to have buy-in from the whole organization that grassroots fundraising is something they’re going to take on before bringing in a new hire. We had originally thought this person would lead from behind, providing coordination and logistics for the staff and board’s fundraising efforts, but we soon learned that she needed to take the lead for staff and board to follow.

CVH: Having this position may not pay off in the short-term and may not cover the salary, but it is extremely important for the long haul. It may take several years for the return to exceed the investment. Help all your key stakeholders understand that.

- A willingness to invite volunteers, members and donors to participate in fundraising
- An understanding that one person is not responsible for raising all of the money, but is responsible for the overall planning and coordination of fundraising efforts and managing implementation of the plan

What should you look for in a strong candidate for the job?

These are some of the most critical skills and qualities required in a fundraiser whose primary focus is raising money from individuals:

- Good communication and relationship-building skills, including listening and taking an interest in people
- Strong writing skills, including the ability to write clearly, directly, and accessibly
- Being well-organized and able to juggle multiple tasks and deadlines
- The ability to provide strong and positive leadership to, and management of, the fundraising team
- A commitment to and understanding of your organization’s mission

How long should it take for a dedicated staff person to make a difference?

If you are getting ready to hire a full-time individual donor fundraiser and don’t currently have a strong donor program, plan on at least a year before the income generated from their efforts even begins to cover their salary. This means that you should see the initial hire as an investment in future income. If you don’t have at least 100 individual donors before a new staff person comes on board, just getting a program off the ground, much less bringing in significant amounts of money, can take three or more years.

Remember that fundraising costs money, and you need to plan to spend money to raise money. If you are not familiar with tracking response rates to direct mail and e-appeals, or how much it costs to produce a large special event, do your homework. (A very useful planning tool is the *Journal* article, “Budgeting for Fundraising” by Octavia Morgan.)

Keeping these statistics in mind when you are creating your fundraising plan and budgeting for a grassroots fundraising staff member will help you plan more accurately and budget appropriately.

How can you afford to pay for a fundraiser when you need the funds for program staff?

By hiring a dedicated grassroots fundraiser, what you are investing in is the ability to build a more consistent and reliable source of funding—one that will continue to grow over time so that you will be able to also increase your program staff positions. By seeing your donors as a part of your broader constituency that helps promote and may participate in program activities, you will in turn see the impact of your fundraising work expand to include other mission-fulfilling goals as well.

If you feel that you don't currently have the budget to pay for the initial year of a grassroots fundraiser's salary, here are some ideas to get you started:

- Talk to some of your current foundation funders to see if they would consider making an extra grant for capacity-building. Make the case that in three years, the salary of your new staff person will be covered by individual donor income, and additional funds from their efforts will go to expand program work.
- Identify a few major donors who could give \$1,000 or more, and at least one who could give \$10,000, to fund at least a part-time grassroots fundraiser. Talk to them about your plans to engage donors more actively in the work, and how their contribution is an investment in strengthening the organization and moving away from being so dependent on foundation funding. Get the input of these donors and involve them in the process of building your grassroots fundraising program.
- If the previous two options are not feasible or successful, work on developing a stronger volunteer team, including some of your more willing board members, to start raising money from individuals that will be set aside until you have raised enough to pay for a new staff position.
- Include some fundraising tasks in everyone's job, including the board, so your new staff person comes into an organizational culture that supports their success.
- Hire someone on a contract basis for three to six months to coordinate an individual donor drive, the proceeds of which will be used to hire a permanent grassroots fundraiser.

A Grassroots Fundraising Success Story

Revisiting the organization described in the beginning of this article, imagine this alternative to its 10 year dependence on foundation funding:

After spending its first three years seeking foundation grants, they realized that they were not going to be able to sustain that funding over the long term, nor were they going to have the flexibility to do the work they most needed to do if funders were not interested in it.

