



Bizperity



QUICK START Marketing Strategies

GROUP 3A:
Local Charitable
Non-Profits

**What Are You
Missing?**

**Managing The
Customer Journey**

NO PROFESSIONAL SALES

GROUP 3: Non-Profit

3A: Local Charitable Non-Profits

3B: Local/Regional Chapters of National Non-Profits

3C: Local Economic Development Organizations (EDOs)

3D: Local Business Organizations

CATEGORY	Non-Profit
Types of Businesses	Small local non-profits serving local populations
Examples	Small independent non-profits, local or regional centers operating under a national non-profit, and some small national & international non-profits.
Sales Process	Fund Raising
Sales Team	Corporate Sales
Transactions	A mix of small and large donations, and corporate sponsorships
Marketing Budgets	\$500K - \$10M
Marketing Staff & Services	Direct media buys/Digital Agency/PR/Video Prod.
Ad Agencies	Small/Medium Digital Agency

#1 Marketing Challenge	Driving Donations
#2 Marketing Challenge	Finding Corporate Leads
CAC	CAC is High
CLV	CLV is High
Customer Loyalty	Customer Loyalty is Mixed
Strategic Needs	Small donations requires continuous campaigns. Large individual and corporate donors are needed. Key is telling our story well.

Non-profit organizations share the challenge of driving donations and finding corporate leads. The four sub-groups in this business category each have unique challenges on top of these two key challenges. Running a successful non-profit is not easy, in part because it requires you remain compliant with IRS rules. Plan on hiring a CPA firm that specializes in non-profits to minimize these risks. We will address their unique challenges of these four sub-groups individually. Economic Development Organizations and business organizations have different key marketing challenges from the other non-profits.

Group 3A: Local Charitable Non-Profits

Local charities are often started by someone who wants to do something good for their community. In other cases, their motivation is based on a tragedy they have experienced in their own life, like the death of a loved one. These can be noble motivations, but before you start a non-profit of your own, get plenty of advice, especially from a CPA firm that specializes in working exclusively with non-profits. If they can't talk you out of it, then it's a good sign you might have a chance of making it work!

Non-profits still have big hurdles to overcome. Driving donations is not an easy task. Many non-profits struggle to raise enough money just to cover their operating costs, leaving little left over for charitable activities. Worse, there are marketing services that will milk non-profits, delivering terrible Returns on their Ad Spend. Poor ROAS is a sign that your organization may not have a target audience that can support your cause. Be realistic when starting a new non-profit. We are not suggesting that you throw down the towel at the first hint of trouble, but you need to be realistic about what is achievable, particularly in terms of the interest of a potential target market. It takes a lot of motivation for a donor to reach for their pocketbook. It requires at the minimum a compelling narrative that captures the story of your cause. So, expect to do a lot of content marketing and capture that compelling narrative in video and TV commercials that can move someone to donate.

Before you get started, also find a good, reputable, digital agency that specializes in working with non-profits. If they cannot convince you that your target audience does not exist, then again, you might have a chance of making it work!

Assuming that you do have a good cause and a compelling narrative that can be captured in video and commercial ads, try and start with a war chest from a few big donors who feel your passion and can provide funding for an initial round of New Donor Customer Acquisition campaigns. Decide on a specific strategy and identify the marketing channels you want to use and set a budget for each. Share this with your big supporters and see if you can raise enough money to cover this cost. Because there are no limits to the amount of money you can raise, your New Donor Acquisition Campaigns can be permanent. That is, you don't need to have two separate strategies, one for starting your non-profit, and one for maintaining a donor base. One of your main marketing goals should be to continuously grow your donations from the moment you open your non-profit.

One curious feature of Non-Profit organizations is that both their Donor Acquisition cost and their Donor Lifetime Value tend to be high, in some cases, quite high. This odd circumstance makes sense when you realize that it is hard to onboard a new donor because it is difficult to effectively communicate the narrative that defines your cause. But once you do, new donors are often passionate about your cause. So, there is a tipping point you have to reach with every new donor or corporate sponsor.

