

Email For Advocacy and Community Organizing: Basics, Essentials, and Best Practices

Sending Email: Best Practices

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Learning Goals

- ▶ Understand Email Calendar and Frequency Issues
- ▶ Appreciate Importance of “Reply Management”
- ▶ Learn Basics of Email Campaign Assessment
- ▶ Note Tips for Maximizing “Click Through”

Delivery Calendar & Frequency

- ▶ Frequency for sending email is very org- and campaign-sensitive
 - Org: "once a month and special occasions"
- ▶ In all cases, listen actively for feedback to know if you're fatiguing your base
 - Easiest indicator: the unsubscribe rate

Delivery Calendar & Frequency

- ▶ Fundraising campaigns can be more frequent
 - Some campaigns do every day for a week
 - BUT remove folks who have donated from subsequent pitches
- ▶ General rule: 3 times a year + special occasions
 - Piggyback and connect to events/other causes
 - Craft two messages: existing supporters vs other
 - Be opportunistic

Delivery Calendar & Frequency

- ▶ Issue Campaigns: the frequency depends on exact nature of the campaign
 - Engage folks when you need them
 - Avoid “crying wolf” early
 - Tie to campaign events/action
 - Factor in lead time for participation
 - Once a week is practical max
 - Exception: “The MOMENT”

Reply Management

- ▶ Email campaigning is not one-directional
 - Recipients will reply with questions, offers, complaints
- ▶ Make sure someone "owns" replying
 - You don't have to reply to every message
 - BUT it's a primary way to cement engagement

Reply Management

- ▶ Select your “reply-to” address carefully and correctly
 - Make sure that “reply-to” address is not personal address
 - Don't use “generic” organizational address
 - Such as info@campaign.org
 - Consider easy-to-remember campaign address
 - May not be same as reply-to address, especially for larger or controversial campaigns

Reply Management

- ▶ Set up "Filters" to replies you receive
 - Auto-reply confirms message was received
 - "Thank you for replying to our campaign message..."
 - A "soft bounce" message can indicate that the reply-to address is not appropriate for correspondence
 - Provide a correct email address for correspondence
 - Remember: immediate feedback is important to senders

Email Campaign Evaluation

- ▶ Determine metrics for success
 - “Looked at the online movie”
 - “Donated money”
- ▶ Look at
 - Open rates for sent email
 - Click-through rates: did recipients click on link
- ▶ Subscription rates
 - List growth
 - Un-subscription rate

Maximizing Click-Through Rates

- ▶ Don't have that many links in message
 - Make them enticing and clear
- ▶ Simple URL
 - www.ourcampaign.org/justicenow
 - is much much better than
 - www.ourcampaign.org/jn.php?node=5AEF&Z=8
- ▶ Link should be on its own line
 - With "white space" above/below

Summary

- ▶ Email Calendar and Frequency Issues vary depending on the type of campaign
- ▶ Proper “Reply Management” is essential for engaging your recipients
- ▶ Know in advance how you will assess the effectiveness of your email campaign
- ▶ Follow best practices to maximize “Click Through”

End Of Section

- ▶ Questions?
- ▶ Comments?

Thank You!

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