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An IMC Approach to Building Trust Among Nonprofit Donors

Catherine A. Romaine

AN IMC APPROACH TO BUILDING TRUST AMONG NONPROFIT DONORS

By Catherine Romaine

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Approved by:

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Advisor: Professor Christina Sparks

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Reader: Dr. Jody Holland

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Reader: Dr. Eun-Kyong Choi

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ABSTRACT

CATHERINE ANN ROMAINE: An IMC Approach to
Gaining Donor Trust in the Nonprofit Sector

(Under the direction of Christina Sparks)

This thesis explores the role of a holistic Integrated Marketing Communications strategy within the nonprofit sector. The research aims to identify the effectiveness of different marketing communication tactics in soliciting donations for nonprofit organizations. It examines the influences and motivations of donors when choosing one organization over another for their monetary contributions. The thesis investigates the impact of specific integrated marketing strategies in building and maintaining relationships with different stakeholders such as donors, volunteers, and employees.

Through a literature review of successful nonprofits and missteps within the sector, this thesis identifies various factors that contribute to nonprofit marketing success, including relevancy, communication, transparency, and credibility. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to gain further insight into donor motivations and behavior. Interviews were conducted to understand the reasoning behind donor selection and the processes of marketing from those who work at nonprofit organizations. A survey was also conducted to analyze patterns among donors and their motivations. The survey results included 509 collected respondents.

The research findings indicate that trust and transparency are the key factors in building support and revenue from donations. Targeted marketing efforts to a variety of audiences can also positively increase support. Ultimately, the thesis argues that nonprofit

marketing plays a crucial role in attaining and maintaining donors, ultimately gaining the trust of their supporters and succeeding in overall organizational goals.

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II. INTRODUCTION

According to The University of Mississippi, Integrated Marketing Communications is a strategy focused process that coordinates interactions to influence consumer behaviors. Using an 'IMC' approach allows businesses and organizations to better connect to their audiences through a variety of channels. The nonprofit sector is no exception to this. Whether it's the major children's hospital that saved a family member, the local food pantry that serves Thanksgiving dinner to the homeless in the surrounding area, or an animal shelter that takes in battered and abandoned animals, most people are affected in some way by a nonprofit organization. In the present day, a nonprofit is most broadly defined as an organization that provides goods, services, or support to specified groups of people or the general population, is tax-exempt, and does not consider surplus revenues as profit to the organization (Powell & Steinberg, 2006). Among the different categories under this broad definition, the most saturated subset is a group of organizations explained under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRS). This group is made up of specific nonprofit organizations that are allowed to accept tax-deductible donations to run their operations (Powell & Steinberg). A tax-deductible donation allows donors to reduce their taxable income; this is enticing to many donors and can make monetary and physical donations to charities a win-win for both parties. To be considered under this entity, the organization must "be engaged in educational, religious, scientific or other forms of charitable behavior; for this reason, they are sometimes referred to as 'public benefit organizations'" (Powell & Steinberg, p. 67). This faction accounts for approximately 75% of both expenses and revenues in the overall sector, with expenditures exceeding $1.94 trillion annually (Faulk et al., 2021).

While corporate donations and support have always been a vital factor in monetary donation building, individual donations are a crucial part of maintaining a successful charitable organization as well. It is natural to suppose that it is the wealthy, Bill Gates-type of philanthropists and corporations that make the majority of donations to small and large charities across the globe, and the United States in particular. However, in 2014, 81% of the $358 billion donated to charity came from everyday donations from individuals rather than businesses and groups (Mcguigan, 2022).

Aside from the 19% of corporate donations, the vast majority of individual donations stem from families with a moderate household income. The average annual contribution of the 'average' household adds up to between $2,000 and $3,000 (Mcguigan, 2022). These monetary donations add up fast, as over 60% of families in America donate to their charity of choice in any given year (Mcguigan). Citizens in the United States, in particular, tend to donate to charitable causes more than in other countries. For example, Americans donate about seven times as much as Europeans per capita to nonprofit organizations (Mcguigan). Similarly, Americans annually donate to charity nearly four times as much as Canadians do (Li, 2020). Elizabeth Mcguigan, Senior Director of Philanthropy Roundtable- a nonprofit that advises philanthropists- hypothesizes that this is due to multiple reasons. These include the following: America is one of the most religiously diverse and committed countries in the world, and religious motivations are a massive push to make donations to charities. Also, Americans have an ‘entrepreneurial impulse’, which motivates an excessive amount of wealth to be shared, using the idea of helping one’s neighbors.

It is important that nonprofit organizations understand how to gain a donor’s trust and convince them that they are worth their monetary donation, especially with the density of the industry in the United States. Nonprofit organizations are an important part of the US, and for these charities to be most successful, leaders and decision-makers work to understand the minds of donors and market their efforts specifically to the demographics that best fit their mission. By reading into the tendencies of donors, nonprofits can best use their resources to raise awareness and receive donations to best serve the mission at hand. Above all, donors seek to connect with an organization that they fully trust, feeling confident that their money is going to ‘good’ use- whatever that looks like to them. It is hypothesized that using a holistic, IMC approach will aid in gaining donors’ monetary donations as well as an important aspect of building long term relationships with donors: trust.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Nonprofit Overview

A1. What is a nonprofit organization?

With almost 1.8 million nonprofit organizations in the United States alone, these entities carry significant weight by building up communities, reinforcing relationships, and providing various types of assistance to a multitude of areas. The practice of giving to charities or nonprofits dates back as far as there are written records. For example, some records show no-cost healthcare centers in Egypt, Sri Lanka, and India throughout the third century. Similarly, it was not uncommon for wealthy individuals to donate food to the poor and sponsor charity-like sporting events in ancient Rome (Bennett, 2018).

Today, the monetary supply of nonprofits is driven by individual donations, national and regional government grants, corporate donations, and grants and fees for services (Faulk et al., 2021). Nonprofits that receive more than $5,000 in gross annual receipts are legally required to register through the IRS. Moreover, those that receive an annual total exceeding $25,000 are also obligated to submit a separate annual report that includes other information and details, such as board members, expenses, compensations, and specifics on revenues (Powell & Steinberg, 2006). As an organization grows, more accountability is expected from donors and the IRS alike.

A2. The ethics and perceptions of fundraising practices

While the vast majority of nonprofit organizations are founded on the noble principle of doing good for the community or a specific group of people, criticisms can arise when an organization is seen as solely focused on the accumulation of others' money. Questions are raised about the allocation of donations to marketing and administrative expenses, which can cause concerns for those engaging in monetary donations. The public perception of these expenditures varies across individuals with different levels of knowledge regarding the management of a large-scale nonprofit organization.

A 2009 study conducted by Adrian Sargeant, Stephen Lee, and Elaine Jay, which surveyed 500 organizations, found that on average, 80% of income directly contributed to the cause at hand, with the remaining 20% of donations allocated to other operational costs, including administrative fees and marketing (Bennett, 2018). However, this same study also revealed that a significant number of people *believe* that about *half* of any given charity's income is spent on 'everything else' (Bennett). The study surveyed both donors and nondonors. The study, "... questioned 980 charity donors and 249 non-donors about their estimates of how much of a person's gift to a charity would be spent on beneficiary-related programs. On average, the non-donors believed that only 45.5% of the money donated to a charity would be spent on philanthropic activities, and 54.5% on management and marketing. Even active givers assumed that just 67% of revenues went to a good cause." (Bennett, p. 3)

Similarly, a separate study proved in agreement that individuals with a more in-depth understanding of nonprofit workings and those who receive technical information from organizations they donate to had a better grasp of the actual percentages of annual income that directly help the cause (Bennett, 2018). These percentages are discussed more in depth further in this thesis. While the majority believes that excessive spending on marketing is inherently bad, those who are better educated about the work can estimate closer to the actual cost of marketing and outside expenses of a charitable organization. As donors are often unaware of the inner workings of the organizations they donate to, charities must be transparent and vocal about their spending habits. By doing so, donors can feel more comfortable providing monetary support to a cause that they know a significant majority of their dollar is going directly to the mission at hand.