So, they started focusing more attention on building a base of individual donors. They created a dues structure for membership, a fundraising component to their leadership development program (which led to greater member involvement in fundraising as well as giving), and clearer expectations for the board's involvement in fundraising. They developed a fundraising plan, with a modest goal in their first year of raising \$10,000 from individual donors. While they only raised about \$8,500 that year (from a combination of mail and email appeals, a house party hosted by a board member, and a member-led community potluck dinner), it was a start. They made sure to keep track of their donors' giving history, relationship to the organization, and interests, even though their database was not the most up-to-date or easy to use.

In its fifth year, the organization hired its first grassroots fundraiser, who was able to develop better systems and a more ambitious fundraising plan and worked closely with the rest of the staff, board and members. Over the next several years, the organization built its donor program, bringing in more individual donors, deepening relationships with current donors, and identifying potential major donors.

By the fifth annual fundraising dinner, they raised \$45,000 from the event (after expenses), including \$30,000 from an ad book and several local business sponsors. By year ten, they were raising \$250,000 from individual donors, enough to know that whatever happened to their foundation funders, they were going to be able to cover most of their core operating costs solely from individual donations. Indeed, their long-time loyal donors and members were going to make sure they had what they needed to keep going and growing. ■

Stephanie Roth is a partner with Klein & Roth Consulting, and the former editor of the *Grassroots Fundraising Journal*.

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Why Good Fundraisers are Never Paid on Commission by Kim Klein



Multiple Constituent Groups, One Database?

How to Track Everyone Who's Anyone to You

By Laura Quinn

SINCE MOST ORGANIZATIONS TRACK more than just one type of constituent, the idea of a single database for all of them—donors, members, volunteers, clients, email subscribers, advocates and everyone else—is something of a holy grail. The ability to easily see both how all your constituents interact with your organization and with each other makes for an attractive, ideal vision of what a database should be.

In reality, a single database for all of an organization's constituents usually means some sort of compromise. If your organization tracks a wide variety of constituents but doesn't need deep functionality in any particular area, one database may be sufficient. But if you need to keep tabs on more complex data—like tracking stock gifts from donors or dues from members, matching volunteers with volunteer opportunities based on their interests and availability, or documenting the case notes,

histories and outcomes of the mental health services provided to clients—you're not likely to find a single system to fill all your needs.

If there is not much overlap between particular constituent groups (for example, if your clients are unlikely to be donors, and your donors are unlikely to become clients), there may not be enough of an upside to a single database to make it worth your while. For many organizations, multiple systems can be a better fit.

But how do you determine which is the right solution for your organization? We have designed a short exercise to help you decide.

