



DIRECT FORUM

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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. The most important sale isn't the first one—it's the second and all the ones after that.

2. How to find new monthly donors.

3. How Greenpeace improved their monthly giving by 332% by sending out targeted emails.

4. Video of the month: The Time We Have Left.

The most important sale isn't the first one—it's the second and all the ones after that.

Ask any business person and they will tell you that the most important sale is not the first one that they make to a new prospect, but the second and all the ones after that. A prospect only becomes a customer or a client after the second or more sales.

Similarly, for charities the most important donation is not the first one but all the ones you can get from your donors after that.

Sure it's thrilling to get a that first gift from a new donor, but you can't stop there. You need to persuade your newly acquired donor to make that second and third gift too.

Charities know that donor retention rates are really, really low. **It is estimated that on average non-profits tend to lose 8 of 10 first-time donors.** Which means that all the time, effort, sweat,

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hard work and resources you just put into acquiring that one new donor has led to just one gift which too often means you will never hear from them again.

That's a crying shame!

Now imagine if you could just convince that first-time donor to make that *crucial second gift*, their retention rate would go up by 61%.

How about a third or more after that.

That's what monthly giving is all about.

Donors make their first gift because they have somehow been convinced that their support is important. If you want them to give again, you need to show them that not only has their first gift made a great impact but also that their continued support will help your charity to accomplish its goals.

This generally involves two actions on your part.

First an immediate acknowledgement and thank-you for their gift and second the tone and manner of your message. How welcoming, genuine and thankful you make it is crucial.

Get in touch with them right away.

If the first-time donor has given you their phone number, it is an indication that a call is welcome. However, don't try and find out their phone number if they have not given it to you.

That personal touch by phone can go a long way in generating a second gift, hopefully one that's larger than their first one. However, don't immediately ask donors for an additional gift—just thank them graciously and sincerely and let them know how their donation is being used. Also try and find out how they heard about your organization. When a first-time donor makes a donation, it's like a gift out of the blue. Thank them, of course, but also find out what specifically made them give.

Asking them to share a little more about how they learned about your charity and what inspired them to give, helps both you and the donor. It helps you understand what's inspires your donors, and through which communication channels they learn about your charity. It makes the donors feel good that their opinions and gifts matter, which is key to relationship building with them.

If you can't call them, send a personalized email at once.

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If the gift is substantial, ask your president or one of your board members to call.

If nobody answers then leave a voicemail; it is just as valuable.

Next send them a progress report.

When a first-time donor sends money because they want to help the environment that they saw or read about in your communication, you now need to show them how their gift helped get critical help.

Send them a video showing them the progress the environment they helped has made. Demonstrating the impact of their gift really makes a difference in their continued support of your organization.

Case in point, here is link to a video sent by EarthJustice:

https://youtu.be/daNKG_J9tds

Don't know how to make a video, then send them an email describing the progress their money is making. They need to know that their money is not being ignored or wasted.

Here is part of an email sent by a sightseeing charity:

Your donations provided 2 sight-restoring cataract operations; they have relieved

the pain of trachoma and prevented blindness with medication for over 15 people. What an incredible gift to have given!

Each of these numbers is a person and a life that they have transformed forever—a pair of eyes that they helped to see again. There are no words to truly show our gratitude, but on behalf of all those people whose sight you have protected and restored, we would like to say a big heartfelt thank you.

When should you ask them to give again?

It has been established that the best time to ask donors for a second gift is within 90 days of the first donation, when they're still actively interacting with your organization.

These three months between when you first thanked your new donors, should be used to stay in touch with them via your newsletter or regular email updates.

When someone makes their first gift to your organization, they have demonstrated that they believe in your vision to make a difference in the lives of those you serve. By asking them to contribute within 90 days, you are telling them that they are more than just donors; they are now stakeholders of your charity.

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How to find new monthly donors.

First let's take a deep dive into your current donor database.

To identify the best donors in your database, who would be good to ask for a monthly gift, look for those who made more than two gifts last year. Select those who gave more recently, as well as donors who gave online.

