

# DIRECT FORUM

June 2021

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 6

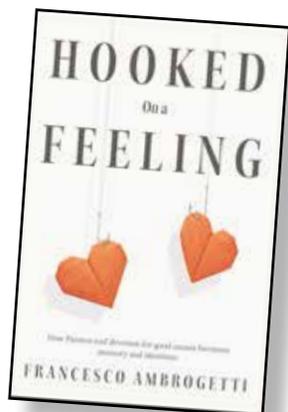
Direct Forum is a free email newsletter containing useful direct marketing tips, news updates and how-to information. It's convenient, informative and I am not trying to sell you anything!

**1. Why your donors' inner feelings are key to any fundraising success.**

**2. How to use the power of physical direct mail to get the best from your digital channels.**

**3. Video of the month: Give a Little Love.**

## Why your donors' inner feelings are key to any fundraising success.



I recently had the privilege to write a testimonial for a new book by **Francesco Ambrogetti**, to be published by **Civil Sector Press** titled, *Hooked on a Feeling*.

Frank explains all that step-by-step in his brilliant new book, *Hooked on a Feeling*, using data and research from neurosciences and behavioral economics.

As a fundraiser, a writer or anyone in the non-profit trade may ask, what does this have to do with me?

**Nothing, really. And yet everything.** Because as Malcolm Forbes was fond of saying, "In all thy getting, get understanding."

It's vital for all of us to understand that our prospects and donors are people too . . . and that emotions have the power to move people to donate or join a march, or respond to an emergency.

**Billy Sharma**, fundraising copywriter/ art director, and author of *Handbook of Direct Marketing for Non-Profits*, and the monthly newsletter, *Direct Forum*.

### Here's what I wrote:

There is great wisdom in what Maya Angelou said: ***"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."***

Frank Ambrogetti's first book, *Emotionraising*, was an attempt to provide evidence on how the human brain works and how decisions such as giving money to charities are made.

## **The reason why donors' feelings are important is because they are key to moving your donors.**

But we focus too much on the transactional part of the relationship with donors and supporters (RFM for instance). Then we keep losing many supporters and money too!

## **Emotions are short-term; feelings are long-term.**

Emotions, like instant pleasure, are short-term experiences and dopamine-induced (and so are their one-time gifts), while feelings like happiness, joy and loyalty are long-term serotonin-driven processes.

Fundraising often focuses on leveraging emotions and delivering a mild pleasure on a short-term basis. Examples: Click-through rates or likes on Facebook, instant gratification participation, etc

## **What we really need is a fundamental shift to the long term feelings of donors, building real relationships, and engaging with them.**

I know this is harder; and it takes longer. But it is more powerful and will deliver more money for causes and organizations in the end.

We all have an urgent need to feel connected, even more so now during COVID-19. We want to help others. We want to take a stand on some injustice or problem like systemic racism, gender discrimination, or the climate crisis. We want to deliver food, water, medicines, or other things to those in need or boycott a brand or a policy for their bad behaviour. Evidence of this was an uptick in donations to charities.

However, there is a world of activism beyond the established charity and fundraising world. And it's being accelerated by mobile and digital technologies.

**Think of why people are lifelong hardened fans of their hometown hockey team, or diehard fans of the music bands they love; people are even devoted to a pair of their favourite sneakers brand.**

**That's the kind of dedication charities need to instill in their donors.**

**And the only way to do this is getting them "hooked on a feeling".**

There are several research projects on rewards and loyalty and how people get "hooked" on brands and experiences. There is research on decisions and on what makes us happy. For instance, researcher Kahneman shows that what we retain in the memory is what then drives decisions. If some action makes us happy, we want to repeat that experience again.

CONTINUES ...

Kahneman explains that the “remembering self” is much more powerful than the “experiencing self”. We make decisions, like repeating a donation or buying more products from a particular company, based on what’s treasured in our memory. The feeling, the awareness of the emotions linked to the experience or cause, becomes essential.

When this feeling is anchored to a positive memory with a positive reward like participating in a march or signing a petition that makes us feel good every time. Then we become fans which is like going on autopilot; we don’t need to be solicited again, or when we are, we’re more likely to respond positively again and again because it feels good to be part of an organization or to support group or a cause that is now a part of our own identity.

In the book, *Hooked on a Feeling*, Francesco Ambrogetti uses two case studies, **Kony 2012** and the **Ice Bucket Challenge**.