Nonprofit organizations often rely on emotional appeals to elicit donations from the general public. However, some critics argue that these appeals can be manipulative and misleading. For instance, some nonprofits have been accused of using psychologically disturbing photos and videos, excessive advertising, or other questionable practices to solicit funds (Bennett, 2018). Such deceptive tactics are illegal and violate constitutional laws. In Madigan v. Telemarketing, the US Supreme Court affirmed states' authority to take action against deception in the solicitation (Herrington, 2007). The court defined deception broadly, noting "...misrepresentation of the mission, the purpose of the solicitation, its tax deductibility, the amount that will be used for the program purpose for which solicitation is being made, and the connection between the fundraising agency and the organization for which it is collecting (Herrington, p. 119)."

While marketing is essential in attracting donors and supporters, nonprofits must prioritize honesty and accountability in their fundraising practices. They must provide clear and transparent information about how they intend to utilize the funds received from donations. These organizations must also ensure that their mission statements, statistics, and plans are accurate and reflect their actual activities. Only then can they build and maintain trust with their donors and avoid suspicion of fraud or deception. Being transparent is the ultimate way to build a sense of trust among supporters.

B. The Giving Type

B1. The trust of donors

When individuals make monetary donations, they entrust an organization to make the best possible decisions with their contributions. Often, donors seek reassurance that their donations are going toward solving the intended problem, rather than solely supporting the nonprofit's operations. A Google search of more well-known charities indicate dissatisfaction with how the money is distributed. Questions such as "How much does the CEO make?", "Is (insert organization) a good charity?", or "How much of my donation goes to use?" provide evidence of donors' questions about how monetary donations are spent by the non-profit organization.

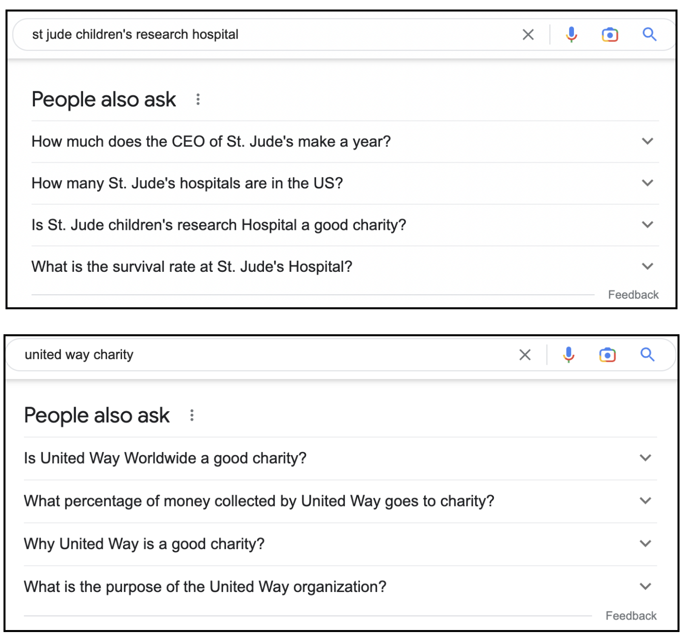

Figure 1- Google Searches Regarding Nonprofits

Regarding the question of ,“What percentage of money collected goes to the charity,” according to author Woods Bowman, 78% of Americans believe that at least 70% of the money collected by a nonprofit *should* go to the charity (Bowman, 2006). Therefore, it is crucial that nonprofits are able to establish trust with the public and differentiate themselves from organizations. Effective marketing strategies can help establish trust, generate positive word of mouth, and ultimately result in more donations.

Nonprofits are held to a higher standard than ordinary organizations, as they are expected to use donations for the betterment of society. While customers will steer away from any company that engages in malpractice, it is looked down upon even further when that corruption is stemming from an organization that is supposed to be putting that money towards an exterior benefit. Avoiding deceit and incompetence among charitable organizations is important above all other factors.

Public-Nonprofit Transactional Relationships	Principal Bases for the Public Trust	General Nature of Managerial Action Impairing Public Trust	Primary Information in Message to Restore Public Trust Based on Projection of Future Performance of Nonprofit and Expectations of Public
1. Contracting			
Ordinary	Performance	Mal-Performance of Any Type	Communicating realizable future performance consistent with needs of public and counter-party (e.g., government or foundation) to the contract; confirming the reliability of the organization.
Charitable	Mission and Contract Adherence, Discretion, Social Capital	Misrepresentation, Non-Adherence, Deceit, Non-Responsiveness, Incompetence, Misrepresentation	Affirming the organization's commitment to mission, social capital, and a shared interest with the public and mutual reliance; confirming its capacity to perform specific tasks guided principally by the public's need

Figure 2- Creating and Impairing Trust Chart

Equally as critical as creating trust within a group of consumers, it is important to abstain from a lack of faith. Trust is fragile, and distrust can arise in a multitude of ways depending on the situation and the individual. Figure 2 outlines author Bryce Harrington's explanations on not only examples of bases to *build* trust, but for *impairing* trust of the public as well. Qualities like great performance, an outstanding mission statement and following contracted guidelines are basic principles on which a trustworthy organization is built. Malperformance, incompetence and misrepresentation give donors reason to look elsewhere for organizations to support. He also maps out the public's expectations of organizations and what should be upheld throughout their project and marketing implementation. Tactics include being transparent about the reliability of the organization, sharing the commitment to the specified mission, and outlining the ability to actually perform in the goals that they have set for themselves.

B2. **Factors that affect the likelihood of donation**

In order to market effectively to certain groups, organizations must understand their target audience. There are numerous qualities that can be analyzed to directly define the target market directly, ranging from demographic information such as location, employment status, marital status, age, religious beliefs, annual salary, level of education, and personal connections to charitable causes. Each group of people requires and desires different types of information, making it essential that messages are tailored to specific groups of supporters.

The Fraser Institute used IRS data in 2004 and 2010 to determine the top 10 states where individuals donate the highest percentage of their annual salaries to charitable organizations. Although these states may vary from year to year, it is helpful to identify the similarities among the states that remain in the top 10 after six years such as Utah, Wyoming, New York, and Tennessee.

Top ten states: Fraction of their income that residents give to charity		
2010	national rank	2004
Utah	1	Wyoming
Wyoming	2	Utah
Georgia	3	Tennessee
Alabama	4	Arkansas
Maryland	5	Texas
South Carolina	6	Alabama
Idaho	7	Oklahoma
North Carolina	8	Mississippi
Tennessee	9	South Dakota
New York	10	New York

Figure 3- Top Ten States

Bottom ten states: Fraction of their income that residents give to charity		
2010	national rank	2004
Louisiana	41	New Mexico
New Mexico	42	Iowa
Alaska	43	Ohio
Rhode Island	44	Hawaii
Hawaii	45	Montana
Vermont	46	Vermont
New Hampshire	47	Wisconsin
Maine	48	New Hampshire
North Dakota	49	Rhode Island
West Virginia	50	Maine

Figure 4- Bottom Ten States

Additionally, the study identified the bottom 10 states based on donation percentages. Here, even more similarities are found after the 6 year gap. Over half of the states remain in the bottom 10 after a number of years, revealing different patterns among residents. These are two interesting charts, as some of the highest income states like Massachusetts and New Jersey (median income of $89,645 and $89,296, respectively (Fitzgerald, 2022)) are not found in the top 10 of most generous states. It is also important to note the donations across cities, as citizens of cities like Memphis, Atlanta, and Birmingham tend to donate 4-6% of their income to a charity of their choice, while those who live in notoriously wealthy areas like The Silicon Valley rank near the bottom. Here, citizens earn nearly seven times the national average income (Reilly, 2022), but data shows that, "San Jose and San Francisco (fall) near the bottom among our 50 biggest cities, giving away just 2.2 percent and 2.4 percent, respectively, of their income." (Mcguigan, 2022). Similarly, the average South Dakota household gives roughly the same monetary amount to charities as those in San Francisco, though the family income in SD is much less, resulting in South Dakota actually giving 75% more than those in San Francisco of their annual income (Mcguigan). Knowing the status of states' donating habits when customizing marketing strategies to certain regions of the country is important. Marketers of nonprofit organizations have an interesting decision to make in this case, choosing whether to focus attention on the states and groups that historically donate a substantial portion and shift focus away from those who don't, or hone in on those areas that aren't historically big givers and have faith that the places that do remain steadfast and loyal.

Other factors that affect donation habits across the country include political views, level of education, and marital status. Economist Arthur Brooks noted that, "The electoral map and the charity map are remarkably similar (Mcguigan, 2022)." It has been found that predominantly Republican states donate to private nonprofit institutions at a much higher level than Democratic-saturated states do. In fact, a 2012 study by the Chronicle of Philanthropy found that, "...the eight states that ranked highest (in donations) voted for John McCain in the last presidential contest…while the seven lowest-ranking states supported Barack Obama (Mcguigan)."