Next look for donors who made gifts of the same amount, year after year. Check to see in which month they donated to find if there is a pattern there. Look at other years where this trend holds. Make a separate list of these donors. And place them in clusters.

Check to see how they supported you in the past.

Look at how this group of people donated. What exactly was the source that made them give?

Did they contribute toward a direct

mail appeal or an email appeal? Did they donate online or offline?

Did they pay by credit card or did they mail a cheque? Did they use PayPal or did they contribute by workplace giving?

Did they give to a Facebook campaign or a Crowd Funding appeal?

All these factors are important to cull out your best prospects for monthly donations.

Depending on how many different categories you isolate, you can then flag them as having common attributes. This makes it easier to single them out as potential monthly donors.

This will also help you to determine the best approach when it comes to the best method of communication with them.

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Next make a clear strategic plan to ask them for monthly support.

Clearly outlining your charity's mission and why you need their support for ongoing gifts will help persuade them to become monthly donors.

The more convincing your story is the more likely you are to earn their trust and support.

The channels they responded to in the past will help you ask them to become monthly donors now.

Emotion is a powerful asset. How non-intrusive and powerful your message is will dictate their response.

Show your donors the tangible value of each small amount.

Show them what the donation is for and talk about the impact their funds can make to achieve a certain goal. Suggest varying gift amounts that clearly explain the tangible impact each gift can make.

For example: If your charity serves the homeless, let each amount show the gift it can purchase.

Your monthly gift of \$5.00 provides a meal to 20 homeless people.

Your monthly gift of \$30.00 will provide a pair of warm winter boots to 3 people.

Your monthly gift of \$50.00 will provide a warm winter coat to 2 people.

Give your monthly donations program a name.

The Canadian Liver Foundation's monthly giving program is called **CIRCLE OF LIFE MONTHLY GIVING PLAN**. The United Nations Association in Canada calls their monthly program **Ambassadors Circle**.

How much should you ask?

Here is the rule of thumb: If the average single donation of your selected group is between \$35.00 to \$40.00, then set the first monthly gift level at \$10.00 for this group.

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Your giving ladder or gift strings can then range from \$15, \$20, \$30, etc.

Make sure you change the gift ladder for different groups depending on their past level of support.

Treat each monthly donor as someone special.

How you treat your newly acquired monthly donors is crucial. Lay out a welcome carpet for them; show them they are special.

You can do this by sending them a welcome package, like this one from The United Way of Montreal.

THANK YOU
For making a big difference.

With your help Centraide was able to invest in communities in the Greater Montreal area including Laval and the South Shore. We assisted vulnerable people and families to regain control of their lives and finding refuge from the difficult situations they face every day.

Your gift helped in four ways:

1. It aided in early childhood development, improved parent-child relationships, supported immigrant parents and families, and provided social inclusion of young adults
2. It provided food security, housing, income, consumer services and support
3. It helped handicapped people, refugees, immigrants, single parent women, street youth, seniors and people with mental health problems
4. It fostered community mobilization, development of agency skills and leadership.

HOW YOUR GIFT WILL HELP

- 37% will create positive opportunities for children, troubled youths and their families
- 29% will improve living conditions of the underprivileged in the community
- 19% will assist marginalized and excluded people to maintain their independence and social connections
- 8% will help build stronger neighbourhoods and communities
- 6% will support volunteer programs and other activities

To find out more go to: www.centraide-mtl.org

Or give them a special small perk, like this personalized bookmark sent to select donors at the end of the year by Integra Children’s Mental Health Foundation:



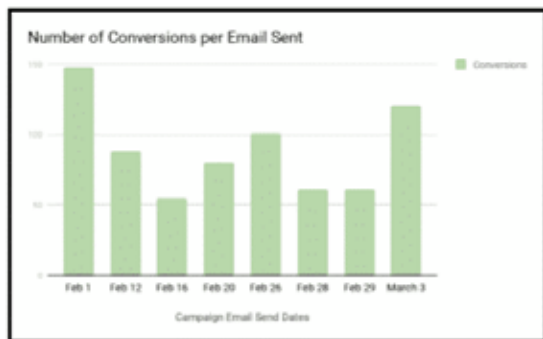
Finally, send them your newsletter, or your Annual report, never forgetting to thank them for their ongoing monthly support with each communication.