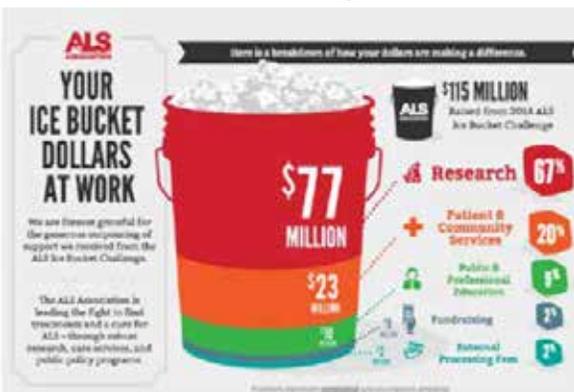
These two campaigns were celebrated and everybody asked, “What can we do to replicate it?”

- **Or think about the thousands of supporters for Notre Dame Cathedral after the fire.**
- **Or those who donated to koalas in Australia after the devastating bush fires.**
- **Or when recently hundreds took to the street after the George Floyd killing.**

Pundits or experts have labeled these as “rage donors” or “emergency donors”, a sort of secondary group of supporters that do not donate again or that you cannot convert to long-term supporters.

But this is not true at all, because these very same pundits don’t bother to understand who these people are, why they donated in the first place, and how they want to engage with your charity.

**Those who take the trouble of doing so will have a greater chance of increasing their number of supporters and their coffers handsomely.**



CONTINUES ...

# How to use the power of physical direct mail to get the best from your digital channels.

With all the attention on digital, it's worth noting the underlying physical characteristics of direct mail that makes it such an effective medium.

Direct mail has always been popular with marketing professionals who understand its value and strength.

The answer lies in the physical and emotional reactions mail tends to provoke.

For example:



**ADDING MAIL TO THE MARKETING MIX CAN BOOST ROI BY 12%**

That's because:

**70% OF PEOPLE SAY THAT MAIL, RATHER THAN EMAIL, GIVES THEM A BETTER IMPRESSION OF A COMPANY**



**WHILE 90% OF CONSUMERS OPEN AT LEAST SOME OF THEIR MAIL IMMEDIATELY**

**AND 65% OF PEOPLE SAY THEY ARE LIKELY TO GIVE MAIL, RATHER THAN EMAIL, THEIR FULL ATTENTION**



**AND 87% OF PEOPLE ARE INFLUENCED TO BUY ONLINE AS A DIRECT RESULT OF RECEIVING MAIL**

Source: Royal Mail Market Research.

CONTINUES ...

Direct Mail has become an overlooked engagement channel. But things have changed...Royal Mail's research has consistently shown that far from being competitors, mail and digital have a powerful and symbiotic relationship.

## THERE IS A RENEWED FOCUS ON LIFECYCLE MARKETING.

Every marketer knows that it's more expensive to acquire new customers or donors, than it is to retain existing ones.

Last year Salesforce research indicated that 54% of customers said organizations need to transform how they engage with them, and furthermore, 52% of customers said the email messages to them were impersonal or not relevant.

Direct mail addresses those challenges head on. Direct mail also enables marketers to cut through the noise for important messages, as per the research by Royal Mail: 80% of adults open all or most of their mail, and 91% engage with or process opened mail in some way. It's also worth noting that 87% of people describe mail as "believable".

Direct mail also helps drive digital behaviour; 70% of people have been driven to an online activity by mail, and 41% searched for information about a company (via any device) after receiving mail in the last 12 months.

## INTRODUCING DIRECT MAIL RETARGETING OR PROGRAMMATIC MAIL

Programmatic mail is a smarter way of connecting with prospective and existing customers, enabling you to combine best practice digital marketing techniques with offline communications triggered by an interaction at a key point in their customer journey.

Here's how programmatic mail works:



1. Suppose a new customer visits an energy company's website about energy saving cost for a new house.

2. Then that action immediately triggers a direct mail response.



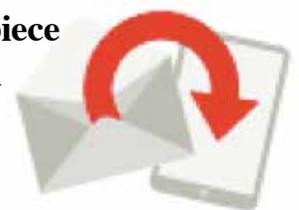
3. Now, instead of an email, a pre-printed message is mailed out as a personal communication to that customer.

4. Today's digital printing allows for this quick, personalised turnaround.



5. The mail piece often arrives at the customer's residence within 24 to 48 hours.

6. The arrival of the mail piece prompts reconsideration by the customer, and a decision when they decide to move.



CONTINUES ...

## That was theory, now here is a real example.

OVO Energy worked with Paperplanes (a digital print provider) and generated a £15 return on every £1 invested from customers interested in energy services.

**The background:** OVO is one of the fastest-growing energy providers in the UK. They are one of the UK's largest independent suppliers offering customers competitive rates on energy tariffs.

