



Marketing Your Non-Profit

If you're in charge of a non-profit organization, your time is likely maxed out.

Between running the organization, developing programs, writing grant proposals and dealing with issues...who has time for marketing?

But the thing is, it's important. How your group communicates – how it's perceived – is crucial to your success, whether your goal is attracting donors, enlisting volunteers or motivating participants.

Marketing is something you need to do – and it's something you *can* do. And if you work smart, with an outline in place, it won't be the monumental task you might imagine.

Whether you self-market, or partner with an agency, here are a few key questions to ask when undertaking any marketing project:

What does your organization or program represent? Sum it up in one short sentence.

What different groups of people are you trying to reach? What is the message for each?

Do people know about your organization – or are you starting from scratch?

Do you need to overcome any misperceptions about your group? (Be sure to put yourself in the audience's shoes and try to answer these questions from their perspective.)

What does your marketing need to do? Setting specific, measurable goals (e.g., increasing contributions 10%, attracting 100 more volunteers, signing up 20 more corporate sponsors, etc.) will help focus your efforts.

What media or materials would best accomplish those goals – while fitting within your budget?

Are your existing marketing materials still useful? Do they project the image you want for your organization?

What is the timeline for your marketing campaign? Do you have deadlines to hit?



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When working on a single creative piece (ad, brochure, webpage, etc.), ask yourself these questions:

- What is the main point of this piece?
- What do you want someone to do after reading/seeing/hearing it?
How do you want them to feel?
- What reasons are you giving them to do so?
- Is the finished piece consistent with your organization's brand and image?

Of course, other questions will arise as you work through your marketing projects, but these basic ones are an excellent foundation on which to build. When in doubt, defer to common sense; it will never steer you wrong.

Finally, a few words about copy: Never fail to keep the end-user in sight. Remember, he or she is probably as busy as you are, so make your points quickly and with as few words as possible. Speak directly to them – you're talking to a human being, not a demographic category! Imagine writing a letter to a friend; picturing the living, breathing individual you're trying to reach will help you keep the tone personal and inviting.

Best of luck in your marketing efforts!

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Ideas With a Point.