Step 1: Identify Your Constituents

The first step is to identify all the constituents you deal

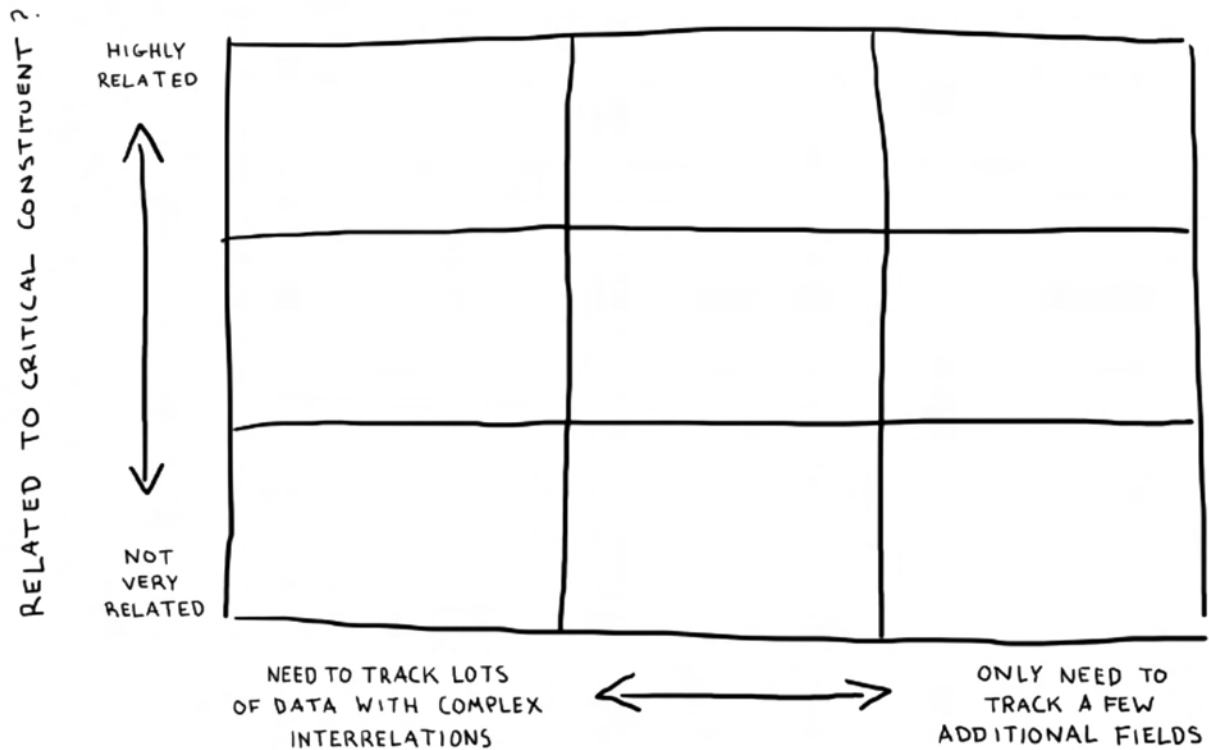


Figure 1

with on a day-to-day basis. These are the people you need to track. It is likely you will have not only donors and clients, but volunteers, members, alumni, event attendees, partners, press contacts and other groups. Include them all.

Then, choose the constituent group that is most important for your organization to track—we'll call them your "Critical Constituent." For most organizations, this will probably be either donors or clients. (If you have two or three key constituents, you can repeat the exercise for each, but choose one as a starting point).

For each of the other (non-critical) constituent groups you identified, determine:

- Their relationship to your Critical Constituent: How likely are people in one group to be in the other? Might they move between them?
- The complexity of the data you need to track for them in addition to what you are already tracking for Critical Constituents: Basic data like names, addresses and contact information are probably the same for both, but there is likely to be additional information.

Using donors as an example of the Critical Constituent, let's compare them to volunteers as the other constituent group. Are volunteers likely to become donors, or vice versa? Might a volunteer also be a donor? Neither scenario is unusual for many organizations, so we could call these two constituents highly re-

lated. As we consider other constituent groups—press contacts or legislators, for example—we are likely to find far less overlap.

Does your organization have members? Consider their relationship to your donors—in the case of organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) or a museum, members and donors may be nearly interchangeable terms for people who pay to join the organization. In this case, there is little-to-no distinction between those constituent groups. But if your organization is, for example, a grassroots organizing group, you may have a number of members who are not donors, or members who pay dues on a very different timeline than you send your donor appeals, creating two distinct constituent groups.

Answering this question about the relationship between constituent groups may not always be as straightforward, depending upon the groups you have defined.

Step 2: Know What to Track

Next, let's consider the complexity of the data. In the first example, what will need to be tracked for volunteers that we don't already track for donors? This might include the types of projects they would like to help with, when they are available, or their history volunteering with the organization. Because there are more than a few additional fields, this falls somewhere between medium- and high-complexity, depending on the specifics. The complexity of the data will vary among different