Typically, when a customer comes onto the OVO site to obtain a free quote, if they do not go through to complete the process they receive a follow-up email. Although the retargeted email led to a good return it had become difficult to further improve the performance of this channel so OVO was looking for something to supplement it.

**The Action Taken:** OVO partnered with Paperplanes to identify online browsers expressing interest in switching to their competitively priced energy services and targeted those prospects that didn't convert via email with highly personalised programmatic direct mail.

Customers were retargeted and encouraged to come back to complete their energy switch with the specific quote details they had abandoned. Paperplanes integrated with the email retargeting strategy offering the same level of personalisation on direct physical mail. Content provided further detail around the customer's uniquely tailored instant online quote.

## The Creative Piece mailed:



## The Results:

The campaign led to strong, incremental uplift and extremely favourable ROI.

- 5.5% overall conversion rate representing a 25% incremental uplift on conversion vs closet lookalike customers and strong performance vs digital retargeting channels
- £15 ROI for every £1 invested
- The campaign continued to generate strong conversions well past the standard period uplift normally occurs, thus extending the typical sales cycle of a 7-day quote. Incremental uplift is still noted up to 30 days after the campaign ends.

CONTINUES ...

**Think of using Programmatic Mail as a better substitute to emails that you send when a new customer visits your website. Programmatic Mail is a great opportunity to use your permissioned online behavioural data for offline (direct mail) retargeting, but also a neat way of engaging customers at different stages of the lifecycle using your CRM data to drive loyalty and retention.**

**Beyond retargeting people that abandoned their virtual basket or a web page, it's a powerful way to cross-sell, offer next best purchase, engage email non-responders, reach email non-permissible customers, acknowledge high value customers, reward customer milestones and reactivate lapsed customers.**

### **Here is another example:**

With the Help of Programmatic Direct Mail, BOTB saw a 50% Higher Return Rate.

**The Background:** BOTB (Best of the Best plc) offers customers the opportunity to win their dream car.

They have been running competitions since 1999 in the UK and have given away over £34 million in prizes. Every week there are guaranteed winners, Dream Car, Midweek & Lifestyle competitions.

BOTB was interested to see if partnering with Paperplanes would allow them to engage with clients in new ways, and deliver relevant results. They had used DM previously but never to any measurable success.

**The Action Taken:** Paperplanes and BOTB

collaborated to understand the right strategy for programmatic direct mail to drive engagement and sales. Customers were more likely to remain engaged if they came back to play once in 60 days, so it was decided to test the difference between sending content between 0-30 and 31-60 days.

Paperplanes worked with a sub-set of 6,000 customers that signed up to BOTB to trigger a month 1/month 2 follow up. Would a personalised, educational letter and incentive make a difference after 30 days or 60 days?

### **The Creative:**



### **The Results:**

- 31% of customers receiving the campaign in month 1 went on to play.
- 26% of customers receiving the campaign in month 2 came back to play.
- Return rate was 50% higher for those mailed vs those not mailed in the 60-day group.
- While both campaigns did very well on conversion also detected was incremental revenue on top of incremental engagement from the 60-day group that led to strong ROI.

CONTINUES ...

## Video of the month: Give a Little Love.



John Lewis & Partners have done it again. They needed to create loveable and unique characters to help tell the story of the different ways you can give a little love, no matter how big or small the gesture, especially now during COVID-19.

It was vital that the characters captured the hearts and imagination of the nation, and that the visual aesthetic pushed the dial from where the brand had been previously.

Adam&eveDDB enlisted the help of nine creative: illustrators, animators and makers, all experts in their field.

Everything from the stop motion claymation characters, felt figurines and puppet pigeons to the felt tip drawings and 2D animation were painstakingly crafted by hand.

Enjoy, here is the link to video:  
<https://youtu.be/Juv2c0xgGno>

CONTINUES ...

## OPT IN, OPT OUT, OPTIONS:

To subscribe, email me at:  
[billy@designersinc.ca](mailto:billy@designersinc.ca)

To download back issues of my newsletters go to 'Freebies' on my website:  
[www.designersinc.ca](http://www.designersinc.ca)

To unsubscribe, send me an e-mail simply saying, "Please, remove."

To participate, send me an email with your article suggestions.

To post a comment, please include your name, email address and your thoughts.

**Let me remind you that your name and/or e-mail address will never be shared, sold, circulated, or passed along to anyone else.**

BKS Fundraising/Designers Inc.  
1806-77 Harbour Square  
Toronto, ON  
M5J 2S2

© Designers Inc.

