

Marketing, Communications and Branding Strategies:

A Toolkit for Mission Success

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

About Mission Spark and the Authors	3
Using this Toolkit	4
Introduction	5
Differentiating Between Marketing, Communications and Branding.....	5
Part 1. Positioning Your Organization.....	6
Defining Organizational Values	6
Vision & Mission Statements	7
Identity & Branding.....	7
Communication and Marketing Goals.....	9
Part 2. Your Audience and Your Message	10
Defining your audience(s)	10
Crafting Your Message(s)	12
Start with your tagline	12
Engage and inspire	12
Part 3. Choosing Your Methods and Tools.....	15
Print Advertisements	16
Online Outreach Tools Guide.....	16
Messaging Best Practices	17
Part Four: Marketing Plan Template & Assessment.....	22
Setting a timeline and defining responsibilities.....	22
Making Success Measurable	23



Table of Contents

Planning for Longevity23

Closing Thoughts24

Links and Resources.....25

Appendix A: Communications Grid26

Appendix B: Sample Communications Survey28



Mission Spark

About Mission Spark and the Authors

Mission Spark, LLC (www.missionspark.org) partners with philanthropy, nonprofit and social enterprise leaders to achieve transformative social change and to strengthen the social sector. They work to achieve this mission by providing results-driven consulting, training, and facilitation in Colorado.

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Using this Toolkit

Using this Toolkit

Background

Non-profit organizations are driven by their missions and the causes they seek to serve. Unfortunately in this mission driven space, marketing and communications often come secondary or even tertiary to programming and other activities. But, prioritizing marketing and communications is crucial to advancing a mission in a cost effective way. Effective marketing will raise awareness for your organization, broadening the reach of the people you can serve, attracting volunteers, and stimulating giving.

This toolkit is designed to lay out the process of creating a marketing plan, beginning with the crucial step of defining your own organizational values. Creating a marketing plan and defining the communications strategies you will use can be a journey of self-discovery and inner self-search for an organization. The pages of this toolkit will provide descriptions, examples, and explanations of the importance of each concept situated in the non-profit in an effort to make that journey a seamless one for your organization. Additionally, there will be space for you to work through interactive activities on organizational branding, audiences, and messaging that will culminate in a marketing template and evaluation plan. Best practices by national organizations in this space are also highlighted in call-out boxes throughout.

Parts of the Toolkit:

- Part 1 – Positioning Your Organization: The first part of this toolkit serves as an organization assessment tool of your values, vision and mission.
- Part 2 – Your Target Audience(s): In this part of the toolkit, you define your different audiences and begin to think about what type of messaging is best for each.
- Part 3 – Choosing Your Methods and Tools: The second half of the toolkit builds upon the organizational assessment, pulling in your values, goals and target audiences and connecting them to effective communications channels.
- Part 4 – Marketing Plan Template and Assessment: The toolkit culminates in a marketing plan template, Appendix C, and creates space for you to define roles and plan for longevity.

Uses for this Toolkit:

- Clarify organizational values, vision and mission.
- Better understand the different communications strategies available and how to choose the best method for each of your target audiences.
- Develop a complete marketing plan and evaluation system for your organization.



Introduction

Introduction

Non-profit organizations have the power to transform our communities. By tying effective communications strategies to your vision and mission statements, your organization will be more powerful and more likely to realize the change you seek to see in the world. The value of effective marketing, communications and branding strategies is they provide the opportunity for you to make the most of your available funds and amplify your reach and social impact.

Differentiating Between Marketing, Communications and Branding

Marketing is defined by the American Marketing Association as “The activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large.” Marketing is the research and planning of all activities related to your organization. *Communications* can be thought of as the messaging, or “how” you will execute your marketing research and plan. Communications involves choosing the most effective channels and methods by which to communicate to your audience(s) about your organization’s offerings and brand. Which brings us to *Branding*, which is the marketing practice of creating a name, logo, etc. that identifies and differentiates your organization, product or services.

The Nonprofit Village in Montgomery Counted developed the following summary on [Branding vs. Marketing and What Nonprofits Need to Know](#).

In a nutshell, marketing unearths and activates your audience. Branding is designed to educate or create certain emotions. It attracts loyal supporters, donors and advocates to your cause.