Education is also a significant factor in donation behavior. According to Philanthropy Roundtable, those who have graduated college and hold a bachelor's degree are 1.5 times more likely to make a donation to a charitable organization than those without (Mcguigan, 2022). Similarly, married households are 62% more likely to donate than one person households (Mcguigan).

Income is another significant factor that impacts donation behavior. The top 1% of the population in terms of income and net worth are responsible for a third of *all* donations (Mcguigan, 2022). While a majority look to their personal values to choose a charitable organization (74%), half of this group bases their decision on where to donate based solely on the reputation of an organization (LF School of Philanthropy, Bank of America. 2018). When it comes to marketing among those of higher wealth status, 41% of donors who stopped making donations to any particular charity ended partnership because they felt the organization was soliciting donations too often and reaching out to them more than they'd like (LFSP, BoA).

Income also influences *where* donations are made. A wealthy philanthropist lives a much different life than a lower income household, resulting in differences of priorities and recognized issues among one's community. For example, one who may live near the poverty line sees firsthand the effects of a food pantry, help with housing issues, or the need for programs to help with a vulnerability to crime in certain communities. Those who live lavish lives but choose to donate to nonprofit organizations will have a greater tendency to put their wealth towards an organization that more directly involves them, like an arts and culture charity (Neumayr & Handy, 2017). Francie Ostrower, author of "Why the Wealthy Give", studied 'elite giving' and found that those who are wealthy are more likely to donate to organizations that have incentives tied to them, like annual galas or invitations to other special and higher-class events (Ostrower, 1997). Similarly, "Why Rich People Give" author Theresa Lloyd finds that those of higher wealth are most likely to put their monetary donations towards organizations that support health, education, medical research, and arts and culture, but typically refrain from those that are angled more towards things like helping religious organizations and different environmental causes (Lloyd, 2004).

C. Marketing tactics

When it comes to reaching the correct people in a desirable way, Author Kivi Leroux Miller urges those who are wanting to make an impact need to define their nonprofit marketing through a series of three important questions:

1. Who do you want to reach?
2. What do you want to say?
3. How and where are you going to say it?

These questions encompass a wide range of specifications when it comes to targeting a certain segment of people who may support a charitable cause. Miller dives into each of these questions, outlining exactly what it means to be successful in this realm. Examples of each are outlined below.

C1. Who do you want to reach?

Targeting exactly who an organization should be reaching is the first step in reaching any fundraising and awareness goals that an organization has set for themselves. Because donors range from all ages and demographics, it is important to understand the different groups who are supporting the cause. Miller discusses this topic with Cheryl Megurdichian, communications director at Second Sense, a nonprofit that provides training to individuals with vision loss and client-centered support in the Chicago area (Miller, 2021). Through a series of focus groups, Megurdichian found that staff and donors alike weren't fond of the terms 'consumer', and changed the language around the organization to 'clients'. All of this to say, the way one refers to another affects the relationship with them. While in the marketing world, 'target audience' is a common phrase to define who one is speaking to, she finds the word distasteful in the nonprofit sector, as it refers more to the instances where communication is one-sided. While the basis of the term remains - one needs to focus: target specific people - she claims that it is a mistake for nonprofit organizations to think of its donors as an audience. Miller agrees with this idea and tries to implement words like community, supporters, participants, and influencers as better fits in the sector.

It is important to note that the 'general public' is not something that exists. Skipping the step of defining who an organization wants to reach and creating any fundraising campaign for the 'general public' is a "waste of time" in Miller's opinion (Miller, 2021). In her opinion, regarding the overall general public, she notes that a lot of people will never, ever care to donate to charities no matter what an organization does to market it. Encompassing a wide variety of a general population will get a charity nowhere, and while this sounds like a step in the wrong direction, focusing limited marketing resources on those people who *will* support a nonprofit's success is vital. Finding answers to specific questions regarding marketing is more simple when an organization knows exactly who they are talking to rather than any given person.

Segmenting an organization's community (target audience) into groups is a manageable way to be meaningful and intentional when reaching out to potential donors (Miller, 2021). Looking at basic demographics like gender, age, and education level is important, as noted previously in this thesis. This can also include specific factors like whether or not they have a nine to five job, if they live in an owned home or a rental home, and their personal family status. Secondly, Miller suggests looking towards behaviors and psychographics. What are the likes and dislikes of a group of people?

What are they doing and what are their interests outside of charitable giving (Miller)? Lastly, it is helpful to look at the stages of change and note which groups of people are among each phase. Also known as the transtheoretical model in health psychology, the chart lists five stages: precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance (Miller).

Being aware of what stage of understanding and donation preparation a supporter is in is important. As noted in Figure 5, those in the precontemplation stage have no intent to change a problem because they may not know that the problem exists, whereas people in the contemplation stage are aware of an issue and have a back minded thought to maybe support the cause. Those in the preparation stage are nearly making a change, and deciding how to go about it in the way that makes the most sense for them. Action stage participants are ready to help and are in the process of doing so, while those in the maintenance stage are working on maintaining a level of support for the organization that they have chosen to support.

The Stages of Change

Stage	Description	Typical State of Mind
Precontemplation	Does not recognize problem and has no intent to change	"Not my problem."
Contemplation	Recognizes problem, considering action	"I'll think about it."
Preparation	On the verge of taking action to make a change	"I need to do something. I'll give it a try."
Action	Making changes	"I'm ready. Let's do it."
Maintenance	Trying to maintain those changes	"I'm sticking with it."

Figure 5- Stages of Change

If an organization were to reach out to first time supporters in the precontemplation stage asking for monetary donations assuming that the group already knows everything about the organization, they may be turned off by the persistence, lack of personalization, and low amount of understanding about the mission. This group requires detailed and memorable information about the organization and the problem at hand so they are able to make their decision about whether or not the mission resonates with them. Similarly, long-time supporters don't necessarily need a reminder of the history and mission of an organization each and every time that they are contacted. This can come across as impersonal and that the organization doesn't appreciate their previous support. Knowing which stage of change a person falls into can prevent any miscommunication and can help in maintaining loyal supporters. Working through the process of defining groups of donors will allow an organization to communicate effectively with varying interests and personas.

C2. What do you want to say?

According to The Nonprofit Marketing Guide, the most effective messages that nonprofit organizations can use embody at least one of the following (Miller, 2021):

1. <u>Emphasize the impact on one person, animal, or thing</u>

A study done by Paul Slovic emphasizes the identifiable victim effect (Slovic, 2014). This idea stems from research that found people are more apt to help an identified individual rather than numerous unidentified victims or a statistic (Slovic). Donors will feel more compassion towards a mission that identifies an individual rather than a group as a whole. Researchers asked a group of participants to contribute monetary donations to provide life-saving treatment for a sick child, and another for a group of unidentified sick children. The amount targeted that was needed to save the child or children was the same overall goal in both groups. At the end, the sum of the donations towards the single identified individual was enough to cover all of the actual children, while the group comprised of people to help the numerous children raised much less (Slovic).

2. Evoke specific emotions

When making purchasing decisions, many times one's heart overrules their head. According to Hamish Pringle and Peter Field, authors of "Brand Immortality: How Brands Can Live Long and Prosper", profit of ads that use emotions outperform those with only rational content two to one (Pringle & Field, 2008). People want to feel good about the decisions that they choose to make. Seth Godin, author of numerous marketing books, argues that the three most important and effective emotions across the sector are fear, hope, and love (Miller, 2021).

3. Reinforce personal identity

When marketing tactics are specified to something that the donor already relates to and feels like they have a relationship with, they will be more likely to feel seen and heard and ultimately donate (Miller, 2021). How a supporter feels about themselves in relation to an organization's cause can affect a message and can alter how it is tailored to speak directly to a person.

4. Validate a decision or action by appealing to reason

Miller explains that while up to this point it may seem as though statistics aren't useful when trying to appeal to *emotions* of donors, they are still helpful in the justification of a donation. While people tend to make their decisions based on emotion, they rationalize the decision afterwards with reason. A donor who makes a monetary contribution and is later asked why may respond with a logical and fact based answer to justify this decision. Because of this, it's important for organizations to not allow numbers and statistics to get overwhelming; when donors are faced with large numbers and complex stats, they will be hard to understand and remember as well (Miller). The Frameworks Institute argues that many nonprofit organizations use really big numbers in the hope of magnifying the issue they're trying to solve, and suggests "social math" instead (Miller). This tactic uses numbers to tell stories and make analogies that are easier to understand, interpret and recall.