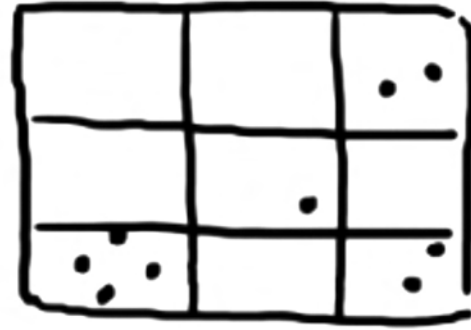
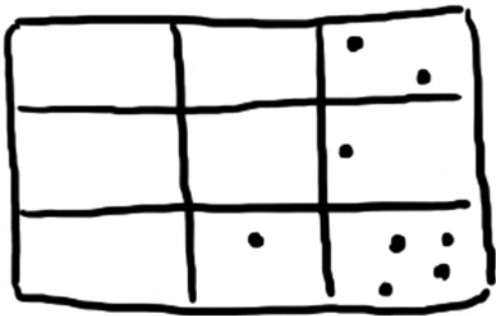
constituent groups based on their relationships to each other. For the ACLU example, members and donors are largely the same, making that relationship less complex. For the grassroots organizing group, the two groups are distinct, but experience overlap, making that relationship more complex.

Step 3: Plot Your Constituents

Once you have defined how complex and related each constituent is, plot your constituent groups on a chart for a look at your overall constituent picture. See Figure 1.

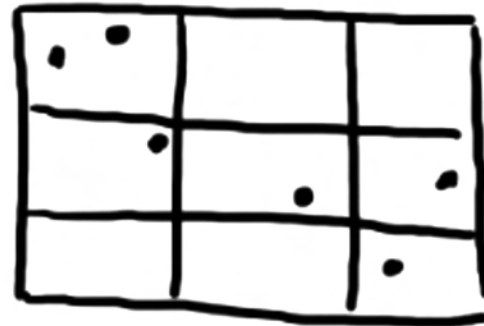
Step 4: Read Between the Lines

What can you learn from this constituent picture? Let's say your groups mostly cluster toward the right side of the chart. This means you don't have many additional needs on top of what you already track for Critical Constituents, so tracking them all in a single database likely makes sense for your organization. You should be able to customize a database optimized for your Critical Constituents to fit everyone else too.



But what if you have a cluster down in the lower left hand corner that shows you have some difficult-to-track constituents that are not particularly related to your Critical Constituents? You are unlikely to find a system that is effective and functional for both types of constituents, and given how little they relate to each other, there may not even be much benefit in trying to shoehorn them into a single database.

In this case, you are probably better off with more than one database. But how many do you need? Remove the Critical Constituent from the equation and repeat this exercise just for the constituents grouped together in the lower left hand corner. Are they related to each other? Do you need to track similar data for each of them? Again, if they don't overlap significantly, more than two databases might make sense.



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by Robert Weiner

Software to Support Your Fundraising by Laura Quinn

When You've Outgrown Homegrown Software
by Gene and Marcy Weinbeck

Things get more complicated if you have constituents floating in the middle of the chart, or even worse, in the upper-left corner. If that is the case at your organization, start weighing the possibilities and tradeoffs. It might prove difficult to incorporate these constituents into the same system as your Critical Constituents. Is it worth the effort and expense? Consider whether multiple systems can be integrated so key data flow smoothly between them through an automatic data feed. Integration is often expensive and complicated, but it can be a great solution to thorny data problems like this. Not all systems are capable of integrating, so if this is something that interests you, talk to the

vendor of your existing systems or any that you're considering purchasing. You may also want to hire an experienced database consultant to help with implementation and adoption.

Wrapping it Up

The vision of a single database is attractive, but the reality might be neither practical nor cost-effective for your organization. Should you track all your constituents in the same system?

Only if it makes sense for your particular situation. At the end of the day, that's not easy to know.