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How Greenpeace improved their monthly giving by 332% by sending out targeted emails.

They first developed an email marketing strategy.

Then they created an email marketing campaign in real-time. This allowed for content that reflected changing government decisions on environmental issues and resonated more deeply with Greenpeace supporters.



Because you only have your donor’s attention for about 2-7 seconds, it’s important that email marketing makes an impact and drives supporters to act right away with compelling, urgent and relevant messaging.

To achieve this, Greenpeace used email segmentation to generate customized content that acknowledged

each supporter’s unique giving history.

Prospect	Never made a donation before	You already support Greenpeace in many ways, whether it's signing petitions or sharing campaigns on social media. I'm hoping you're ready to take the next step and join Greenpeace with a \$15/month donation.
Recent donor	Donated in the past 30 days	You've donated to Greenpeace really recently — thank you! We're so grateful for your support. I'm hoping you're ready to take the next step and join Greenpeace with a \$15/month donation.
Last year donor	Donated in the previous year	You donated to Greenpeace last year — thank you! We're so grateful for your support. I'm hoping you're ready to take the next step and join Greenpeace with a \$15/month donation.
Consecutive donor	Donated in both the previous two years	You're one of our most loyal donors and support Greenpeace year after year. We're so grateful. I'm hoping you might consider joining Greenpeace with a \$15/month donation to continue to power the change our planet needs.
Lapsed monthly donor	No longer an active monthly donor but was in the past	I know you've joined us as a monthly donor in the past and we're so grateful for your support. I'm hoping you'll consider rejoining Greenpeace with a \$15/month donation.

Segmentation is important for the personalization of emails but it is also crucial for results. Greenpeace found that through segmentation a recent group of donors was willing to give twice in 30 days. They also discovered what specific types of messages resonated the strongest with them.

Similarly they learned that their non-donor segment responded best to emails covering campaign issues such as ocean health and the tar sands. It was not just the conversions that made this campaign a success, but also the insights that could be funneled for future actions.

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The Results of this Email Marketing Campaign: Greenpeace Canada improved their monthly-giving-campaign results by 332% since 2018 and acquired 808 new monthly donors.

Greenpeace Canada also ran another monthly giving push during **#GivingTuesday** and acquired over 160 new monthly donors. This showed that during a global pandemic, many people are still ready and willing to give.

Lessons Learned in this Recurring Giving Acquisition Campaign:

- Timing is important. Running a campaign early in the calendar year

allowed them to leverage the momentum of year-end giving. Also asking recent donors to upgrade their gifts, when the cause and commitment were still top of mind, was very effective.

- Set a reasonable deadline. Deadlines create urgency and drive supporters to take action.
- Communicate the right goal. Greenpeace clearly asked supporters to be part of what they were trying to accomplish.
- Use segmentation to personalize the message.
- Be agile; quickly respond to current events.
- Use multi-channels. Even though email was the key driver of communication for Greenpeace, updating their donation page with campaign messaging and adding a pop-up on their homepage, to promote their ask on social media, helped yield more conversions.

Watch Greenpeace’s 2019 video:

https://youtu.be/oa4H_ti3k6w



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Video of the month: The Time We Have Left.



This video encouraged people to change their behaviour and find more time to see each other by telling them exactly how much time they had left together. Leo Burnett and Pernod Ricard had to create a bulletproof algorithm against skeptics, so they gathered data from the National Institute of Statistics on life expectancy as well as studies related to the likelihood of maintaining the frequency of our encounters over time. From this, they built a fairly accurate tool that predicted how much time you had left with someone in terms of days and hours.

Video link:

<https://youtu.be/woqCzFo55mU>

Credits

Agency: Leo Burnett Spain

Client: Pernod Ricard

Chief Creative Officer: Juan Garcia-Escudero

Creative Director: Gastón Guetmonovitch

& Dani Sáenz

Head of Art: Juan Frias

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