8 things you should know before starting Face-to-Face fundraising

*Face-to-Face is used almost everywhere in the world to recruit donors. Before setting up a Face-to-Face fundraising program, take notice of the next 8 steps.*

1. With great power comes great responsibility

Face-to-Face is an extremely powerful marketing channel, which can be used to directly contact your target audience. In a more literal sense, it allows you to engage people in conversations. No other marketing channel acts on its own in the sense that it can think, anticipate and react directly to the behavior of your target audience. It works as a direct mail with brainpower.

However, this is a double-edged sword, as Face-to-Face relies on people. The people that do the work determine the success of this marketing channel. If you ensure that there is a good selection of people that are given attention with good training and guidance, your team will be golden. If you select a bunch of slackers, and treat them as such, it will not be a great surprise that the whole performance will not turn out well. Your team should be selected and treated as professionals.

2. Everything is measurable

All your actions can be measured: The amount of consumers you approach, the amount of donors this results in, the time they remain donating, the amount of money they donate and the media coverage your brand receives. It is possible to constantly monitor the results. Advantages of this are the fact that it is possible to quickly adapt to this information, changing campaigns, but most of all effectively using your budget.

This information can also be confronting. There is no way of hiding the results if they do not turn out the way you had hoped or expected. There is no way of changing them in hindsight, so it is best to learn how to deal with it.

3. Watch out! It becomes scalable

For NGO’s in the Netherlands, 30.000 new donors each year has become a rule rather than an exception. One specific organization in the UK is known to recruit 150.000 donors each year, using Face-to-Face marketing.

These numbers are wonderful, but this marketing channel is also a serious one. Next to giving training, giving briefings, making a planning, inventing new concepts, tracking follow-up etc., there is still a lot of work to be done in the area of data collection, donor administration, the crediting of bank accounts and the coordination of different departments within the organization. Make sure to set enough time apart to organize these things.

Mind you: you will also receive complaints. The good news is that there are many ways to reduce those complaints as much as possible. However, there is no way to avoid angry consumers and
donors at all, even if your teams and departments are functioning at their best. Take this piece of advice: there will be complaints.

4. **Use the digital revolutions**

The development and use of smart phones, tables and social media is increasing rapidly. Use these tools to support and enrich the consumer’s experience. Also use it to increase the range of your marketing channel.

In countries such as the Netherlands, the United States and Australia, charity organizations use mobile devices for the direct registration of new donors, the direct processing of their registration, and the immediate follow up on this registration with email or text messages.

In addition, a new project will be launched in the Netherlands in 2013, starting with ‘Address-based Door-to-Door.’ This will include a better selection of target audiences, a higher efficiency for Door-to-Door teams and the possibility to give attention to the people that are already donating, or specifically the people that just stopped donating. Sound like a great project, right? I will keep you updated on this!

5. **More and more an ‘experience’**

As Jack Ryan already said: Face-to-Face fundraising is becoming more of an ‘experience’. I completely agree with him. People enjoy being surprised. Extraordinary campaigns and concepts lead to better results.

These things cost more time and preparation. It requires more thought from the marketer and fundraisers, as well as a budget at the start of a campaign, but it will work. In the long term, the results will be far better.

You would not start the construction of a home before the architect completed his part of the job, would you?

6. **Don’t forget retail…**

Face-to-Face is more than just recruiting door-to-door or on the street. As the word gives away, Face-to-Face includes eye-contact with the target audience.

This can happen at events, on fairs, in malls, in stores, at DIY’s; practically everywhere the target audience is present.

In the Netherlands and Belgium, the best results are achieved by campaigns a retail partner or event is affiliated to. These campaigns have an adjusted concept and proposition to complete the circle.

7. **Think Integrated**
Combine fundraising, media and communication. Adapt your marketing mix at the moment you want to convert. Face-to-Face campaigns that are supported by a strong marketing mix have better results (in some cases even twice as good) than Face-to-Face campaigns that stand alone.

Themes and events such as World Aids Day, World Animal Day, but also media campaigns around large disasters have a significant influence on Face-to-Face results.

Try to combine this as much as possible, supporting your Face-to-Face results!

8. **It is more than Direct Marketing**

Face-to-Face is more than simply Direct Marketing. Face-to-Face is also used for things as PR, Guerilla marketing and marketing research.

The Belgian TNT used a Face-to-Face campaign that was not aimed at direct conversion, but at PR. At this time, their action has 40 million views on YouTube.

Did you already calculate what it would cost to get this amount of views through television commercials? In the Netherlands, this would surely cost more than 1 million euro.

Imagine what could happen if these kinds of marketing were combined with lead generation and fundraising…

*These were the first 8 things you should know before starting Face-to-Face fundraising. I hope they are usable. Don’t hesitate to give me a call or email me for any questions or in-depth discussions on one these 8!*

*I am looking forward to seeing you soon!*

*Regards,*

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