Corporate sponsors can be very important in your business model. Even though you are a non-profit, you still operate as a business. While you cannot make a profit that can be shared with the operators of the non-profit and you have no shareholders, you can still raise all the money you can. You just have to spend it on client services who receive them for free. It is possible to sell products as a non-profit. The rules governing how this works depend on the exact classification of your non-profit (under IRS rules) so check with a CPA experienced in working with non-profits. In some cases, it is possible to set up a separate for-profit business that operates under the umbrella of the non-profit. Check with your CPA to see if this is possible and will work for you if you want to sell products and services.

Marketing language is slightly different for non-profits because they have a client market that is different from their donor audience. So which one is the target market? They both are, but for different reasons. The donor audience is targeted for donations while the clients served are targeted for the delivery of free goods or services.

Best Marketing Practices for Local Charitable Non-Profits

If you are selling products or services, **download our *Guide to Offers & Promotions*.**

- ✓ Define your **Brand** around your **cause narrative**.
- ✓ Define a **powerful value proposition** and seal it with a **strong slogan**.
- ✓ **Build a simple website that features your cause narrative and your unique value proposition. These define your client base and what you do for them. These two elements define a theme for your cause narrative.**
- ✓ **Event Marketing** is not typically done with non-profits, but that doesn't mean that it can't be an effective marketing channel, especially since there is a large educational component to any cause narrative. Events can be a powerful way to attract and recruit volunteers needed to run your organization, and corporate sponsors which could be a major revenue stream.
- ✓ Run a **referral email campaign** for existing Donors to bring in their friends and families. **FREE**
- ✓ Set up a **Facebook Page** and **post stories and educational information** about your engagement with clients you serve. Think of every post or story as a chapter in your cause narrative. Provide links for downloads, pages on your website, or videos on your YouTube channel where you host your client stories and educational content. Look for stories that your donors like. Engagement (likes, clicks, shares) are the best test if a client's story is compelling. When you find a good story, feature it on your website within a library of client stories. Consider making your best client stories into television commercials or videos on your YouTube channel. **FREE**
- ✓ **Boost posts** that have high levels of engagement.

- ✓ If you hold **Events**, you set them up in Facebook Events. If you get a good response on any post, **boost the post** using a small budget to get more data to test how well it works. If it works well, increase the budget.
- ✓ **Run a Facebook Ad campaign** with promotional offers or to events if you have them. Invest more in these campaigns to maximize Donor Acquisition so you can continuously expand your donor base.
- ✓ Add a **Local Television campaign** or a **Google Search Ad campaign** when you can afford to test these marketing channels.
- ✓ Run **Email Campaigns** in your CRM to share interesting content with your existing Donors and keep them engaged with your cause. You can also include occasional specials or remind your Donors of the different ways they can get involved, including by volunteering. **FREE**
- ✓ Consider building **a media team of volunteers** who have the skills or experience to help you create content. Chief among these are good writers with a background in journalism, or even high-school teachers, and anyone with experience interviewing people. The key to capturing a lot of great client stories is in having a media team that can interview your clients. It does not take a lot of volunteers to capture a lot of stories. They can either write them down or video them. Be sure to get a release so you are free to publish their stories or feature them on your YouTube Channel. **FREE**
- ✓ Experiment with **Email campaigns promoting referrals**. If you have branded products (swag), packed stories, or documentary films, you can offer these in exchange for a donor referral. Paid referrals are one of the best ways to measure customer loyalty, so track the response to your referral program over time to put a number on your customer loyalty. You can run campaigns designed to increase customer loyalty and use Donor referrals as an indirect measure of your campaign outcomes. **FREE**
- ✓ Run **Branding campaigns on multiple marketing channels**. Branding campaigns have a more direct effect for donors than branding campaigns with For-Profit businesses because of the compelling nature of your cause narrative. Seeing a brand campaign is often enough to create a conversion to a Donor. You can alternate these to test individual channels for performance. Continue to use the channels that have positive ROAS. Branding campaigns will still have the effect of lifting all your other marketing campaigns.



