



Fundraising Alchemy:

The Science and Art of Integrated Campaigns

Brock Warner, CFRE
Holly H. Paulin, CFRE





Holly H. Paulin, CFRE
(she/her)

Partner, Broccoli

- 20+ years as a front-line fundraiser and consultant
- Believes the best fundraising is found at the intersection of storytelling and data
- Lives in Ottawa, Canada



Brock Warner, CFRE
(he/him)

Partner, Broccoli

- 10+ years as a fundraiser
- Teaches Integrated Marketing at Humber College
- Author of *From the Ground Up: Digital Fundraising for Nonprofits*
- Lives in Prince Edward County, Canada



Agenda

This is an **introductory** level session focused primarily on annual giving and direct response campaigns

- Part 1: **What is an Integrated Campaign?**
- Part 2: **Why Integrate Offline and Online Appeals**
- Part 3: **How to Build and Optimize Integrated Campaigns**



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and pay tribute to the original inhabitants of this land where we meet today. The Choctaw, Houma, Chitimacha, Biloxi, and other Native peoples have lived on this land since time immemorial.

As settlers and guests, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and are committed to learning, working against colonialism, and moving forward in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration. This land acknowledgement is one small way of doing so.

[Indigenous Tribes of New Orleans](#)



Fundraising Alchemy: Science, Art, but *not* Magic

Executing great integrated campaigns shouldn't be shrouded in mystery. Yes, you *can* do it!

- There is **science** behind human behaviours
- There is **data** to prove effectiveness
- There is an **art** to bringing it all together





Part 1: What is an Integrated Campaign?



An **Integrated Campaign** is a coordinated fundraising and marketing strategy that shares a specific story, offer, and/or ask across multiple channels, both offline and online.





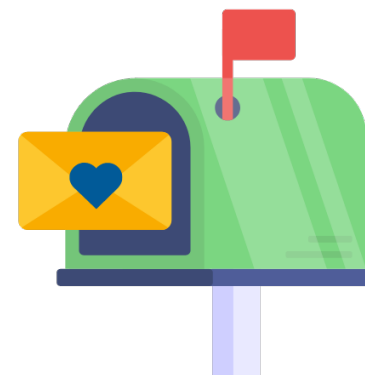
Part 2: Why Integrate Offline and Online Appeals



Direct Mail Isn't Dead

DM is still the primary driver of revenue for most nonprofits:

- 78% of donations come from direct mail
- 55% of people look forward to seeing what's in their mailbox
- Brand recall is 70% higher for DM vs digital



Source: [2021 USPS Research Report](#)



Digital Can't Do It Alone (usually)

The (not-so-massive) COVID effect:

- 2019 – **9%** of donations came from online giving
- 2020 – **13%** of donations came from online giving
- 2021 – **12%** of donations came from online giving



Source: [2021 Blackbaud Giving Report](#)



Your Response Rates Will Thank You

The (massive) integration effect:

- **1%** average response rate from email
- **5% - 9%** average response rate from direct mail
- **28%** average response rate when combining DM + digital



Source: [Ballantine 2020 Fundraising Trends](#)



Response Rates 2: Electric Boogaloo

The (massive) integration effect volume 2:

- **1.4%** response rate from email only
- **15%** response rate from direct mail only
- **24%** response rate from both mail + email
- Multichannel = more likely to give online AND increased average gift

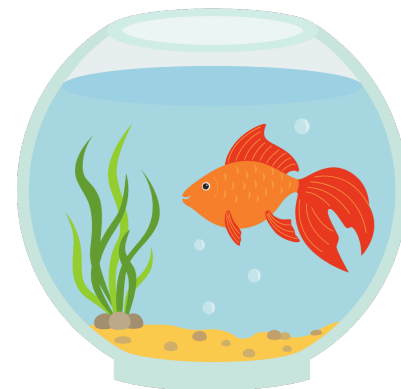
Source: [NextAfter](#)



The Goldfish Theory Has Been Debunked

Humans actually have the potential for very high attention spans!

