

Advanced fundraising



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOP SERIES

Brisbane, May 2003

**Originally prepared
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For the Powerful Voices
Conference 1998**

Communication – your most important fund raising tool

- ⌘ Information management and communication is the single most important role of environmental organisations.
- ⌘ No fund raising campaign can operate effectively without full involvement in every aspect of organisational communications – be it rallies, newsletters, web sites, media.
- ⌘ Every piece of communication from the organisation or from staff/volunteers in the organisation should also have a fund raising and organisational building function.

Communication Mechanisms



- ⌘ Direct Mail
- ⌘ Emails from staff (to anyone)
- ⌘ Newsletters – hard copy and electronic
- ⌘ Email fund raising
- ⌘ Thank you letters
- ⌘ Rallies
- ⌘ Media releases
- ⌘ Web sites
- ⌘ Direct actions
- ⌘ And many others

What you should be doing

⌘ Every communication should have a fund raising function – this is particularly so in the era of electronic communications. For example

- ☒ Pop-ups on emails
- ☒ Avant cards
- ☒ Email newsletters
- ☒ Subscription features on electronic newsletters
- ☒ Promotions of HTML links direct to fund raising pages at rallies and direct actions

What you should be saying

⌘ Your communications should be used to promote

- ☑ your campaigns and achievements
- ☑ member get member promotions
- ☑ donations, bequests, equipment

Your hardware and your tools

You cannot function effectively without good equipment, information systems and infrastructure. This means:

- ⌘ ergonomic furniture
- ⌘ phone headsets if high volume
- ⌘ reliable, fast computer with:
 - ☑ tape drive for daily back up
 - ☑ high speed printer for labels and lists (& sound hood if required)
- ⌘ Well designed “dynamic” web sites
- ⌘ Automated fund raising tools (eg direct debit and online donations)

Your computer software



- ⌘ must record all donations, purchases and what they were from
- ⌘ be able to generate useful reports
- ⌘ be reliable
- ⌘ allow you to segment the list
- ⌘ commercial package or customised via volunteer?

Data entry



- ⌘ what is your data entry system?
- ⌘ volunteers require training
- ⌘ importance of variability of tasks
- ⌘ importance of moral support
- ⌘ what is the turn around time?
- ⌘ what precautions against RSI?

Membership



- ⌘ what do you offer to potential members?
- ⌘ do you have a membership form?
- ⌘ automatic renewals? pre-paid membership?
- ⌘ do you have a new member kit?
- ⌘ do you do an annual report? What sort?
- ⌘ “sudden death” renewal system?
- ⌘ On line donations and renewals

Direct mail appeals and email appeals



- ⌘ a letter should be personal
- ⌘ be specific
- ⌘ the importance of the PS
- ⌘ the coupon and return envelope
- ⌘ thanks for the stamp
- ⌘ what is the turn around time on processing to receipt and thanks letter?
- ⌘ timing eg May/June
- ⌘ Links to web site and donation pages

Direct Contact and regular donations



- ⌘ Moving donors onto monthly payments plans is the best way to build long term income and reduce peaks and troughs
- ⌘ Phone every donor and supporter on your list
- ⌘ Have a prepared presentation
- ⌘ Focus on regular and small(ish) amounts; it's only a cup of coffee a week
- ⌘ If they won't donate find out why not – you may be able to talk them around
- ⌘ Is there a better time (month) or time of day to call.

List building



- ⌘ quality not quantity i.e not petitions
- ⌘ why you can lose money on acquisitions -
life cycle analysis
- ⌘ where do you come in contact with
potential or enthusiastic supporters?
- ⌘ importance of quick turnaround times
- ⌘ evaluate sources
- ⌘ train activists

Major donors



- ⌘ importance of research and donor profile
- ⌘ personal knowledge and connection
- ⌘ research their interests
- ⌘ the presentation
- ⌘ the ask
- ⌘ thanks
- ⌘ friendly follow up but don't smother

Bequests



- ⌘ you don't get what you don't ask for
- ⌘ best \$ return of any program
- ⌘ are you a long term stable organisation?
- ⌘ importance of dedicated bequests/major donor person
- ⌘ policy of investing not spending
- ⌘ stability of staff critical

Ethical investment & capital appeals



- ⌘ requirement for prospectus
- ⌘ willingness to invest for both capital growth & annual return from a cause
- ⌘ requires good planning & administration
- ⌘ requires research and compelling case
- ⌘ can be a major income raiser

Merchandising



- ⌘ often high risk activity
- ⌘ most activist groups better at production than distribution
- ⌘ research, design, stock management critical
- ⌘ posters, T-shirts, calendars, guides
- ⌘ can it be an annual?
- ⌘ Selling on-line

Retailing



- ⌘ can be very stable effective fundraiser
- ⌘ can also go wrong and sink organisation
- ⌘ requires good location and capital for establishment
- ⌘ staff selection and training critical
- ⌘ rarely profitable if reliant on volunteers
- ⌘ requires good oversight of staff
- ⌘ monitor changes in retailing district

Raffles



- ⌘ knowing your members and their interests makes prize selection easier
- ⌘ plan carefully to maximise income
- ⌘ know the legislation
- ⌘ detailed records of income by date allows for better budgeting and monitoring
- ⌘ potential for member get member promo
- ⌘ importance of list segmentation

Doorknocks & street appeals



- ⌘ collectors must have identification
- ⌘ critical to train collectors in dealing with public
- ⌘ street collections have advantage in time and fundraising efficiency
- ⌘ importance of clear visibility of what you are collecting for
- ⌘ timing can boost impact

How you can help



- ⌘ help create or participate in Qld/Brisbane fundraising discussion groups
- ⌘ feedback on proposal for fundraising newsletter
- ⌘ put yourself on the contact list
- ⌘ a fundraisers conference?

Resources on fundraising



- ⌘ read, surf, subscribe
- ⌘ Grassroots Fundraising Journal/
Fundraising for Social Change
www.chardonpress.com
- ⌘ Chronicle of Philanthropy:
www.philanthropy.com/
- ⌘ UK Fundraising:
www.fundraisingco.uk/index.html