Quick Start Marketing Strategy

If you can raise enough money to kick-start a robust series of Donor Acquisition Campaigns, consider working immediately with a full-service digital agency. Aside from building an in-house media team to help create content, rely on a digital agency to run your campaigns and

media buys. You should be in the business of creating a lot of content to use in content marketing campaigns. Ideally, this will include a mix of client stories (what was their challenge and how did you help them), video interviews with clients, and educational content providing background information about your cause and the issues you deal with on a regular basis. These stories all fit under the umbrella of your cause narrative, which is a grand theme that defines what your organization does, who it helps, and how it helps them. Download our eBook, ***Creating a Brand, From Vision to Brand Promise***.

Because you are creating so much content, build your website with a library of content that is searchable. Cross link content as much as possible. It will increase our Google rating (and improve your SEO). Create a **Subject Tree** that includes all the important topics relevant to your mission, with sub-topics listed under each main topic. Google rates your content based on how well it connects to similar content. Creating a Subject Tree allows you to cover a large area of related subjects and Google will pick on that. Enhance this effect by crosslinking content under a subtopic with its main topic. Create a YouTube Channel and post all your video interviews, any documentary like videos, and educational videos. You can create special videos on membership, corporate sponsorships, volunteers, and other unique aspects of your business model.

Campaigns

[Campaign numbers refer to our list of 15 Basic Campaigns]

#1 Lead Capture (with content)

Create a content marketing campaign to capture leads that you can convert patients. Test it in online campaign channels (Facebook/Instagram, Google Search Ads, and Google Display Ads). Drive prospects to a landing page where you can capture their contact information and follow up with a phone call to sign them up. The content should focus on your brand value, your brand promise, and your unique value proposition.

CHANNELS: (Facebook/Instagram Boosted Posts, Facebook Ads, Google Search Ads)

#3 Paid Referral

Enhance organic referral with a Paid Referral for new Donors. The most powerful measure of loyalty is the willingness to refer your business to another person, so tracking paid referrals gives you a solid metric of patient loyalty you can track over time. Offer a special service to both the new Donor and the Donor who makes the referral. Both special offers should only apply after a new Donor conversion. Set up a landing page where Donors can sign up to refer to another Donor, and one to track new Donor registration. Create two landing pages in your CRM and tag both Donors with the same referral tag so you can review referrals in real time. Create a special field in the new Donor registration so they can include the name of the referring Donor.

You can also promote your paid referral program to a larger audience in your target market through any marketing channel.

#4 Brand Awareness (multiple channels)

Run a brand awareness Facebook Ad campaign using a long term, slow-drip strategy, with a small daily budget. Brand Awareness campaigns typically work indirectly by providing lift to your other campaigns (increasing conversions), but for the Non-Profits, brand awareness campaigns can directly produce Donor conversions, letting you add new Donors immediately.

Test the ROAS of your Brand Awareness campaigns by marketing channel. If the ROAS is positive, continue running it throughout the year. Alternate between different marketing channels to see which performs the best, then focus your Ad Spend on the best two or three. CHANNELS: ***(Facebook/Instagram Boosted Posts, Facebook Ads, Google Search Ads; Google Display Ads; Local Television; Local Newspapers & Magazines)***

#6 Online Search (SEO)

Optimize your website to match keyword searches for your service and the needs and concerns of prospective patients. Work with your digital agency to maximize your SEO on a monthly basis. Spend about 10% to 15% of your marketing budget on SEO. This will enhance organic search without paying for Google Search Ads.

Be sure to optimize all your content for SEO.

CHANNELS: ***(Google Search)***

#7 New Lead Nurturing

New Donors may spend some time investigating your organization. That is why it is good to create a Subscriber Conversion. This would apply to anyone who signs up for your blog, downloads any content, or watches any of the videos on your YouTube channel.

A Subscriber is an important part of the Donor Journey (customer journey). This is a classic Marketing Qualified Lead which needs to be converted with content. Typically, this requires multiple engagements with a prospective Donor. Use a Lead Nurturing content marketing campaign to address all their concerns, both with your brand, your cause narrative, and the services you offer your clients. Use content to identify their concerns. These should be natural customer segments for you. These may fall into categories defined by services, or by client needs and challenges. Once you have identified customer segments, run different campaigns for each Donor Segment.