Branding for nonprofits is more than just your logo or name — a lot more. Branding is telling your story to your audience and showing why YOU matter. It’s about the experience and perception your audience has of your organization online, in-person, and on paper. Effective branding differentiates your organization from the countless others the public can choose to support. It should convey a clear and cohesive identity and communication for everything associated with your organization.

Marketing for nonprofits are activities and strategies employed by a nonprofit organization that are designed to spread the message of the organization, as well as to solicit donations and call for volunteers. Marketing may contribute to a brand, but the brand is bigger than any particular marketing effort. The brand is what remains after the marketing has swept through the room. It’s what sticks in your mind and is associated with a mission, service, or organization.

Branding is strategic. Marketing is tactical.

Branding is usually overlooked in nonprofits but great brands know that the more consistently they reinforce their reputation, the more likely supporters will remain loyal. Are you strategically leveraging your brand to advance your mission and impact?

Positioning Your Organization

Part 1. Positioning Your Organization

– Values, Vision and Mission Statements, and Branding –

Defining Organizational Values

Your organization's values are the moral compass that drives organizational culture and decision-making. Values are what you stand for. Values also serve as a point of differentiation in marketing and communications. Here's how to determine your nonprofit's unique value proposition:

The following guiding questions from 7 Steps to Creating Your Best Nonprofit Marketing Plan Ever, developed by a Network for Good as a good starting point for how to determine your nonprofit's unique value proposition.

1. *Take a journalistic approach to determining your "oneliness." Break it down with five Ws and an H: Who (are your constituents), What (is your issue area), Where (are your constituents located), When (do they need you), Why (are you important), and How (are you different)?*
2. *Get an outside insider's opinion. Call a volunteer and ask why he or she is involved with your organization and not Joe's Other Advocacy Group down the street. Your view of your differentiator might be way off from what your supporters see.*
3. *Complete this phrase: "Our nonprofit is the only __ that __." This gets right to the core of why your organization exists in the first place. Who are you serving that no one else does, and how are you doing it differently?*

Use your "oneliness" statement to help you make decisions. Will a new program align with your statement? How can you position your organization in fundraising campaigns?



Positioning Your Organization

Vision & Mission Statements

Vision and mission statements are important tools to guide your organization and also play an important role in guiding marketing and communication strategies. Start by writing out a vision statement, which is a guiding image of success formed in terms of a contribution to those you represent or serve.

Our vision is a community where/that...

Next, write your mission statement, which is a succinct statement of your initiative's reason for being that communicates who you are, what you hope to achieve for whom and through what means.

To bring that vision into reality, we are...

And we hope to achieve...

For...

By...

You likely already have these statements clearly defined, and that's great! However, starting a marketing plan is a good time to revisit those statements and make sure they still align with your organization.

Your organization's values, vision and mission statement are the starting points for developing your strategic communications plan. Ideally, your plan should be linked to your organization's overall strategic direction.

Identity & Branding

Your brand is your most powerful tool for strengthening your organization from the inside out. When you clarify and communicate what you stand for inside your nonprofit, you instill not only a sense of pride but also a motivational tool for your staff and volunteers to live the promise in their day-to-day tasks. And when all levels of your staff are dedicated to fulfilling the brand promise, your key audiences can't help but notice.

