

Advancing Donor Services: A Comprehensive Communications and Paid Marketing Strategy

Building on our research and discovery process, we have developed a communications strategy designed to elevate the role of donor services at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.

This approach integrates storytelling, digital outreach, and a robust paid marketing strategy to amplify the Community Foundation's leadership, deepen connections with donors, and highlight its philanthropic impact.

Strategic Goals to Enhance Donor Engagement and Impact

- **Positioning the Donor Services Team as Leaders in Philanthropy:** Showcase the Community Foundation's expertise, innovative approaches, and changemaking leadership.
- **Deepening Donor Relationships:** Build stronger connections with existing donors through tailored storytelling, transparent communication, and personalized updates that demonstrate the impact of their generosity.
- **Connecting Donors to Broader Impact:** Highlight the alignment between donor contributions, grantmaking, and the Community Foundation's overarching mission.
- **Highlighting Tangible Outcomes:** Share detailed stories of impact, outcomes, and achievements to showcase the transformative results made possible by donor contributions.
- **Leveraging Paid Marketing:** Use targeted campaigns to drive traffic to donor services resources, connect audiences with philanthropic experts, and inspire deeper engagement with the Community Foundation's work.

Audience Focus

The Community Foundation's donor services outreach will prioritize the following groups:

- **Current Donors:** Deepen engagement through tailored updates and personalized communications. This includes the Affiliate audiences.
- **Prospective Donors:** Use paid ads and storytelling to showcase the impact of philanthropy and inspire new contributions. This includes Affiliate audiences.
- **Current Endowment Partners:** Deepen engagement through tailored updates and personalized communications.
- **Professional Advisors:** Highlight resources and tools available to advisors who guide clients on philanthropic strategies.
- **Board of Trustees:** Strengthen their role as ambassadors and donors by providing tools and updates that highlight the Community Foundation's leadership and the impact of donor services.

Storytelling Across Platforms

- **Earned and Owned Media:** Highlight stories of impact of our grantmaking from initiatives to donor advised fund grants. Emphasize how donor contributions enable transformative work.
- **Product Education:** Showcase donor services products that help donors achieve their philanthropic goals.
- **Tailored Updates and Reporting:** Provide personalized communications, including donor-specific outcomes, to build trust and inspire long-term commitment.
- **Interactive Content:** Leverage visual storytelling and multimedia to bring donor and grantee stories to life across digital platforms via videos, downloads, chat bots, surveys, etc.

Storytelling Roles and Responsibilities

- **Donor Services Team:**
 - Identify impactful donor stories and program highlights.
 - Collaborate with grantees and donors to gather testimonials and narratives.
 - Approve donor-focused updates and content tailored for key audiences.
 - Source, draft and edit storytelling content for newsletters, blogs, social media, and press materials.
- **Marketing and Communications Team:**
 - Draft, edit, and design storytelling content for newsletters, blogs, social media, and press materials.
 - Develop a centralized story bank for cross-platform usage.
 - Manage content scheduling through the editorial calendar.

Paid Marketing Strategy

Paid advertising will strengthen outreach to key audiences by driving traffic to the Community Foundation's website and increasing engagement with donor services.

Objectives:

- Promote the donor services sections of the Community Foundation's website, showcasing tailored services and expertise.
- Increase visibility of donor services products and resources.
- Amplify impact stories to inspire prospective donors and build trust with current supporters.

Tactics:

- **Search Engine Marketing (SEM):** Use Google Ads to target high-intent keywords like "donor-advised funds," "Southeast Michigan philanthropy," and "endowment fund management."
- **Social Media Advertising:** Promote posts on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to highlight donor success stories, planned giving options, and upcoming events. Run ads featuring donor services products, such as setting up an endowment or creating a personalized philanthropic plan.
- **Retargeting Campaigns:** Re-engage website visitors who have shown interest in donor services pages or funding resources with targeted ads that guide them back to key webpages.