If there is a compelling reason to combine everything, and the benefits outweigh the risks and cost, the dream of a single database is a viable possibility. But achieving that dream requires some strategy and forethought—otherwise, your dream of a single database might just become an implementation nightmare. ■

Database Case Studies

Tracking Constituents in One System

Group: Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA)

Focus: Personal transformation and community power for Latina immigrant women

Budget: \$1.5 million

Number of Staff: 17

Database: Using Salesforce since 2006



AS A MEMBER-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION, being able to track membership in their database was extremely important to MUA. Also important was MUA's shift to seeing its members as donors to the organization. They needed a database that could track members, donors, and allies in the same system. They also wanted to track employer information for their workforce development program.

The Salesforce Foundation makes salesforce.com products available to nonprofit organizations and higher-education institutions at a deep discount. MUA got its database, as well as the consultant team to customize it, for free through the Taproot Foundation. The comprehensive system plus the free price tag convinced MUA to use this option. They considered moving to a specialized donor-focused system, but “were wary of donor databases that don't recognize all of the relationships that organizations have with donors beyond the gift,” explains Andrea Lee, MUA's co-director for development and administration.

Prior to converting to one system, they had “a hodgepodge of systems,” says Lee. They tracked workforce employers in Access, donors in Filemaker, and everything else in Excel. Now they have one database that can track a wide variety of information beyond the typical donor database, such as which activities which members have participated in as well as what kinds of jobs at what level of pay and amount of hours their employers are offering.

The main challenge they have faced is their lack of dedicated staffing to make sure that information is entered and updated consistently. Each team—grassroots fundraising, organizing, and direct services—is responsible for entering and managing its own data. Given full workloads and a lack of existing database expertise, it has been difficult to make this a priority. MUA is currently hiring a new staff member dedicated to operations, who would in part become its in-house database expert and manager, helping to shepherd in longed-for improvements, such as more relevant reports and a more intuitive interface. They are also hoping this person will join some of the nonprofit peer user groups that have sprung up to get additional support and ideas.

“It's worked for us for the past five years,” says Lee, “but, as our organization has grown, we are outgrowing our database.” They are currently considering whether to invest the funds to get the database re-customized to meet new needs or to shift to a new system. Her advice for others looking for a new database: “Look at your top needs right now and what you will need three to four years from now, and find a system that can meet you somewhere in the middle. But don't get too attached—you'll probably need to change databases again in the future.”

Tracking Constituents in Two Systems

Group: Sarah's...An Oasis for Women

Focus: A home for women in transition

Budget: Less than \$500,000

of Staff: 4

Database: Recently switched from Excel to eTapestry and Apricot



IN ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, Sarah's is a home for women in transition—sometimes referred to as a “supportive housing program”—that provides housing, a community, safety, and the basic necessities of life—as well as referral and direct advocacy services—for the women who live there. Always at capacity, the nonprofit's 29 residents come from such difficult life situations as domestic violence, war, torture, and displacement from their home countries.

Associate Director Hilary Otey says the organization works with a wide range of community partners to provide the services its residents need rather than providing them in-house so that “when they move on, which is the goal, they'll have those connections, support systems and empowerment.”

In all, staff track 23 different “person types,” Otey says, including the residents, volunteers, community organizations and partners, financial donors, and others. The nonprofit is affiliated with the Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet and maintains relations with other faith-based organizations that also need to be tracked.

“An important constituent—I'm not sure I'd call them ‘critical,’ because we have so many groups that are important—would be a donor,” she says. “About 80 to 90 percent of our revenue relies on donors, and the rest is earned income. We're tracking their contact info, their gift dates, their participation in events.”

Until recently, staff tracked everything in Excel. Or at least, they tried to.

“That didn't work well,” Otey says, being diplomatic. “There were no email addresses, really, no regular newsletters, no giving history. We had zero ability to really figure out who was giving and how to customize or specialize messages or asks or anything like that. No direct mail campaign or anything like that.”

About a year ago, Sarah's underwent a leadership change, and both the executive director and the associate director positions changed hands. Both Otey and the new executive director have seen the value of technology in their careers, and made it a priority to bring Sarah's more in line with current capabilities. They researched and evaluated options for a donor relationship management database and a separate system to manage the direct advocacy and referral services they provide.

