

The Ultimate Guide to Nonprofit Marketing

PRESENTED BY LÚGH STUDIO

If you work for a nonprofit organization, it's still essential to understand the in's and out's of nonprofit marketing.

That's because effective marketing is the catalyst for the results you can have. Whichever cause you promote, and whatever the group of people it is that you help, one thing is sure: good nonprofit marketing is essential.

Today we are talking about the main differences between for-profit marketing and nonprofit marketing, how to get better at your nonprofit marketing, as well as some of the best examples to learn from.

Let's get started.

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WHAT IS THE MAJOR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FOR-PROFIT AND NONPROFIT MARKETING?

Before covering how to improve your nonprofit marketing, it's important to understand [the main differences to for-profit marketing](#).

Only then will you have the necessary background to implement our tips most effectively.

1. For-profit marketing

This is the majority of marketing you see. The majority of businesses that have a transactional business model (you pay money and get something directly in return) are for-profit. This would be the majority of products and services that you spend money on.

Here are some of the main features of for-profit marketing that are most essential to understand.

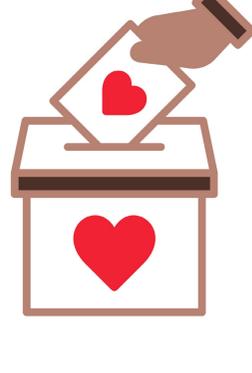
- Creates excitement or hype around a product or service to build interest in purchasing it.
- Markets this product or service to people by educating their audience on the product or service.
- Focuses on the direct benefits the consumer can expect by purchasing the product or service.

2. Nonprofit marketing

This is the sort of marketing most common in the humanitarian field. This is the overwhelming minority of businesses you see. Typical examples of nonprofit businesses include human rights organizations, environmental protection groups, and [advocacy groups](#) fighting to publicize very specific causes.

- Creates excitement around the idea of helping other people and/or "giving back."
- Market this donation by explaining to the audience how important their money is.
- Focuses on the importance of the cause and/or the good feelings of altruism the donor can expect once donating.

It creates excitement around the idea of helping other people and/or "giving back." In many ways, nonprofit marketing is highly centered on [convincing people through emotion](#). Because they aren't getting a product or associated benefit for themselves, it's even more important to convince them of the worthiness of the cause, the worthiness of the cause.



WHY IS EFFECTIVE NONPROFIT MARKETING IMPORTANT?

There is a tendency for nonprofit organizations to distance themselves from marketing principles. They think that because they are not selling a product or service in the traditional sense of the word, marketing principles don't necessarily apply to them.

This couldn't be further from the truth. Any business or organization that works with people (whether they are buying something from you or donating their money to you) can benefit from [good marketing foundations](#). You raise awareness of your cause, get more people to care about what you have to say, and (ideally) convince them to become a customer or donor.

As for what happens when you ignore them? Unfortunately, by doing this, you are limiting the amount of success your organization can have. Nobody hears about you; you don't build expertise in your country; you bring in less money than you could.

Nobody wants that!

The fact is, human nature doesn't change. If you want your organization to have the biggest impact possible, you need to get good at nonprofit marketing. Let's look at some tips now.



9 TIPS FOR GETTING BETTER AT NONPROFIT MARKETING

1. Get to work understanding your donors

There's a reason this is our number 1 tip: without a deep understanding of who you are marketing to, nothing else much matters. You need to take the guesswork out of your marketing and ensure that every message is spot on.

Something that really helps with this first step is creating [buyer personas](#). Through this tactic, you are able to craft better marketing material that applies directly to one person - NOT something as vague as "your audience."

I would also recommend talking to your past donors. This gives you a great idea of the sort of person most likely to donate. Odds are they share a lot of similarities with your next donor!

2. Make it easy to donate

When on your website, donating should be the most natural process in the world. Unfortunately, many organizations get in their own way with things like [dysfunctional websites](#), unclear web page navigation, or numerous unnecessary steps in the donation process.

Making donation easy is especially important online. That's because there is much less resistance to donating when the payment is digital compared to physically pulling money from your pocket.

It pays (quite literally) to get this right. Make buttons bright and obvious. Make "upsell" donations as easy as one click. Regardless, the donation process should be [quick and easy](#).