5. <u>Have a clear, strong call to action</u>

Enticing readers with what to do next is an important last step in creating a marketing message. They can be direct or lighter in tone; "Donate today" vs. "Tell a friend" appeal to different audiences. Regardless of the phrasing, it's important that the reader feels compelled to take action after seeing the effort.

C3. How and where are you going to say it?

Above all, storytelling is an effective form of communication for nonprofit organizations. Richard Maxwell and Robert Dickman, authors of "The Elements of Persuasion" define a story as, "...a fact, wrapped in an emotion that compels us to take an action that transforms our world (Maxwell & Dickman 2009)." When it comes to *word of mouth marketing*, stories stick better than more complicated statistics do. The book gives numerous tips to ensure that an organization's story is well told.

"Made to Stick" by Chip and Dan Heath define three storytelling plots that they consider the most important and inspirational: the challenge plot, the creativity plot, and the connection plot. The first, the challenging plot, mirrors a movie plot in the sense that they inspire and motivate supporters through three acts. First, the story introduces the protagonist. As aforementioned, this should be an individual person or thing rather than a large, unidentified group. Details are given about the ‘protagonist’ and readers get to know them. Secondly, a conflict arises, usually giving way to information about the charity’s cause. Lastly, action peaks and the obstacle at hand is overcome with the help of others. In this case, the organization is a supporting character rather than the main role. The mission of the challenging plot is to emphasize those that are being served, not what is serving the organization as a whole (Heath, 2010).

A creative plot aims to bring about a “Aha!” moment or pursue a “What if?” story (Heath, 2010). This is in an attempt to think about age-old problems in more creative ways and think outside the box in a way that will resonate with the supporters and potential donors. An example is given of a farmer who visited hungry children during the Spanish Civil War. Surrounded by famished citizens, the farmer had to ration the limited supplies of food he was given. The food lines that previously were in effect were clearly not working, and when he returned home, he had the simple idea of long term relief rather than an effort of short support. The simple idea of, “These children don’t need a cup of milk. They need a cow,” sparked real and innovative change that has helped 8.5 million people over 60 years (Heath).

Lastly, a connection plot, also known as bridging-the-gap stories, brings light to unlikely connections. These stories tend to start with a small and specific event that is probably not noteworthy on its own, but connects to a great human experience (Heath, 2010). This usually is brought about from an epiphany or discovery. Connecting characters in stories as well as these characters to the reader is a way to build empathy and connection.

Miller also lists, in her opinion, the six most important qualities of storytelling.

1. Short - Telling a story as briefly as possible while still getting the important messages across is vital. For online stories, 500 words or less is ideal to keep the audience engaged. Likewise, videos under two minutes keep the viewer's attention.
2. Straightforward - Stay focused on the main reason for the story. Being clear and straightforward will keep the story from going off course
3. Personal - As aforementioned, making a story about a specific subject will be much more effective than a stand-in or statistic for a larger population. Keeping the story focused on a main subject reminds the audience of what the mission of the story is.
4. Authentic - When a consumer hears a story that is something that they can relate to, they are more likely to connect with the mission and have a passion for it. Supporters don't want to hear about something perfect, they want it to be real.
5. Includes conflict - Providing a more unflattering detail in a story can help supporters understand an amazing transformation that the mission can help to achieve. Readers want to see something that is genuine.
6. Ends with a message - Storytelling works best among nonprofit marketing when there is a direct goal in mind. In conclusion, readers and listeners should have a sense of understanding of the mission and what they are supposed to do next.

Implementing these characteristics in a message can attract more potential donors and maintain a level of trust and connection between long time supporters as well. While messages are altered to aim towards different groups of people, these six attributes are a step in the right direction to maintain consistency.

C4. Challenges among nonprofit organization leaders

Nonprofit organizations face unique challenges when it comes to marketing to their supportive consumer base. Due to the mission-driven nature of the charities and the heavy reliance on donations from external sources, effective marketing requires a lot of strategy through maintaining a level of trust, building strong relationships, and demonstrating the desired impact to those who come across the message. Limited budgets to maintain a small overhead combined with communicating potential complex social issues can increase an organization's challenges. As mentioned in Figure 2, donors hold nonprofit organizations to much higher standards than a for-profit company. This added level of pressure should serve as a reminder of an organization's "why", and a push to reach their fullest potential.

D. Missteps among Nonprofits

D1. The good and the bad

Corruption among nonprofit organizations can arguably be linked as one of the reasons that discourages the smaller percentage of Americans that do not donate to charity to continue to refrain, as well as force avid donors to halt their support. A public misstep that gains a mentionable amount of attention can permanently damage an organization's reputation and donation levels. While steps can be taken to amend this trust among their once-donors, there is no assurance that any organization can return to where it once was.

A 2019 study by Mark LeClair looks at two kinds of organizations. First, those 'charities' that spend a vast majority of their income on fundraising and management, leaving very little of the monetary donations to the actual cause that the organization is founded upon. The Tampa Bay Times even ran an article capturing the '50 worst charities', citing that over a ten year span, these 50 'worst' organizations solicited $1 billion to for-profit businesses in fundraising efforts alone (Hundley & Taggart, 2013). While some of these may have meant well at the beginning, a poorly run nonprofit organization can lead to more harm than good in the eyes of a paying donor. The second kind of organization are the organizations that either seemed to have been corrupt at their inception, or endured a scandal so vast and public that donations will impact giving for years to come.

D2. United Way

A notable example of this is the 1995 United Way scandal. William Aramony led United Way, a worldwide network composed of over 1,800 local nonprofits, for 20 years as president and was recognized as a visionary for growing annual donations by $2 billion in ten years (Shapiro, 2011). United Way is the world's largest privately funded nonprofit organization. In the 1990's, Aramony went under investigation when suspicions rose about him using this nationally known charity as his 'personal piggy bank'. A Washington Post report of his excess urged both the FBI and the IRS to conduct a deep dive into Aramony's leadership and use of the nonprofit's income. He used donations and the organization's income for his own personal expenses, like purchasing first class trips to Las Vegas and buying a high-rise condo for his mistress in New York City (Hundley & Taggart, 2013). He even spent over $90,000 of United Way's money on a limousine service as his personal way of getting around. He told the Washington Post, "I can't afford to be waiting for cabs (Shapiro)." When questioned about his extravagant spending, Aramony explained that this lavish lifestyle was a way to meet other corporate executives, impress them and gain their financial support through monetary donations (Shapiro). On top of the expenditures, Aramony, at the age of 59, began a relationship with 17 year old Lori Vissalor before separating from his wife (Shapiro). After the Washington Post ran this story in February 1992, Aramony resigned from United Way (Shapiro), and was '...eventually convicted of 25 felony counts and sentenced to seven years in prison (Hundley & Taggart, p. 40).'

Brian Gallagher, United Way International CEO from 2009 - 2021, gave Harvard Business Review insight into how the charity was able to change its course of direction to maintain a successful mission years after an internationally seen scandal. The nonprofit that used to focus on getting donations (mainly through payroll deductions), no matter who they were from, began to look at the importance of creating direct relationships with the individual donors. While formerly a business to business model organization, a switch to a B2B2C (business to business to consumer) model allowed for a more personal fundraising approach (Gallagher, 2018).

After the 1995 fraud scandal involving the longtime CEO William Aramony, United Way spent a large part of the next decade recovering from this public embarrassment in hopes of rebuilding trust among its former donors and employees. Efforts included scripting a new company code of ethics, systemizing brand management, and remodeling operations within the organization (Gallagher, 2018). Through a digital transformation, Gallagher focused on providing infrastructure and promoting the brand in a merger with United Way International, converting United Way from an industry of local charities to a franchise model (Gallagher).

D3. Susan G. Komen Foundation

Another nationally recognized nonprofit misstep in the US involves a 2012 incident with the Susan G. Komen Foundation. The organization came under fire after announcing that the organization would no longer provide funding to Planned Parenthood for breast cancer screenings. In 2011, the foundation had given about $680,000 to Planned Parenthood, and provided nearly 170,000 breast exams in the five years prior (Memmott, 2012). The Susan G. Komen Foundation is dedicated to breast cancer research and awareness, so the decision to cut ties with Planned Parenthood was widely criticized among donors and others alike. Many former supporters accused the foundation that it was putting politics ahead of its mission, succumbing to ‘bullying’ from those who are anti-abortion. While some people supported this decision, throughout the following year, the foundation saw a significant drop in donations and an overall decline in the public’s trust. Eventually the organization reversed the decision, but the scandal remained on its donors and supporters minds for years following, damaging the foundation and leaving a lasting impression on its reputation (Memmott).