CHANNELS: ***(Facebook/Instagram Boosted Posts, Facebook Ads, Google Search Ads; Google Display Ads)***

#8 Existing Customer (email campaigns)

Use a lead nurturing campaign with your existing Donors to keep them engaged and providing you with support. You can use the same content used in new Donor nurturing campaigns, or you can use a special offer (which can be combined with any campaign type). The only rule is that if you offer both content and a special offer, do not put the special offer in the content itself. You can mention the offer separately on the landing page used to request the content, or in a follow up email, delivered a few days after they have downloaded the content. Offers can include free branded products (swag), free access to special content, or even discounts on products if you offer any.

CHANNELS: (*Facebook/Instagram Boosted Posts, Facebook Ads, Google Search Ads; Google Display Ads*)

#9 Product Education (content marketing)

You can create a separate product education campaign directed to your entire target market. Run it just like a Lead Nurturing campaign. The only difference is you are potentially reaching everyone in your target market, not just Marketing Qualified Leads. These leads can create a Subscriber Conversion, a Marketing Qualified Conversion, or go direct to a Donor Conversion. If you have a blog or videos on a YouTube channel, these leads may first become subscribers, which is why you want to have a Blog. Track all three of these key conversions, “Subscriber”, “Marketing Qualified”, and “New Donor” and tag them in your CRM. You can track these leads and retarget them in online ad platforms.

CHANNELS: (*Facebook/Instagram Boosted Posts, Facebook Ads, Google Search Ads; Google Display Ads*)

#11 Event Marketing

If you want to use event marketing to inform and educate prospective Donors or Sponsors in person, set up your event in Facebook events. You can use Facebook Ads to promote your events along with other online marketing channels. Offline channels cannot directly connect to Facebook so online channels are preferred. If you are using offline channels like local TV, you can put the URL on a branded landing page, which can be a hidden page in your website, but it is usually preferable to buy a URL for a specific campaign. Pick a URL that includes the name of the treatment you are marketing.

CHANNELS: (*Facebook Ads; Google Search Ads; Google Display Ads*)

Signing Sponsors

Signing up sponsors requires a sales process and one or more sales professionals. A founder can do this themselves, at least initially. We are aware of local non-profits whose president closes all their sponsors with a little help from an executive assistant. Closing big sponsors can be a big deal, with sponsorship donations running from a few thousand dollars to tens of thousands, or even larger.

If you do have a sales process in place for sponsorships sales, use a Lead Nurturing campaign to target this special customer segment. Manage these campaigns separately from your other campaigns and be sure to deliver qualified leads into the hands of your sales staff (or whoever is closing them).

Identify potential sponsor organizations and focus a series business development process to pursue sponsorship opportunities. This is typically done by a professional salesperson with business development experience who has to find their own leads.

Look for companies that have a natural connection to your organization. There are endless possibilities. It requires in-depth knowledge of your mission to identify possible partners. Brainstorm possible categories of sponsor corporations with an advisory board if you have one, or with senior employees.

Strategic Partners

Strategic Partners can be any kind of an organization, including both public (collages and local, state, or Federal agencies) and private (businesses), or even other Non-Profits. Look for organizations that have a natural connection to your organization. Just as with sponsors, there are endless possibilities. It requires in-depth knowledge of your own organization and other non-profits to identify possible partners. Brainstorm possible categories of sponsor corporations with an advisory board if you have one, or with senior employees. It is possible to co-market with these organizations, sharing marketing costs. To be effective these relationships should focus on the client groups of each organization. Don't expect to share Donor information, which could easily be a violation of the privacy policy of either organization. Non-Profits are naturally unwilling to share their Donor base with other organizations. The real value of these partnerships comes from delivering services or messages to the same or similar client groups.

You can establish a strategic partnership with a simple, one-page Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Anyone with good writing skills can write a simple MOU. Outline areas of collaboration in marketing, at events, in co-marketing campaigns, and strategic planning on separate but related campaigns. Do not include financial obligations unless they are limited and agreed to beforehand and allow either party to cancel the agreement without cause. A good partner relationship does not depend on a contract. It depends on collaboration between the parties. An MOU simply makes it clear to employees in both organizations what each expects to gain from the relationship. It also requires leadership in both organizations to motivate employees to engage with each other and to pursue common goals and projects.