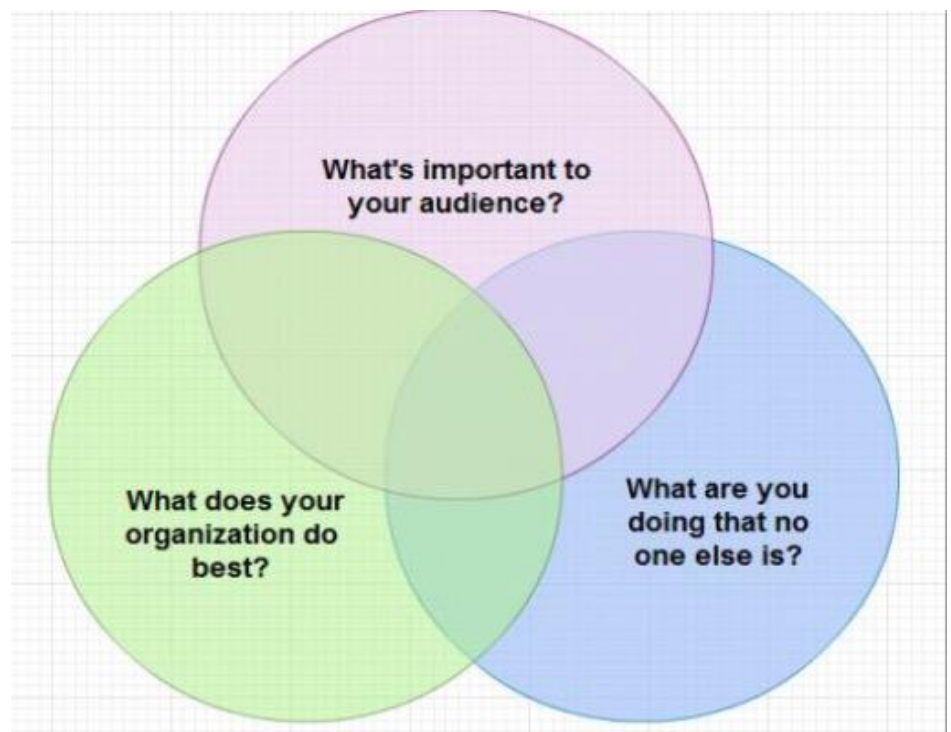


Positioning Your Organization

The following are essential components of a strong brand identity:

- Agreement among your board and senior leadership about the importance of developing and maintaining a consistent brand.
- Sufficient allocation of resources – time, talent and money – toward building your organization's brand.
- Relevance of your brand to the audiences you want to reach.
- Consistency in your messages.
- Consistency in your materials.
- Consistency in how employees and volunteers at all levels portray your organization.
- Consistent follow-through on your organization's promises, direct and implied, to all of your key audiences.
- Ongoing measurement of whether you are increasing the value of your brand in the eyes of your constituents.

This graphic from 7 Steps to Creating Your Best Nonprofit Marketing Plan Ever, by the Network for Good, emphasizes finding your brand's "sweet spot" and urges you to think about what happens at the intersection of what's important to your audience, what your organization is good at, and what you're doing that nobody else is.



Positioning Your Organization

Communication and Marketing Goals

Nonprofits typically have two main goals for their communications programs – raising awareness and raising funds. Yet getting your messages heard and moving people to act have never been more challenging, or more important. With all the information clutter that exists, how do you make your organization stand out? In the corporate world, not being visible eventually means going out of business. And more nonprofits are coming to understand that the same is true in the nonprofit sector. If those you are trying to serve don't know you exist, or if donors don't understand that you need their support, your organization's survival can be at risk. Your goals should be SMART – specific, measurable, accountable, realistic and time-bound.

Your marketing goals should be tied directly to your organization's strategic goals. These goals will make clear how you will use marketing and communications strategies to reach your organizational goals over a predefined period of time. On the next page, you will find an example of how of organizational and marketing goals from the [Right-Things, Right-Now, Nonprofit Marketing Plan Template](#) by Getting Attention! You will have an opportunity to align your organization goals and marketing goals to communications strategies in Part 3 of this guide.

Example: Environmental Health Partners (EHP):

Organizational goal:

Improve regional health by significantly reducing exposure to toxic chemicals—lead in homes, bay contamination, and air pollution from trucks, ships, power plants and other sources.

Marketing goals:

- *Build awareness about EHP's work and impact.*
- *Motivate 15 area residents to attend a two-part community meeting (to be held in each of four neighborhoods in the region), to build their understanding of the relationship between health and the environment and train them as effective advocates.*
- *Forge partnerships with key partner organizations in the region with existing relationships*



Your Audience and Message

Part 2. Your Audience and Your Message

– Define Your Audiences, Craft Your Messages , Engage & Inspire –

Defining your audience(s)

To effectively reach the right audience with the right message, you not only need to clearly define your values and goals, but you also need to target your audiences precisely.

Determine your constituents: Who are the people you serve?

How are you currently communicating with this audience?