D4. American Red Cross

The American Red Cross (ARC) is a nonprofit organization that administers support, disaster relief and other varieties of humanitarian services. After a life altering earthquake in Haiti in 2010, Red Cross raised nearly $500 million in an effort to help those affected by the natural disaster. However, a report released by Senator Charles E. Grassley of Iowa found that the organization spent a quarter of the funds on internal expenses: $125 million (Elliot, 2016). In June of 2015, news reports were released indicating that ARC’s Haiti operations were wasteful and inefficient. Lee Melany, a former ARC official for the Haiti relief project, told reporters that the leadership at the time was much more interested in the project generating good publicity than actually fulfilling its pledges (Elliot). In fact, ARC promised to build 700 permanent homes in the Campeche neighborhood in Haiti. According to the report, despite hundreds of volunteers and hundreds of millions of dollars raised through fundraising, the American Red Cross only managed to build six (Grassley, 2016). Senator Grassley expressed his grievances with ARC through a 309 page report. As part of his introduction, he complains,

> “Non-profit entities have a special tax-exempt status and therefore have a responsibility to be as honestly, efficiently, and transparently operated as possible.

> Just as important, non-profits have a moral obligation to spend the vast majority of their resources furthering those causes for which the organizations were created. That is, after all, why Congress created the tax-exempt status in the first place. It stands to reason, then, that the public should know how ARC performs its work in pursuit of its stated mission (Grassley)."

The senator's opinions were not unpopular, as many donors were understandably frustrated with promises that were never fulfilled.

In both of the previous cases, the controversy had a significant impact on each separate organization. Gaining a loss of public trust and an overall decline in donations, supporters of both organizations demanded greater attention to transparency and accountability from the establishments that they used to have faith in. Both the Susan G. Komen Foundation and the American Red Cross had to work diligently to ensure that their reparations were rebuilt and trust could be restored. While they were both able to eventually recover and maintain a healthy level of supporters, both incidents serve as a good reminder of the importance of responsible stewardship, decision making processes, and ethical conduct in the highly visible nonprofit sector.

IV. PRIMARY RESEARCH STUDY

For the researcher to examine the thesis' hypothesis in alignment with the data found in the literature review, primary research was conducted. Through a survey and interviews, the researcher was able to analyze the findings of the review in conjunction with first hand exploration.

A. Survey Results

To gauge the general public's interests and preferences regarding nonprofit organizations, a 19-question survey was administered to over 500 survey participants. The survey was distributed to respondents who are over the age of 18 through the researcher's social media and email chains. Of the 509 respondents, 446 (87.6%) are female, 59 (11.6%) male, with the remaining four participants preferring not to disclose. The majority of the participants - 94.1% -identify themselves as white. Another 4.2% fit the categories of Hispanic, African American, or Asian. A large portion (55.8%) of the respondents are between the ages of 43 and 59 and over half are employed full time.

Beyond demographics, the survey asked questions regarding nonprofit marketing, the kinds of organizations that respondents donate to, and how they prefer to engage with the nonprofit organization of their choice. The first of these sought to understand who donors are choosing to spend their money on. Because there are hundreds of thousands of nonprofit organizations across the globe, there are a variety of preferences when it comes to who to support. Organizations' geographic impact range across from local, regional, national, and international.

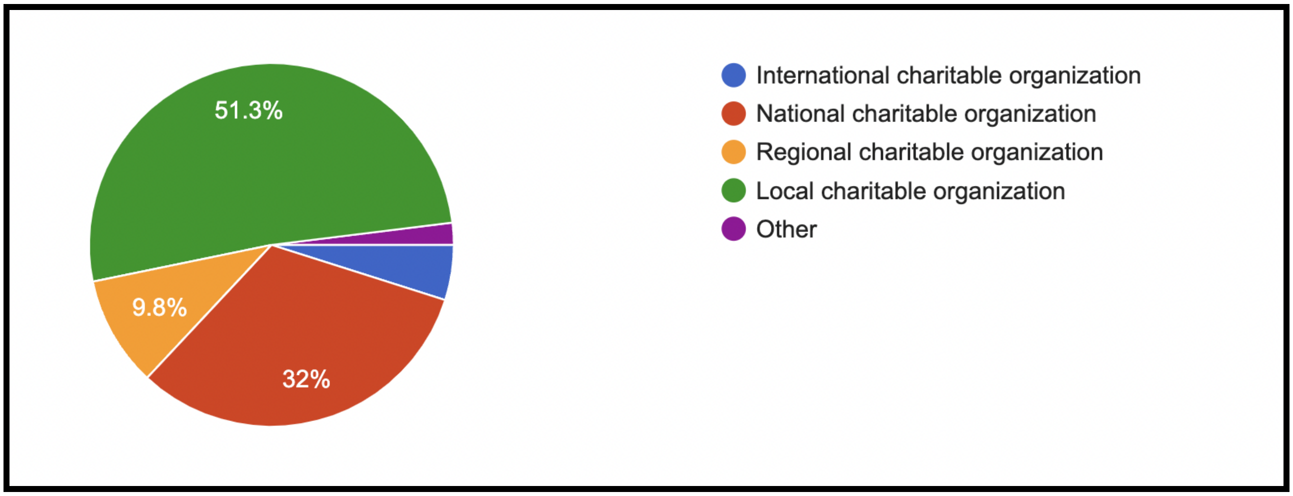

Figure 6- Which best describes the types of charitable causes or nonprofit organizations you support?

According to Figure 5, a large majority of donors choose to angle their donations towards nonprofit organizations in their community. Staying local can allow donors to have a personal connection to the organization, and provides easier access to the mission. This information is beneficial when generating ads towards groups of people: those who prefer to donate to local organizations may need more of a targeted push from more wide scale nonprofits.

Regarding the aspect of social media, a large portion of those who responded to the survey follow nonprofit organizations on at least one social media platform, with Facebook being the most popular. Figure 6 shows the breakdown of popular platforms including Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, LinkedIn and Twitter.

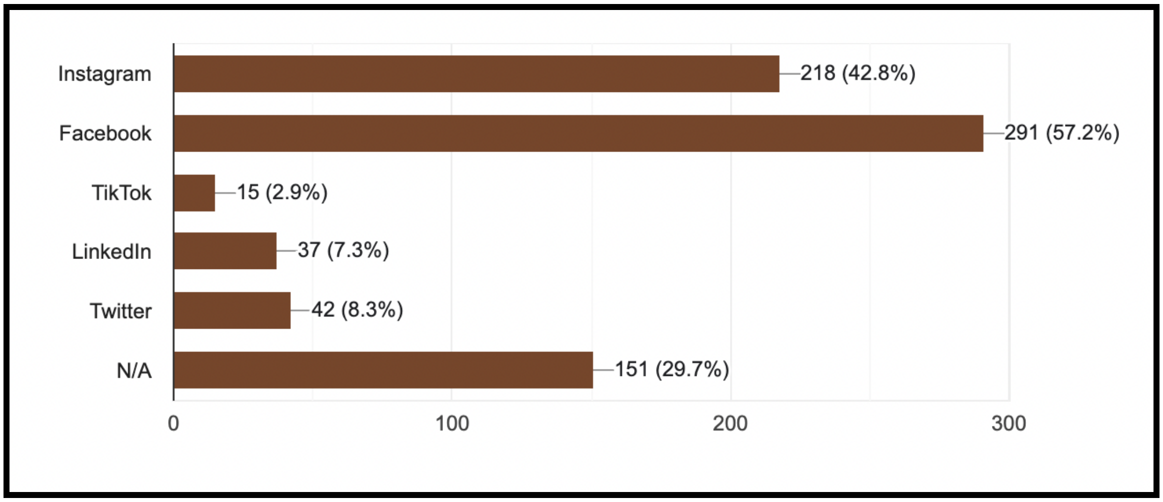

Figure 6- Do you follow the organizations that you donate to on social media? If so, on which channels? Select all that apply.