3. Prioritize visual storytelling

Seeing things will always be more powerful than hearing or reading about it only. The reason visual is so essential to effective nonprofit marketing is that it's the most impactful to somebody's emotions.

You are only limited by your imagination when it comes to visual storytelling in [your content](#). Here are some options:

- Video. This doesn't just give a good insight into your beneficiaries, but helps tell their story as well. Thinking about interviewing the people and partners you are helping for the greatest effect.
- Photos. There's nothing like actually seeing the people that your money is going towards helping. This is a great strategy for platforms like Instagram.
- Infographics. These are a great combination of data and images. They also appeal to your donors most interested in hard facts.



4. Segment your email list

[The power is in the list](#). You've likely heard this numerous times in for profit marketing.

Well, it's equally applicable for nonprofit. The only caveat is that you actually need to be sending people customized messages.

That's where [segmentation](#) is so essential. Most ESP's will give you the option to segment your list in various groups, so it's not all that important which provider you choose. What IS important is how you segment them.

5. Make it worth your donors time

In an ideal world, everybody would love donating money. They would be interested in making the world into a better place, and they would put their money where their mouth is.

Unfortunately that's not the case. The fact is, nonprofit isn't so different than for-profit when it comes to influencing people's behavior. Simply put, people need a reason to donate. And sometimes, this goes beyond "your money is helping us."

Spell out [more specific benefits](#). Let them know exactly what their money is achieving, and the personal benefits they stand to receive by donating.

6. Take the thank you process seriously

Donations don't stop once you've gotten somebody's payment. In fact, if you want a continuing partnership, this is just the beginning. One of the most essential actions your organization can take is prioritizing heartfelt and deliberate acts of gratitude.

Nobody *had* to donate to your organization. But they did, and they deserve to be thanked for it.

Send a thank you card. Let them know how thankful you are. Let them know what good their money is doing, and make sure they know how appreciated they are. This has the added benefit of building your organization's reputation.

7. Social media strategy

[Social media](#) is likely where a large portion of your target audience is. And that's a good thing: social media channels are a wonderful opportunity for you to showcase your organization's work in a way that brings you more donors.

Just think about it. Nobody wants to donate their hard-earned money to a faceless cause.

They want to see where their funds are going and who they are helping (remember the point about visual storytelling?).



8. Get organized

Of course, none of these tactics mean much if you aren't organized. If you aren't keeping track of the most important metrics and past donors, your interactions with donors are going to be unprofessional. You also won't have a good idea of the things you need to improve.

For useful tools that can help your nonprofit stay on top of their game, check out [this post here](#).

You might also give [this post](#) a read. In it you will find tailored advice that can help any nonprofit know the most important information they need to keep track of.

9. Set realistic goals

All of the previous eight tactics, when implemented correctly, will allow you to hit your targets. However, it's still important to stay realistic. Not only does a realistic assessment of future goals [prevent burnout](#) but it also keeps your interactions with donors professional.

If you constantly have goals of raising an unrealistic amount of money, the people thinking of donating will [start to wonder](#). It also makes your organization look worse than it actually is if you are constantly "under achieving."

So stay realistic. Towards the end of every calendar year, look back at what you achieved and where you might improve. Only then will you have a clear path going forward.

EXAMPLES OF NONPROFIT MARKETING DONE RIGHT

Now that we know what nonprofit marketing actually is and how to get better at it, let's see some examples in action.

This will help you conceptualize the tactics mentioned.

1. Fundraise Up

Fundraise Up is a tool that promises to "generate 2x more revenue with the same fundraising efforts" by using smart technology. This is one of our main partners that we work with to increase donations for nonprofits. Check out the [Fundraise Up](#) website to see nonprofit marketing fundamentals in action.

2. Save the Children

[Save the Children](#) is one of the best known nonprofits in the world, and for good reason: their marketing is everywhere. From blog posts that show the stories of people they help, to a focus on statistics that show the work they do, Save the Children knows exactly what they are doing.

3. Doctors Without Borders

[Doctors Without Borders](#) combines important news updates in the humanitarian field with an excellently designed website. They also make it easy to donate money with a bright read button at the top of their home page. Check out their site for more effective marketing principles in action.

CONCLUSION

Don't shy away from your nonprofit marketing processes. Master the fundamentals, and understand how they can be applied to your organization specifically, and you are well on your way to more donations and better results for your beneficiaries.