What do these people care about and how can you best connect with them?

Who else is there?: Who is in your donor base? Are you in need of volunteers? Whose help do you need?

Push further – who else?: Make a list of everyone your organization comes in to contact with. People who call the hotline, who have joined your newsletter list, who have been referred by a friend.



Your Audience and Message

Are there any other ways you can segment your target audiences into groups that share perspectives, habits, and wants, so that you can best reach them? Below you will find an example from the [Right-Things, Right-Now, Nonprofit Marketing Plan Template](#) by Getting Attention! You, of how to segment your target audience.

Target audience: *County residents — build their understanding of the environmental health dangers in the region and how they can improve the situation so they are motivated to advocate for cleaner environmental behavior on the part of corporations. Their main want — for their children to stay healthy.*

Segments: *Parents of children 12 and under; parents of children 12 to 18; school administrators; homeowners.*

Top Tip:

A great marketing team is consistently gathering insights and data to better understand their audiences' needs. Keep asking and keep listening!

One way to do this is by routinely sending out a survey to your email or print mailing lists. Try to gauge what mediums are most effective at reaching your audience.

→ Ask if they are aware or have read your newsletter. Did they attend an event, if so where did they hear about it?

Now, write down the top three audience segments (starting with the main constituency you serve) below. Keep these audiences in mind as you continue to go through the remainder of the toolkit:



Your Audience and Message

Crafting Your Message(s)

Start with your tagline

Your organization's tagline is hands-down the briefest, easiest and most effective way to communicate your brand. Less is more. The three questions you need to ask yourself are: *What do we do? How are we different? Why is our mission exciting?* [The Nonprofit Tagline Report](#) from Getting Attention! outlines 10 helpful rules to follow when crafting your timeline.

Ten must-do's for a great tagline:

1. **Must convey your nonprofit or program's impact or value.** Make sure you use your tagline for all it's worth. If your tagline doesn't have positioning value, it's a bust.
2. **Must be authentic.** Make sure your organization can stand behind your tagline, 100%. When you do, you build credibility. When you don't, you lose any you may have.
3. **Must be broadly and easily accessible and memorable, avoiding jargon and acronyms.**
4. **Must be specific to your organization, not easily used by another nonprofit reaching out to the same audiences,** otherwise it's just a "me, too." This is particularly tough, but differentiation is the name of the game.
5. **Must be eight words or less,** which is all you have of your audience's attention. Although, there are exceptions to this rule, when more than eight words are required to get the gist across, i.e. "More than a store. We build healthy families and communities, one job at a time" —Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota (15 words is a lot, but the organization is trying to correct misperceptions about its work and impact).
6. **Must be highly visible and integrated into all print, online, multimedia and most verbal communications.**
7. **Must make an emotional connection.**
8. **Must capture the spirit or promise of your organization.**
9. **Must clearly complement and/or clarify your organization's name without duplicating it.** You can't presume your audience brings any particular context to digesting the tagline.
10. **Must take the tone that will connect with your audiences while being true to your organizational "self."** Effective taglines may be humorous or earnest, tangible or conceptual.

Engage and inspire

Nonprofit organizations do important and meaningful work that has the ability to change lives and improve our world. Take the time to harvest the stories that demonstrate the impact your



Your Audience and Message

organization has on those it serves. By telling stories of how individuals are affected by the issue you are working to solve, you personalize your mission and goals and make them more memorable. Storytelling can be used effectively no matter what communications vehicles you employ — from your annual report and case for support to your web site and direct-mail appeals. The best stories have a beginning, middle and end; establish the heroes and villains; involve a conflict; and have an emotional hook..

Do More than Engage – **Inspire**

- Whether you're after donations or volunteer engagement, inspiration is the driving force behind taking action. Here are a few quick, actionable tips for building passion for your organization⁷:
- Tell your organization's founding story once a year. Communications guru Andy Goodman calls this part of the "sacred bundle" of stories—a profound reminder of the deep values and moral struggle that gave rise to your organization's existence.
- Have a cultivation strategy and calendar. Send emails to donors that thank them and report back on how you've spent their money.
- Ask your donors for their feedback and opinions on a regular basis. And use their advice when appropriate; it shows that you're listening.
- Offer real-life glimpses into the life of your organization. Your supporters expect authenticity, which is arguably the paramount value in marketing communications.