Figure 6 shows the social media channels that the 509 respondents follow and engage with nonprofits on. Facebook has a large lead, with Instagram trailing close behind. Engaging with donors through social media is a simple, affordable, and effective way to not only reach a wider audience, but to build personal relationships with them as well.

The researcher's survey looked at five guiding principles that may be important to donors when choosing which organizations to put their money towards: trust, relevancy, transparency, credibility, and communication.

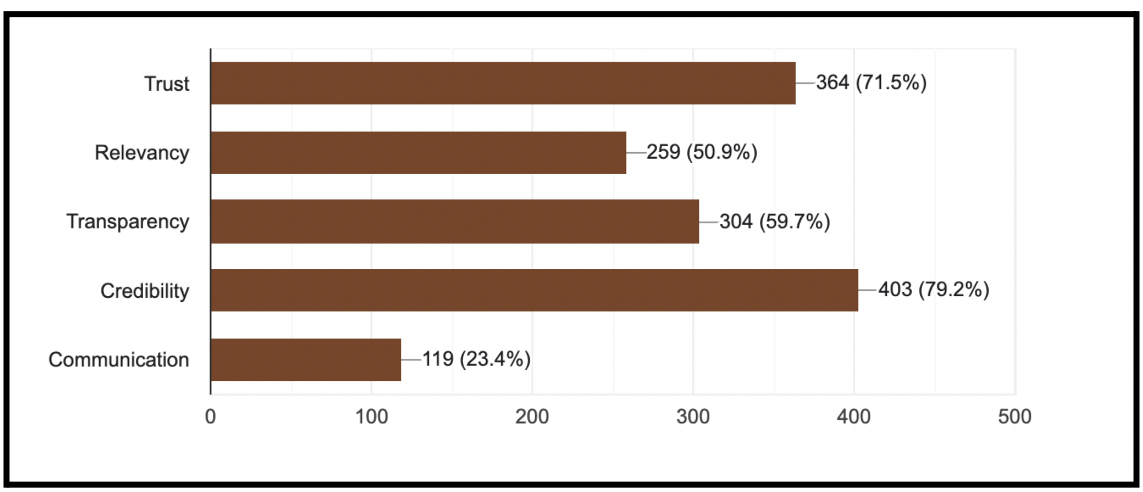

Figure 7- What guiding principles do you use to make your philanthropic decisions? Select all that apply.

Figure 7 shows which guiding principles are most important to donors. Because surveyors were prompted to select as many options as they felt related to them, many of the principles scored highly. The two leading, however, were credibility and trust. These two guiding principles resonate with 79.2% and 71.5% of surveyors, respectively.

Similarly, respondents were asked how important it was to them that nonprofit organizations are transparent about where donations are being used.

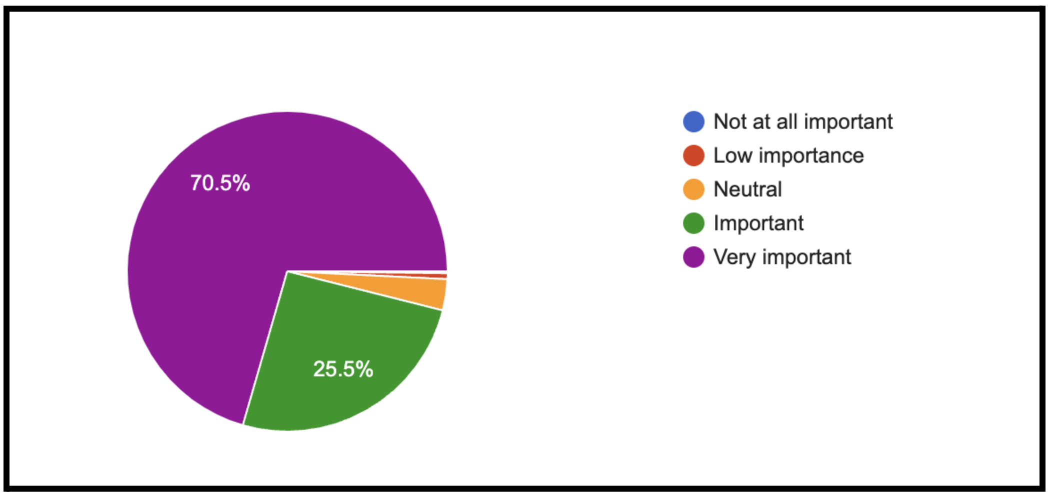

Figure 8- How important is it to you that an organization is transparent about where their donations are being used?

As shown in Figure 8, 92% of respondents agree that it is important that the organizations that they are donating to are being sincere about their use of donations, with 70.5% of these respondents answering that it is *very* important.

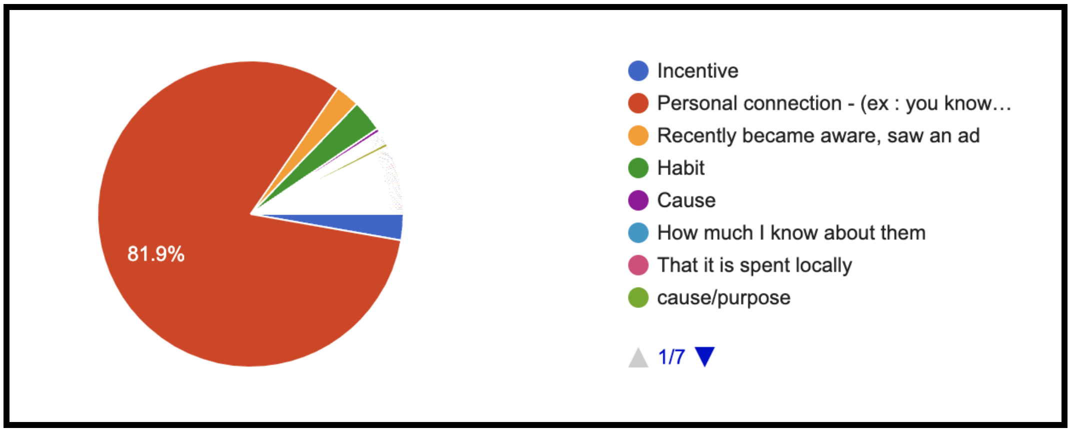

Figure 9- Which of the following is most important to you when choosing to donate to a charitable cause?

According to the survey, 81.9% of the respondents donate to an organization because of a personal connection to the mission. This closely aligns with Figure 5, which shows that over half of the respondents donate most frequently to a local charity. Proximity is a simple way to build personal relationships with donors and ensure that they feel as though they are having a direct impact on the mission. In fact, the largest group of people do not expect any incentive at all after donating and claim to donate with no expectation of recognition.

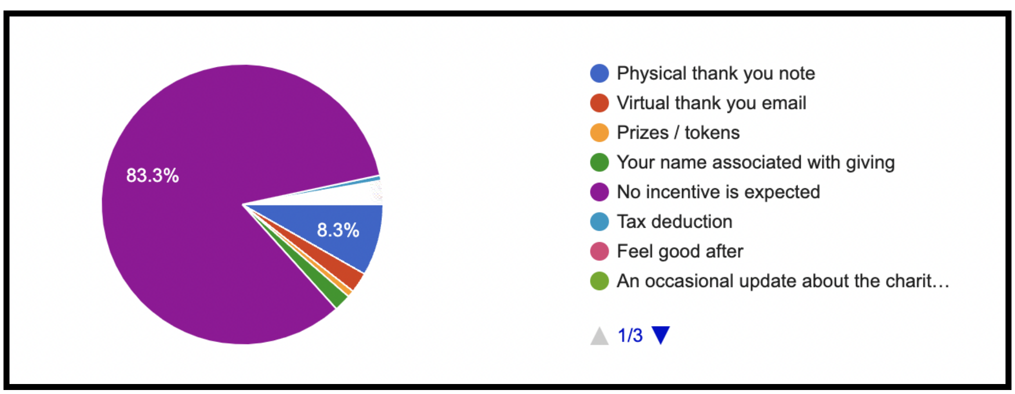

Figure 10- Which of the following incentives is most important to you to receive from the organization that you donate most frequently to?

As shown in Figure 10, 83.3% of donors do not expect an incentive after supporting an organization. The few that wouldn't mind receiving recognition prefer to receive it in a physical thank you note, a thank you email, or having their name being associated with the donation.

When it comes to marketing messages, most donors prefer to hear from their charity of choice rather seldomly.