- **Storytelling** unlocks high-quality “sustained” attention
- **DM + Email** drive revenue because of their capacity for sharing stories



Source: [2023 Forbes.com Article](#)



Meeting Donors Where They Are

A multi-channel strategy creates a better donor experience:

- Allows donors to choose how + where they want to give
- More likely to see your message at the right time for THEM
- More opportunities to build a deeper relationship with your mission
- Increased accessibility → greater equity



Part 3: How to Build and Optimize Your Integrated Campaign



First Steps: What You Need

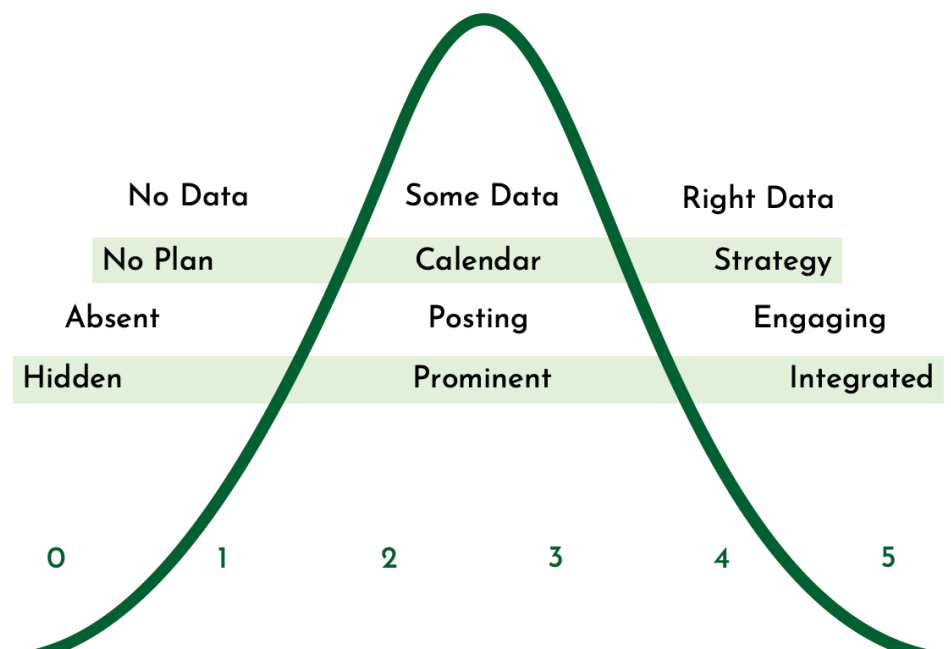
A multi-channel strategy requires time, resources and planning:

- Technology
- Advertising budget
- Strategy first
- Touchpoint calendar





How Do You Measure Up?





Digital Readiness + Infrastructure Review

- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Processes + Policies
- ✓ Analytics
- ✓ Website/Domain
- ✓ Gift Processing
- ✓ Tax Receipt Compliance
- ✓ Donor Database
- ✓ Email Marketing
- ✓ Search Engine Optimization
- ✓ Search Advertising
- ✓ Social Media

HANDOUT: **Checklist + Resources** (on the ICON app)



Beware of Shiny New Object Syndrome

- OGSM: Objective, Goal, Strategy and Measure
- Track what is most important to you, which you can confidently link to your **strategies and goals**. Everything else is noise.



Sample OGSM Framework

Objective	Goal(s)	Strategy	Measure
<p><u>Words:</u></p> <p>What will success look like?</p>	<p><u>Numbers:</u></p> <p>What quantitative targets would this require you to reach?</p>	<p><u>Words:</u></p> <p>What actions must you take to get there?</p>	<p><u>Numbers:</u></p> <p>What will you measure, and how?</p>