“Because we had such varied needs and a strong desire for a high level of customization, as well as a goal to move everything to a web-based format, we decided to go with BlackBaud's eTapestry and Community TechKnowledge's Apricot,” says Otey. “We're in the process of getting those up and running now, so we aren't far enough along to determine the pros and cons.”

Staff members use eTapestry for donor relations and communication management—basically, tracking all contacts, relationships and gifts, and sending electronic newsletters. Apricot serves as a “resident management system,” she says—basically, a case management database.

“It's not completely set up yet,” Otey says. “The big benefit is that it's totally customizable, but it takes so much staff time to create all the user-defined fields. With a handful of staff, it's tough to get that up and running.”

The two systems aren't integrated at all, and there's no need for them to be.

“The only need I would see for that is, when a resident who is being tracked in Apricot moves out, then she would be put into eTapestry,” she says. Former residents are still valuable to the organization in many ways, and receive emails and newsletters and sometimes act as volunteers or donors. However, with just 29 residents living at Sarah's at any one time, it's not difficult to enter the appropriate information manually.

“I'm sure our tracking will become more complex, and our reporting will become more sophisticated as I become more comfortable.”

Case Study: Tracking Constituents in Many Systems

Group: Earthjustice

Focus: Public interest law firm protecting the environment

Budget: About \$25 million

of Staff: 200 in 10 offices



PETER CAMPBELL, IT DIRECTOR for the environmental law firm, Earthjustice, says his organization sees both clients and donors as key constituencies—but that it also considers it important to track information about subscribers, actions, advocacy, other legal contacts, vendors, trustees and other groups. While he likes the idea of a single database that tracks so many different groups comfortably, Earthjustice currently uses separate systems.

“We use disjointed systems to track them,” he says. “On the fundraising and advocacy side, we use Blackbaud and Convio. On the legal side, we use an archaic legal case-management system. It’s not a well-known product, and we customized it so much that it doesn’t work great for us, and we end up tracking contacts more in Outlook Exchange.”

One of his previous employers—another large organization—used a single database, but the company model there supported it. “We tried to see people holistically,” he says. “At Earthjustice, we see them from different perspectives.”

Earthjustice staff use Blackbaud’s enterprise project for development, and Convio for a CRM, Campbell says, but the two don’t integrate well. “Right now, we have to do a lot of manual synching,” he says. “We put our money, time and resources into tracking donors. They’re the ones we make the most effort on, and I think there’s a number of reasons for that. One is that there are good systems for tracking donors—there’s no such thing as a legal case management or contact management system that understands our model,” he says. “Our attempts to come up with good software for managing contacts and case management came up empty.”

Campbell is hopeful that Earthjustice will evolve in the area of data management.

“We are in our strategic planning process right now—we’re doing a new strategic plan right now, and it will probably look at how we plan to manage our data better,” he says. “It’s very much a dream of ours to have all that in one database.”

He says he feels his organization faces many of the same issues as other mid-sized nonprofits. “There are a lot of smaller organizations struggling more than us, because we have budgets and staff that can address the problem,” Campbell says. “We don’t do some things as well as some organizations, and we do some things better. We recognize we have to be data centric—we’re just trying to get there.” ■

Laura Quinn is the founder and director of Idealware. Through research, reports, articles and training, Idealware helps nonprofits make smart, informed software decisions.



Using Video in Your Online Campaigns

By Nzinga Koné-Miller

VIDEO HAS BEEN GROWING AS A MEDIUM for motivating organizational engagement for years. Whether you loved it, hated it, or landed somewhere in between, the Kony 2012 campaign propelled nonprofit campaign videos into the public consciousness with the mother of all campaign videos getting over 88 million views (and counting) on YouTube.