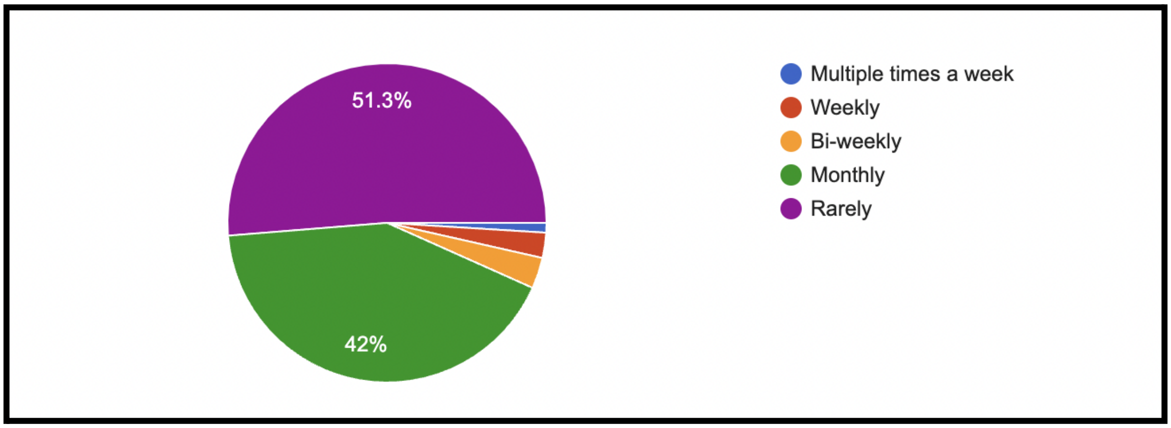

Figure 11- How often do you prefer to hear from the organizations that you donate to?

As shown in Figure 11, the large majority of donors would rather hear from their nonprofit organization once a month, if at all. This is where challenges arise, as it is hard to relay the information that donors want without reaching them often. Because of this, it is important to analyze exactly where organizations can target their supporters through indirect efforts such as social media and word of mouth marketing.

B. Interviews

To truly understand the motivations of those who both work at nonprofit organizations and those who donate, six interviews were conducted. Three interviewees work as leaders in the nonprofit sector, and the other three are frequent donors to a nonprofit organization.

B1. Nonprofit employee motivations

The first interviewee, Chris Boysen, is a Senior Vice President at ALSAC- the organization that provides funding for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Established in 1957, ALSAC's was founded with the sole mission of providing the initial funding to build the hospital and the sustaining funding to keep it afloat. He explained, "Our mission is to ensure that the hospital is able to focus on what they do best: caring for these precious children and their families so that the burden of treatment, travel, housing, food, etc, …. That's on us. That's our job." He says the reason ALSAC is so successful is the fact that they don't rely on one channel of funding; donations are coming in from a variety of sources. While the organization hosts hundreds of events like dinners, galas, and golf tournaments throughout the year, one of ALSAC's biggest events is the St.Jude Memphis Marathon Weekend that occurs in December of each year. What is so special about the race is that the route runs directly through the hospital's campus, allowing runners to physically see the impact that they have supported. In 2022, the event raised $13.6 million dollars, which makes it the single largest most successful fundraising event that is hosted. He describes the weekend as "powerful".

Kelly Leger is the founder of Lane's Promise, which was founded in 2005 shortly after the tragic death of her son. The mission of the organization is to keep the memory of her late son Lane alive through bringing joy to other children. Lane's Promise's biggest program occurs around Christmas- time. The organization collects physical and monetary donations, and gives them to identified families in need in the community. Leger says, "We deliver Christmas magic to them along with other life necessities." Using 100% of private donations, the organization relies on its supporters to remain in service.

Eliza Peters is a 22 year old who started a nonprofit organization in the sixth grade in partnership with ESPN's Sarah Spain. "Hear The Cheers fundraises for hearing aids and equipment to be distributed to young athletes in the Chicagoland area. In the last 11 years, we have raised over $360,000 and helped 110 kids receive hearing aids or equipment," Peters explained. Similar to Lane's Promise, Hear the Cheers relies solely on private donations, not tapping into grant provided funds. With monthly fundraising pushes, Peters aims to connect with donors on a personal level, always following up to thank them for their contributions.

B2. Nonprofit employee challenges

Nonprofit organizations face many challenges when working towards a goal. For Boysen at ALSAC, the issue that he most worries about is the global impact of St. Jude's mission. Since the hospital's opening in 1962, the survival rate of childhood cancer in the United States has gone from 20% to 80%. Boysen is incredibly proud of this statistic, but argues that, "There is a lot more that we can be doing - our work is not done." Despite St. Jude's transparency in sharing their research with clinics around the world, 4 of every 5 children diagnosed with cancer outside of the United States will not survive. Boysen says that when looking at a global statistic, “It’s 1962 all over again.” St.Jude is actively working with clinics across the world to train physicians in cancer research and treatment to ensure that its mission reaches far beyond its homebase in Memphis, Tennessee.

Leger with Lane’s Promise says her own biggest challenge is time. Because the organization is run by unpaid volunteers, they all have full time jobs that fill the majority of their time. When there are big fundraising events and donation pushes, the volunteers can often struggle to prioritize their efforts when there are outside factors vying for their attention. Peters explained that Hear The Cheers’ biggest challenge is a lack of understanding and awareness among potential donors. “People do not realize how much the cost of hearing aids and equipment is until they are needing them and realize that they have no insurance coverage opportunities. We also have gotten to a point that our average of $35,000 in the month-long push runs out after 5 to 7 kids depending on the type of hearing equipment they need, and if it's unilateral or bilateral hearing loss. We always have a waiting list that is 10 to 20 deep,” she says.

B3. Donor Motivations

Gabby Theriot, a 29 year old real estate agent, is a regular donor to St.Jude Children’s Research Hospital. She explained that she is called to give to help children live the life that they deserve; she is aware of how St.Jude uses their donations through marketing efforts and feels confident that her donation is going to be used correctly. For Theriot, she above all trusts the organization because she has visited the St. Jude affiliate hospital in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and has seen firsthand the patients that are benefiting from her dollar. When it comes to how and when she is motivated to take the pledge and donate, she relies on consistent messaging and reminders. While the majority of survey respondents do not want to be contacted more any more than once a month, Theriot is an outlier who uses this as her motivation. She says, “I believe being exposed to the opportunity to donate to any organization is most important for me, and allows me to say “yes” more often… the more I am asked to donate, the more often I am able to say “yes”.” This is a prominent example of knowing one’s target audience when determining a message, where to reach them, and how often to reach them.

Emilie Burgess, a Gen Z college student finds herself donating most frequently to The Whitney Marsh Foundation, an organization that raises money for pancreatic cancer awareness. Here, Emilie’s personal connection motivation aligns with the survey results; she chooses to support this charity due to her friend’s mother’s battle and ultimate loss to this disease. Because of this, she feels the desire to help those with the disease in the future. As a college student, she also likes to volunteer time in conjunction with monetary donations, as she is not employed. “I understand that my $20 donation may help a nonprofit, but it is hard to feel like that when there are organizations donating $20 million. Because of this, I feel like volunteering can make more of a difference,” she said. This is another example of support that nonprofit organizations can hone in on.

Patsy Nelson, who falls into the Generation X category, donates most frequently to animal shelters as well as the American Cancer Society. She chooses to donate to organizations that align with her passions, but is also motivated to these two causes due to the fact that she lost her father to cancer and also loves animals. She is happy to volunteer, share social media posts, or make monetary donations, depending on what is needed from the organization at the time.

B4. Donor Expectations

When it comes to the expectations of donors when supporting nonprofits, the vast majority have high standards. With the majority of donors giving due to personal connections or physical close distance, above all, this proximity to the cause's mission is what makes organizations successful. None of the interviewees can confidently say how much of their donation goes to the actual mission, but all three appreciate reports of the workings of the organization. They each expect transparency and like to know that their support is making an impact. Because Theriot, Burgess, and Nelson most frequently donate to local organizations, they enjoy the fact that they are able to physically see the organization working towards the betterment of the mission at hand. Because of this, organizations should make note of those donors that are not local, and make an effort to allow them to feel as connected with the mission to the same degree as local donors are.