Sample OGSM Framework

Objective	Goal(s)	Strategy	Measure
<i>Recruit new donors through social media in a cost-effective manner</i>	<i>50 new one-time gift donors at a Cost-per-dollar Raised of \$XX or less</i>	<i>Implement conversion tracking tools into Meta, Google Ad Managers, website. Plan and execute a 10-week year-end campaign.</i>	<i># of new donors Cost-per-dollar Raised (or Return on Ad Spend) Total Revenue</i>



Get Granular: Touchpoint Calendar

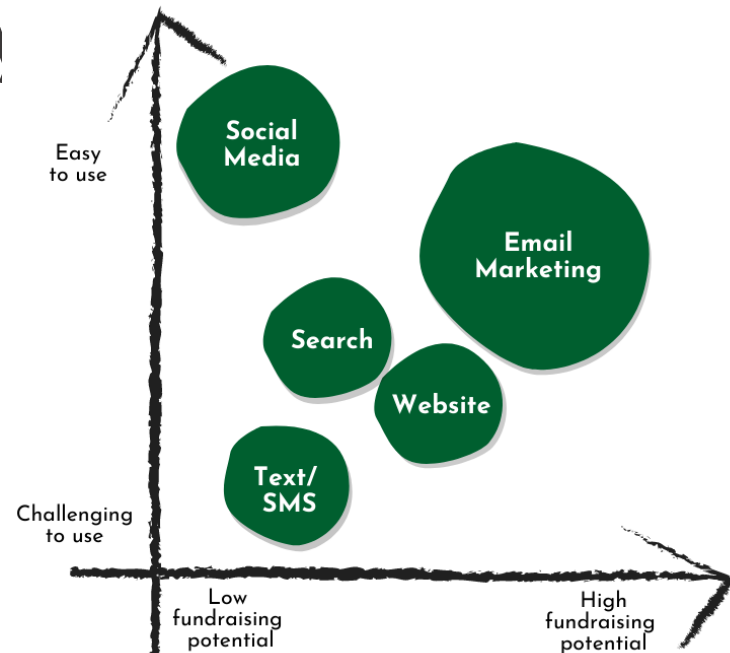
Only after strategy is set do you dive into the details:

- Timing (coordinate with all areas/departments)
- Messaging, images, asks, CTAs
- Tracking
- No, you're not sending out too many!



Choose Your Channel Wisely

- Each channel has its own superpowers
- Make sure there is alignment between the channels you use and your objective, goals, strategies, and audience





Offline Channels: DM, Phone, Print Media

- **Direct Mail** remains the most effective way to renew and acquire high-quality donors
- **Telephone** works well as a follow-up to mail, monthly conversion, even legacy lead generation
- More costly than online, but ROI and LTV are better—fewer “one and done” donors





Online Channels: Email

Superpowers: **Solicit, Thank, Engage, Steward**

- In 2020, US nonprofits sent an average of **59** email messages per subscriber, 23 (39%) were fundraising asks¹
- **Personalized subject lines** are 26% more likely to be opened²
- **Personalized CTAs** perform 202% better³
- 46% of email is opened on a **mobile device**⁴

Sources: ¹[M+R Benchmarks](#), ²[Campaign Monitor](#), ³[HubSpot](#), ⁴[2022 Email Benchmarks](#)



Online Channels: Website

Superpower: **Accept and Process Gifts**

- **Subscribe to your email list**
- Share your case, show how visitors can help
- Show accountability, trustworthiness
- The average online donation is \$204¹



Source: ¹[2021 Blackbaud Giving Report](#)



Online Channels: Search

Superpower: **Being found** when people search for your organization

- Many factors involved in getting to the top of a search engine's results. **Do the basics well!**
- Pages should be helpful and relevant. **Keywords** are great, but don't sacrifice clarity



Online Channels: Social Media

Superpower: Establishing an initial weak **connection**

- Network effects from peer interaction
- Community building, discussion
- Near real-time communication with your community
- Not great for one-step conversion—multi-step required



Social Media Channel Overview

twitter, facebook, tumblr, instagram, and
linkedin



HANDOUT: Social Media Superpowers (on the ICON app)