It seems like everyone is using video these days, from poignant cultivation messages to year-end fundraising. Perhaps with good reason: Anecdotal experience and testing in the for-profit sphere indicate that video seems to succeed in getting people to click links in email messages—and then complete the desired action at higher rates. While testing is not as extensive in the nonprofit arena, we can learn from the for-profit results: Experian Marketing Services 2012 Benchmark and Trend Report found a 21 percent higher conversion rate and 24 percent higher average order value when video was included in email. With the advent of low-cost handheld cameras and video editing software that is well within reach for most organizations, cost is no longer a significant barrier to using video online. Do-it-yourself production value isn't necessarily slick, but it doesn't

need to be as long as it is watchable (no jiggling cameras!) and features a compelling story.

Now, it isn't that DIY video is easy. Even when the equipment is inexpensive, the labor cost can be significant. Someone—possibly you—will need to plan the video, including storyboarding; scheduling and shooting footage; (possibly) finding and obtaining permission for using music; and editing the final product until it shines. If you're new to video production and are squeezing it in amidst other commitments, your first effort could take weeks. To save time and simplify the process, find someone with experience creating video who will volunteer the time to coach you through your first effort.

These days, the question really isn't, "Can you use video?" since it's a tool that is increasingly accessible to nonprofits of all sizes. The question is, rather, "When and how should you use video?" given that it can be a serious investment of time.

Define Your Goals

To make your investment in video worthwhile, first you need to be clear about why you are doing it. What is your goal?

Before doing anything, make sure you—and other stakeholders—are clear about what you want to accomplish.

Do you want to make your viewers feel good about the work you're doing so they may be more likely to make a donation, either now or in the near future? Are you hoping to expose some injustice that will motivate them to take action? Do you want

Keep in mind that while most outbound digital communications give you a way to tell a story, part of video's unique power is its visual storytelling potential. While some organizations use video featuring an individual—like an executive director speaking to the camera about a particular topic—some of the best videos use at least some footage that shows elements of your

WHILE MOST OUTBOUND DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS GIVE YOU A WAY TO TELL A STORY, PART OF VIDEO'S UNIQUE POWER IS ITS VISUAL STORYTELLING POTENTIAL.

your supporters to be so moved by what you have shared that they will share the video through their social networks, thereby exposing your organization to a larger audience and potentially growing your universe of supporters? It is critical that you set this context before diving into the planning and execution process. And take note: While it is understandable to want your video to accomplish all of the above, you are likely to be most successful when you focus on the one thing you want viewers to do right now.

It's also worth keeping in mind that a video by itself does not constitute a campaign. A video is not an end in itself but is just one of many tools that should be used as part of a strategy to accomplish a particular campaign or organizational goal. Many organizations use video only for particularly high priority campaigns that allow for advance planning, like year-end fundraising, annual membership drives, or for high-profile, long-term advocacy campaigns, given the time (and/or money) that goes into production. Others use it as part of their efforts to welcome new supporters. Unless you have the bandwidth to make it a tactic you use regularly, it is worth saving video for special occasion opportunities or for ongoing efforts like welcome messaging.

Show Your Story

Once you are clear about why you're making the video, you have to decide what your video will be about. If your organization has a collaborative team environment, it is worth shutting down your computers and turning off the phones for an hour to brainstorm the possibilities. Whether you develop your concept as a team or individually, be sure to run your idea past at least a few other people, ideally including some perspectives from outside your organization. You will want to make sure you have an idea that resonates with a larger group of people before you get too far down the path of production.

work. You may find that when you drill down into the possibilities, your optimal stories will typically be those featuring someone (or something) your supporters and prospective supporters can identify with, like a person or an animal—a protagonist. The reason is simple—these subjects allow us to tell stories in a way that more readily evoke emotion, camaraderie, and a desire in the viewer to make a difference for the individual (whether person or animal) being helped.