Your Audience and Message

Refer to the following guidelines from [7 Steps to Creating Your Best Nonprofit Marketing Plan Ever](#), by the Network for Good when crafting your message.

Your marketing messages need to put the recipient first and have four clear characteristics: **connection, reward, call to action, and a memorable quality**. Here's a quick checklist of ways to engage your constituents with your messaging:

- Make marketing a conversation. Be sure that all your outreach and presences enable two-way conversation with your supporters, fans, and nonfans.
- Be accessible, easy, encouraging, and intimate.
- Show accountability. Make it clear where the money goes!
- Make it easy for people to find you, while making sure to not publish locations of safehouses or compromising any other information that would impede on victim safety.
- Segment your way to success. Talk with supporters differently depending on who they are, how they give, and the ways in which they support you.
- Test, test, test. Try never to do one version of any appeal or newsletter. Test different versions so you can learn and improve all the time.
- Make your supporters your messengers. Ask your supporters to spread the word among their friends and family.



Choosing Your Methods and Tools

Part 3. Choosing Your Methods and Tools

– Traditional & Electronic Media–

You've done a lot of work thus far in defining your organization, your audience, and your message! Now it's time to look at what communication strategies are best suited for reaching each of the audiences you identified earlier. There are pros and cons to each channel which will vary depending on your organization's goals and resources.

Refer to the following guidelines from the [Cause Communications Toolkit](#), and the [Online Outreach Tools](#)

[Guide](#) by Hershey Cause for direct mail, print ads, and electronic and online media.

Direct Mail Do's & Don'ts

Do:

- Give donors the option of responding to your direct-mail letter with an online gift.
- Invest time in maintaining your database with up-to-date information on your donors.
- Include a call to action that is specific and immediate.
- Use an emotional hook to draw in your reader, keeping in mind the principal reasons people give to charitable causes.

Don't:

- Make your direct-mail program a sporadic undertaking. Existing donors need to be reminded frequently that you need their ongoing support.
- Make solicitations your only form of communication with

Direct Mail:

Direct mail is the staple of most nonprofit fundraising operations. It is used primarily to acquire new donors, renew and upgrade existing donors, and identify planned-giving prospects. It is also effective for special efforts, i.e., to raise funds for specific programs or projects over and above your annual appeal to donors. Direct mail puts your targeted message directly into the hands of your audience, reminding them that you need their continued support. In addition to its importance as a fundraising vehicle, direct mail can help you build awareness through informational mailings about your organization; it can drive traffic to your Web site; inform constituents of new services; educate your audience about current issues; and much more.

To make your direct-mail piece inviting, so that your audience opens and acts upon it, rather than discard your appeal, it's important to test your design with a small segment of your audience before mailing to large numbers. Testing various strategies will help you determine which appeal will be most effective. Use related visuals to build your brand equity and reinforce your message in your donors' minds.



Choosing Your Methods and Tools

Pro Tip: Timing Your Solicitation

For most organizations and communities, it pays not to mail during the summer, one month prior to an election, or just before the end of the calendar year, when your audience may be overwhelmed with holiday preparations and mail.

Print Advertisements

Reach, frequency, memorability and appropriateness are vital attributes to any advertising strategy. Print advertisements have the availability to reach a high volume of people, but require a significant budget.

Seven Print-Ad Principles:

1. Capture the reader's attention like a stop sign and direct it like a road map.
2. Make an emotional connection before attempting to convey information.
3. Write headlines that offer a reason to read more.
4. Use pictures to attract and convince.
5. If you want people to read your text, make it readable.
6. Test before; measure after.

Online Outreach Tools Guide

Hershey Cause Communications has developed a very useful resource comparing different electronic or new media communication strategies entitled Online Outreach Tool Guide, which can be downloaded for free at <http://www.hersheycause.com/download-tools/>. Use this easy chart to learn about the other digital communication channels, not listed, here and decide which are most aligned with your organization's goals and within your budget. Use the space below to jot down the tools you've chosen along with any other information from this guide.