V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has possible limitations. The first is a potentially insufficient sample size for accurate statistical measurement. With only 509 respondents, a small sample size represents the over 60% of American families that donate to charities annually. Additionally, with 87.6% of respondents identifying as women and 94.1% of respondents identifying as white, there is a lack of diversity in the pool of participants. Due to limited resources and a lack of databases of more diverse respondents, the researcher used personal and second hand connections when gathering primary data.

VI. RESEARCH APPLICATION

Through analyzing literature and conducting primary research, common themes were identified that related to the successes of a nonprofit organization's marketing efforts. The researcher proposes four strategies for nonprofits to implement in their tactics. These suggestions are as follows:

1. **Analyze the wants and needs of a potential audience**
    a. As shown through primary research, audiences' desires vary greatly. Because of this, time and money can be put into creating a could-be-effective campaign that has the potential to be successful but reaches the wrong audience. Collecting and analyzing data is a crucial step before moving forward with nonprofit marketing efforts. Each relationship is different, and catering to these needs will aid in forming a long term partnership.
2. **Engage with these audiences in accordance with their desires**
    a. No detail is too small; Knowing how often to target donors or which social media platforms to use is an important step in building trust with donors, letting them know that the organization understands them. It is crucial that nonprofits don't generalize their audience, but rather get as specific as possible.
3. **Share success stories and make the donors feel as though their contribution matters**

a. Letting donors in on the day to day workings of an organization emphasizes the trust being built in the relationship. When supporters feel as though each of their donations is directly making an impact on an organization, they feel as though they are also a part of the mission. This builds confidence in the nonprofit and prompts them to continue to support the organization.

4. **Share statistics about the mission's progress**

    a. Above all, being transparent about the percentages and statistics of both successes and failures will bridge the gap between organizations and donors. As shown in research, nearly all donors have no concept of how much is being spent on overhead, yet believe it should be minimal. If nonprofit organizations are willing to build up statistics that they are proud of and boldly share them, supporters and potential donors alike will feel more compelled to choose them over an organization that hides the specifics of their inner workings.

VII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, building trust among donors is the most crucial part of building a successful nonprofit organization. This proves the hypothesis of this research, as primary and secondary research have shown trust ranking among the most important aspects of a marketing strategy among nonprofit organizations. Trust is the foundation of a successful relationship, especially in the context of philanthropy, as donors entrust their resources and monetary donations to the organizations to make a positive impact in their sector. Because of this, nonprofits should prioritize trust-building strategies to make and maintain strong relationships with donors. Strategies like transparency and authenticity can help establish legitimacy and effectiveness of the organization in the eyes of its donors.

The marketing side of nonprofits plays a critical role in trust building among donors. Not only is marketing about promoting programs and services, but can create a community among donors that make them feel as though they are a part of something. Knowing one's audience is a key way to leverage the effectiveness of social media and other marketing tactics to engage donors. Email marketing can be a powerful tool in sharing stories and engaging with donors, but if sent to the wrong audience, it is a waste.

Above all, implementing an IMC approach to a nonprofit's marketing plan is an effective way to build trust among donors. If organizations can identify their audience, have a clear message, and conclude with a strong call to action, they are able to start a long term relationship with donors, allowing them to trust the organization and grow fonder of it over time.

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VII. Appendix

a. Survey Questions:

1. Are you over the age of 18? If not, please exit the survey now
    a. Yes
    b. No, Exiting.

2. Have you donated to a charitable cause or a nonprofit organization in the last five years? If not, please exit the survey at this time.
    a. Yes
    b. No

3. Which describes the types of charitable causes or nonprofit organizations you support?
    a. International charitable organization
    b. National charitable organization
    c. Regional charitable organization
    d. Local charitable organization
    e. Other

4. Which of the following is most important to you when choosing to donate to a charitable cause?
    a. Management of donation dollars
    b. Transparency of spending
    c. Spokesperson
    d. Support of those you know
    e. Other

5. How important is it to you that you feel as though your personal donation is going to use within the organization?
    a. Not at all important
    b. Low importance
    c. Neutral
    d. Important
    e. Very important

6. How important is it to you that an organization is transparent about where their donations are being used?
    a. Not at all important
    b. Low importance
    c. Neutral
    d. Important
    e. Very important

7. Which of the following is most important to you when choosing to donate to a charitable cause?
    a. Incentive
    b. Personal connection - (ex : you know someone who benefits from the service, you have benefitted)

    c. Recently became aware, saw an ad
    d. Habit
    e. Other : _________

8. Which of the following incentives is most important to you to receive from the organization that you donate most frequently to?
    a. Physical thank you note
    b. Virtual thank you email
    c. Prizes / tokens
    d. Your name associated with giving
    e. Other : ______
    f. No incentive is expected

9. What guiding principles do you use to make your philanthropic decisions? Select all that apply
    a. Trust
    b. Relevancy
    c. Transparency
    d. Credibility
    e. Communication

10. Do you follow the organizations that you donate to on social media? If so, on which channels? Select all that apply.
    a. Instagram
    b. Facebook
    c. TikTok
    d. LinkedIn
    e. Twitter
    f. N/A

11. What kind of content do you prefer to consume from nonprofit organizations? Select all that apply.
    a. Testimonies /stories
    b. Video
    c. Facts and statistics
    d. Photographs
    e. Event calendars
    f. Facts about the organization

12. Which of the following external influences could affect your giving/support of charities/nonprofits. Select all that apply.
    a. A pandemic
    b. Inflation
    c. Job loss
    d. Life change
    e. Other : _____

13. How many different nonprofit organizations do you on average donate to?
    a. 1
    b. 2-3
    c. 3-5

d. More than 5

14. How often do you make donations to your organization of choice?
    a. One time
    b. Monthly
    c. Annually
    d. At or around charity events
    e. Other

15. When donating to your organization of choice, which is your preferred method of giving?
    a. Giving in person
    b. Mailing in a check / cash via self-addressed stamped envelope
    c. Online credit card donation
    d. Venmo/Cash App
    e. Other ________

16. How often do you prefer to *hear* from the organizations that you donate to?
    a. Multiple times a week
    b. Weekly
    c. Bi-weekly
    d. Monthly
    e. Rarely

17. How do you prefer to receive messages from the organizations that you donate to?
    a. Emails
    b. Text messages
    c. Phone calls
    d. Physical newsletters
    e. Other

18. Select the statement that best describes you.
    a. I was born before 1964. (Baby Boomer)
    b. I was born between 1965 - 1980. (Gen X)
    c. I was born between 1981 - 1996. (Millennial)
    d. I was born after 1996. (Gen Z)

19. What gender do you identify as?
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Other
    d. Prefer not to answer

20. What best describes you (check all that apply)?
    a. White (Non-Hispanic)
    b. White (Hispanic)
    c. African American
    d. American Indian or Alaska Native
    e. Asian
    f. Other _______________
    g. Prefer not to answer

21. Which of the following best describes your job status?
    a. Employed full time
    b. Employed part time
    c. Student
    d. Unemployed
    e. Retired

B. Interview Questions for Nonprofit Employees and Facilitators:

1. Tell me about the nonprofit organization that you work for and the role that you play in it.
2. What is it about the organization's mission that resonates with you the most?
3. What is your organization's most successful program or event? Why do you think that it is more successful than others?
4. Is there anything that you wish more people knew about your organization or the issues that it is trying to solve?
    a. Are you taking any steps to make this information known?
5. Where does most of your funding come from?
    a. What percentage of your budget comes from private donations, and what can private donations help you to do that your other sources of funding can't?
6. How do you keep your supporters up to date about your work?
7. How does your organization measure and report on the effectiveness of the programs that it hosts?
8. What do you think are the main obstacles, if any, that stand between you and your mission's highest potential?

C. Interview Questions for Donors:

1. What nonprofit organization do you donate to most regularly?
2. What is it about that/those organization(s) that inspires you to support it?
3. What influences your choice of organization to support?
4. What influences your level and type of support to an organization? (money, volunteering, sharing on social media, etc…)
5. When you think about where you donate, is there a common theme or value in the organizations that you choose to donate to?
6. What do you expect from the charitable organizations in which you are involved?

7. What guiding principles do you use to make your philanthropic decisions?To what degree do you feel your donation(s) have made a difference? How so?
8. In what ways besides monetary donations have you supported a nonprofit? Tell me about it.
9. Do you find that volunteering or giving monetary donations makes more of a difference for an organization?
10. Typically, what percent of your donations do you think goes towards serving the actual mission and not administration fees?
11. What is it about the organization that you donate most to that makes it seem trustworthy to you?