- **Sponsored Content:** Collaborate with regional publications to publish ad as well as paid articles or sponsored stories that spotlight the Community Foundation's role in philanthropy.

Paid Media Roles and Responsibilities

- **Donor Services Team:**
 - Provide input on ad targeting for donor audiences and philanthropic messaging.
 - Monitor leads and inquiries generated through paid campaigns.
- **Marketing and Communications Team:**
 - Develop and execute paid advertising campaigns across Google Ads, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
 - Create retargeting campaigns for website visitors and optimize campaign performance.
 - Collaborate with digital agencies (if applicable) for specialized support.

Social Media Strategy:

- **Facebook**
 - **Goal:** Foster awareness among a broad audience, emphasizing the impact of donor contributions.
 - **Implementation:** Post 3-4 times weekly featuring donor stories, grantmaking highlights, and updates on planned giving resources and ways to give and connect.
- **Instagram**
 - **Goal:** Showcase the Community Foundation's mission and donor impact through visual storytelling.
 - **Implementation:** Maintain a posting cadence of 2-3 times weekly, focusing on reels, donor/staff photos and infographics
- **LinkedIn**
 - **Goal:** Engage professional advisors, philanthropists, and foundation partners.
 - **Implementation:** Publish biweekly long-form content, such as donor success stories and thought leadership insights (including "embolden" content). We will also use storytelling to emphasize the Community Foundation's expertise in managing complex gifts.

Social Media Roles and Responsibilities

- **Donor Services Team:**
 - Review and approve donor-specific posts.
 - Share updates on events, donor recognitions, and success stories for social integration.
- **Marketing and Communications Team:**
 - Oversee platform-specific strategies for Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
 - Create social media posts, including graphics, reels, and carousel content.
 - Schedule posts, monitor engagement, and respond to audience interactions.

Email Strategy: Donor-Centric Focus

Implementation Plan

- **Editorial Calendar:** Use Asana/Hubspot to coordinate sends around key moment/needs as well as regularly scheduled updates such as the Community Foundation Monthly news.
- **Segmentation:** Leverage audience tags to send tailored messages to donor types and interests.
- **Automated Emails:** Utilize automation to deliver content such as a welcome series to onboard new donors with emails introducing the Community Foundation's mission and opportunities to engage.
- **Personalized Updates:** Share quarterly donor-focused updates highlighting impact stories and personalized thank-you notes.
- **List Growth:** Expand the donor email list through event outreach, website sign-ups, and targeted advertising.

KPIs:

- **Click Rates:** Target 1-2% CTR for newsletters.
- **Subscriber Growth:** Aim for a 5-8% increase annually for general newsletters as well as professional advisor list

Email Roles and Responsibilities

- **Donor Services Team:**
 - Provide insights into audience segmentation and donor preferences.
 - Customize quarterly updates with specific donor highlights and philanthropic opportunities.
 - Draft email copy, coordinate audience specific sends
- **Marketing and Communications Team:**
 - Draft email copy, design templates, and coordinate sends.
 - Manage audience tags and list segmentation in Salesforce/HubSpot.
 - Track KPIs and provide regular reporting on email performance.

Measuring Success: Comprehensive KPIs

- **Paid Marketing KPIs:**
 - **Website Traffic:** Monitor traffic to the Philanthropic Experts section and donor services pages.
 - **Ad Engagement:** Track impressions, click-through rates, and conversions from digital campaigns.
- **Social Media KPIs**

- Quarterly tracking of impressions, engagement rates, and follower growth across platforms.
- Higher engagement with donor-focused content.
- **Email KPIs:**
 - Increased open and click-through rates.
 - Growth in donor-focused subscriber segments.

Performance Tracking and Reporting Roles and Responsibilities

- **Donor Services Team:**
 - Analyze donor engagement trends and provide insights to refine strategies.
 - Monitor metrics tied to donor conversions, fund growth, and event attendance.
- **Marketing and Communications Team:**
 - Track KPIs for email campaigns, social media, and paid advertising.
 - Provide quarterly performance reports with recommendations for improvement.