

How to Attract New Donors

FOR YOUR CAUSE

Related topics:

- How to maximize donors
- How to turn board members into ambassadors
- How to customize your message



This worksheet is a complementary guide to help you put into practice the advice found in our “How to Attract New Donors for Your Cause” video. Each 3-minute video is packed with information and is designed to be watched multiple times—even while you are completing this worksheet.

WHAT Develop an approach for introducing your cause to new people and compelling them to give.

TIME REQUIRED 8 hours

WHO IS INVOLVED We suggest brainstorming responses as a team. Alternatively, you can start this process alone, and then refine with a larger group.

Acquiring new donors takes time. With so many causes and so much clutter in today’s fast-paced world, it takes discipline and creativity to reach new people so they can hear about, become interested in, and donate to your cause.

This worksheet walks you through three steps that guide you in developing strategies to reach and engage new audiences.

1. Proactively be seen and heard
2. Enlist friends as trusted sources that can help spread the word
3. Use “social proof” from third parties to help reinforce your message

Here is a list of what you will have when you have completed the steps:



- A prioritized new donor audiences list and a list of potential groups or organizations to approach that provide access to the new donor audiences
- Ideas to pilot in the next three months to encourage current supporters to spread the word about your cause
- A plan to generate more media coverage
- A list of ideas to create your own coverage

→ For more help, contact Cause Communications at info@CauseComm.org or visit CauseCommunications.org/tools to see other Bite-Size Courses.

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Fundraising is rarely discussed without the topic of “finding” new donors. Just like making new friends, it takes effort to find others with whom there is a fit. The following steps can help you narrow your search and target the best groups.

1. Proactively be seen and heard:

A. Consistently making your cause’s work visible in the community is vital. This can be accomplished in various ways and may take a bit of experimentation to find out the approaches that are most effective for your cause. Start by identifying the types of donors you want to reach. Make a list of the characteristics or interests that your current donors share. Do the same for any other groups that you know your organization wants to target (e.g., a particular age or geographic demographic).

B. Identify groups or organizations that exhibit these characteristics and that give you access to your new prioritized audience(s). Ask board members and current supporters for introductions. Propose opportunities for collaboration, such as partnering on an event or contributing content for their newsletters or blogs.



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2. Enlist friends as trusted sources that can help spread the word:

A. Encourage current supporters to share why they care about your cause. Take 15 minutes to brainstorm different ideas to inspire current supporters to share their love for your cause with others (e.g., “share this on my social media” option after an online donation). Consider contests, donor-matching opportunities, in-person events, or online activities. Create opportunities for your supporters to invite others to attend events or engage in brief campaigns.

B. Identify the top two or three ideas on your list to pilot within three months. Test each with small groups of donors. Design the campaign(s) with customized messaging and invitations relevant to the group’s particular interests and track your success, so you can report on what worked. Refine and pivot based on results.



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3. Use “social proof” from third parties to help reinforce your message:

People generally engage with individuals and groups that are recognizable or familiar. This tendency to conform to the actions and interests of others is called “social proof”. The simplest way to achieve notice for your cause is by attracting the attention of the media. Use our “How to Get Better Media Coverage” worksheet for help on increasing your exposure to this group.

Also, brainstorm ideas to create your own coverage. Post articles on your blog or social media channels that highlight your expertise or relate your cause to current topics and emerging issues. Respond to what others are saying about these topics by posting comments or sharing their articles on your channels and including your own assessment.



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→ EXTRA TIPS

Consider piloting targeted advertising. It may be a worthwhile investment, depending on your target audience. Google Ads (formerly AdWords) and Facebook ads allow for microtargeting by location, demographics, and topic. Google even offers nonprofits the chance to apply for Ads grants to make it even more cost-effective to attract new donors.

You can find more information about digital advertising by nonprofits from the following articles:

- [Kiva Case Study on Use of Google Ads Grant](#)
- [Facebook Ad Strategy for Non-Profits & Charities: 9 Things to Understand and Test](#)
- [10 Facebook Tips and Best Practices for Nonprofits](#)
- [Best Practices for Nonprofit Digital Advertising](#)