Even Digital is Pay to Play

Organic (unpaid) reach is increasingly throttled by most platforms:

- 55% of nonprofits pay for social media advertising¹
- US nonprofits spend an average of \$12k per year on SM ads²
- Average Return on Ad Spend (ROAS) for SM is \$1.05 USD³
- Average cost to acquire a new lead via digital advertising is \$2.60 USD³

Sources: ¹[Open Data Project](#), ²[Whole Whale Benchmarks](#), ³[M+R Benchmarks](#)



Users and Organic Reach

Facebook: 2.9 billion monthly active users, Organic Reach = 2%

Instagram: 1.4 billion monthly active users, Organic Reach = 3%

Twitter: 353 million monthly active users, Organic Reach = 6%

LinkedIn: 310 million monthly active users, Organic Reach = 4%

TikTok: 1 billion monthly active users, **Organic Reach = 118%**



Useful vs. Useless Metrics

***Start with these**

Conversion metrics:

- Conversion Rate
- Cost per Conversion
- Form Completions
- Advertising ROI
- Lifetime Value

***Optimize with these**

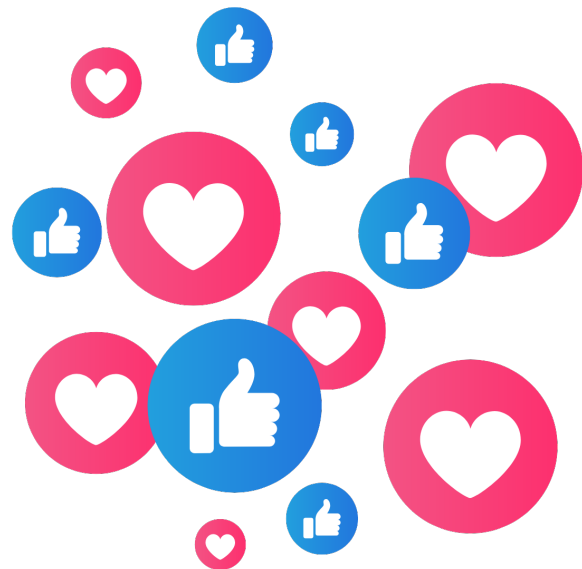
Vanity metrics:

- Impressions
- Likes
- Followers
- Shares
- Comments
- Open rates
- Views
- Traffic
- Time on Site
- Bounce Rate
- + more



Be Content With Your Content

- **Shared DNA, expressed differently:** same visual identity, not copy/paste
- **Optimize + test** tactics (e.g. visuals vs. text, emotion vs. facts)
- **Don't mix asks:** stay focused on fundraising as your primary call-to-action.



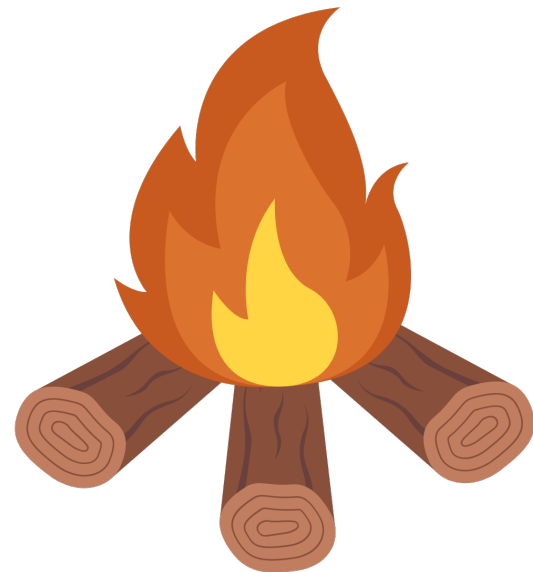


Examples



Build Campfires, Not Wildfires

- Tell great stories
- Sing together, even if it's out of tune
- Gather with good friends
- Make space for new ones
- Remember: it's not magic!





Questions?

Holly H. Paulin, CFRE
holly@teambroccoli.org

Brock Warner, CFRE
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