Do you have access to stories of individuals making positive changes in their lives because of your organization? Instead of simply featuring a staffer from your organization telling viewers about such stories, show one of these individuals going through their daily life, interspersed with snippets of them talking about their life before, during, and following their involvement with your organization. Focus on positive and hopeful images of their newly-improved lives (the “after” shots, if you will).

Keep it Short

Once you have your story, you will have to edit it—mercilessly. All the talk bemoaning the ever-shrinking attention spans of the masses isn't just talk. It isn't impossible to capture and keep the attention of viewers with a long video—after all, the Kony 2012 video is nearly 30 minutes long. But it is an exceedingly rare and highly unusual example. It's a pretty safe bet that we won't be seeing many (successful) imitators.

If you want to keep your viewers' attention, you will need to keep your video short. There is no hard and fast rule about exactly how long your video should be, but anecdotal experience suggests that the two to three minute range is usually ideal. But don't let this suggested length fool you into thinking that you can easily throw footage together. The goal is not to “fill up” two to three minutes of time—the goal is to tell an evocative, informative, compelling story using your very best footage. You may need an hour of raw footage in order to end up with

WHEN THE VIDEO IS READY FOR PRIME TIME, PROMOTE IT IN AS MANY OF YOUR COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AS YOU CAN.

a minute of good video. This isn't scientific—the reality is you will need to try it and see what works best. But plan with the expectation that it will take much longer than you think to get to your end result.

Share It

First, of course, you will want to share it with a small group of reviewers. Now, this isn't about editing by committee, which isn't a viable option, but is about making sure that the video makes sense to someone who isn't inside your head. Share it with people who know who your organization is and what you do—and make sure to share it with people who are not as familiar with your organization as well. The feedback you should be seeking is, “Does this work? Does this make sense? Does the viewer know what to do next (and do they want to do it)?”

Sample Videos

The Webby Awards – Go to the “Online Film & Video” awards under the “Public Service and Activism” category to see what they consider the best of the best each year. webbyawards.com

Jewish Voice for Peace – A 2-minute video asking people to sign a letter in support of Israel's conscientious objectors. december18th.org/

Victory Fund – Watershed worked with Victory Fund to create this 3-minute slideshow with audio (a simple alternative to shooting and editing footage) accompanied by an appeal to sign a letter and make a donation. victoryfund.org/files/listening.html

300 Years of Fossil Fuels – a 5 minute educational video with a narrator providing audio and a graphic illustrator providing the visuals. youtu.be/cJ-J91SwP8w

When the video is ready for prime time, promote it in as many of your communication channels as you can. Like many other nonprofits, you can post it to YouTube and Vimeo, but that isn't enough to ensure that people see it. You will need to embed it on your web site, feature it in one or more email messages, and promote it through your organization's social media presence—and look for ways to partner with your organization's allies and evangelists to move it beyond your current audiences.

End with Your Goals

While you have hopefully proceeded guided by your end goal, make sure that you also end your video with that objective in mind. Even if your video features someone asking the viewer to take action, make sure you close with the same appeal—ideally with a still featuring your organization's name and a friendly URL, like www.organization.org/donate where viewers can take action or learn more information. YouTube also allows you to embed live links in video through its annotation tool. Don't be afraid to include your call-to-action in a variety of ways, and make sure it is very clear. One of the risks of using video is that while it can be a strong traffic-driver, it can also be a distraction that fails to get people to take the action you want them to take when not used appropriately.

Work with What You've Got

You may have read this and thought at various points: “But I can't do that because [fill in the blank].” There will always be elements that don't line up perfectly for you. You may not have individual stories to tell. You may not have a collaborative environment in which to come up with clever concepts for video. You may have other limiting factors. But the reality of the current digital environment is that if you can surmount these barriers, there is little else to prevent you from using video in your campaigns. ■

Nzinga Koné-Miller is an account director at Watershed, a consulting and services firm designed expressly to help organizations build, grow, and sustain relationships with constituents online. watershedcompany.com

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