Choosing Your Methods and Tools

Electronic & Online Media

Social Media: With more than two billion users worldwide, Facebook is generally the first site that comes to mind when you hear “social media.” As more people use the site to stay in touch with one another, many nonprofits have launched Facebook Pages to reach supporters using the site. Many nonprofits that do devote the time, though, have also seen specific benefits. A substantial number have seen Facebook drive traffic to their websites, increase event attendees, and provide some help in building an email list. The Facebook comment functionalities can help you receive feedback from constituents and foster discussions, and Facebook has also recently adopted hashtags within comments to keep conversations going, too.¹

Blogging: A blog is an online site where one or more people post fairly frequent updates about what’s going on in the organization, told from a personal perspective. Technically, it’s not that different from a website, but the structure and tone tends to differentiate blogs—posts are often short, appear in reverse chronological order (newest first), and are almost always written in the first person. Typically text-based, they can also include photos or videos. Blogs can be helpful if you have staff members or volunteers who can eloquently—and relatively frequently—advocate for your cause, tell stories about how you’re serving your mission on a day to day basis, or engage people. Blogging tools include Blogger, Wordpress, Google Blog and Tumblr.

E-newsletters & Outreach

E-newsletters are regularly distributed headlines and blurbs that often link to a web site with more complete stories. Keep subject lines short, hyperlinks plentiful and graphics on your e-newsletter simple; otherwise, many in your audience won’t have the patience to wait for your newsletter to load, or you’ll clog their in-boxes. Either scenario may lead your readers to opt out of your mailing list. Be sure you have enough staff, and enough news, to produce your e-newsletter in a timely fashion. And remember that although electronic newsletters save money on printing and postage costs, they often take as much time and effort to produce as print newsletters.

Messaging Best Practices

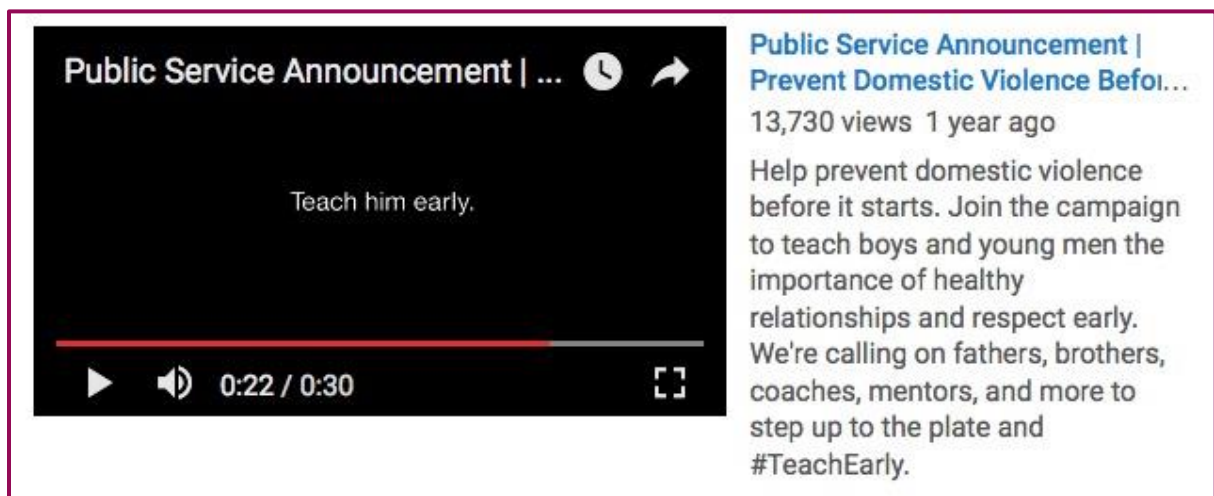
Social Media: No social media outlet is identical and as such your organization’s content should never be identical across platforms. The goal is not to have a presence on every social network possible, but rather to make strategic decisions on what platforms to use and create frequent curated content for each. In practice, an organization may tweet a link to relevant current event article



Choosing Your Methods and Tools

with a short “hook” tagline to draw in readers. A similar article posted on Facebook could include a much longer caption that highlights the organizations commentary and stance on said current event. Curating content that is accessible for mobile users is also important to keep in mind.

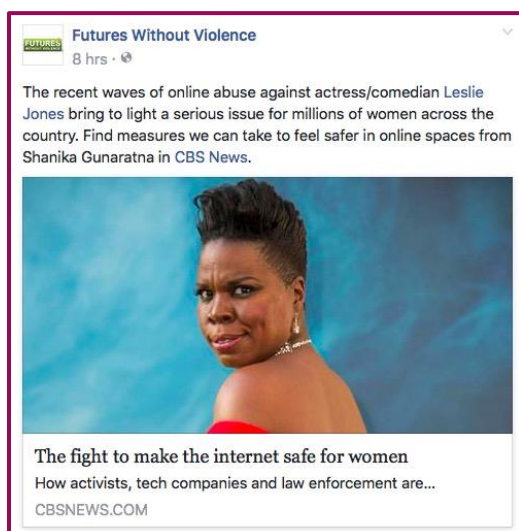
Futures Without Violence is great at curating content specific to their three social network presences (see below).



Youtube: (Photo Credit: <https://www.youtube.com/user/FutureswoutViolence>)

Facebook: (Photo Credit: <https://www.facebook.com/FuturesWithoutViolence>)

Twitter: (Photo Credit: <https://twitter.com/withoutviolence>)



Choosing Your Methods and Tools

Shareable Graphics: End Abuse 4 Good (formerly Beauty Cares) uses professional and clear graphics in their branding, from their logo to the content that they produce. Many of their resources also come in a digestible and shareable infographics. This is a great way to communicate important information in a manner that is more likely to get your audience to stop and read it.

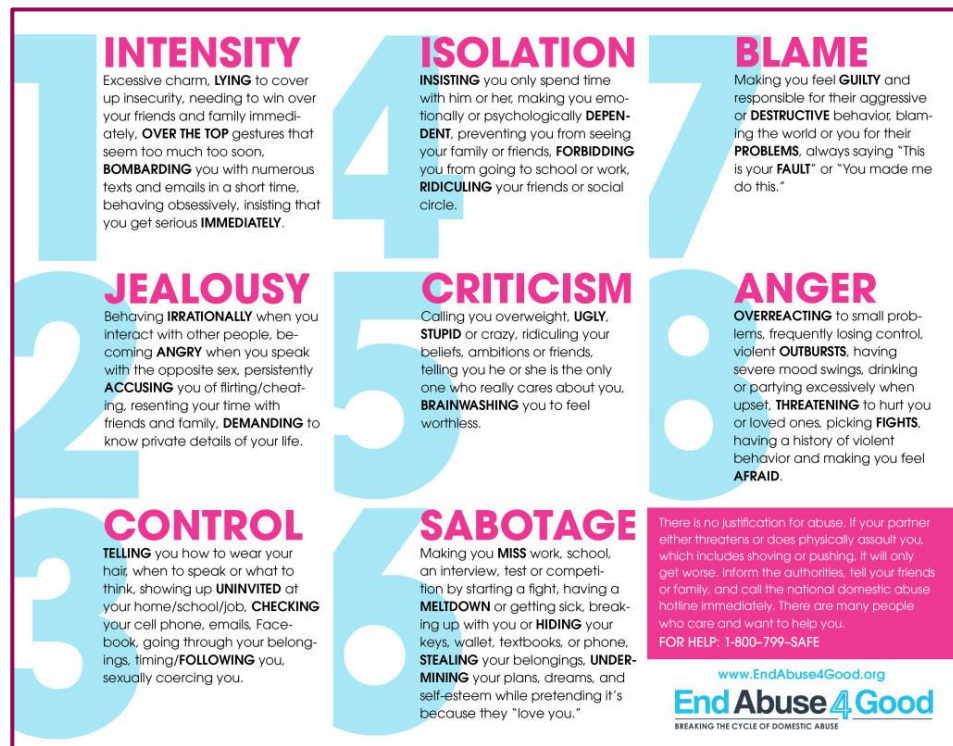


Photo Credits: <http://beautycares.org/signsofdomesticviolence/>

Media Strategies: Now that you have a deeper understanding of the kinds of communication channels at your disposal, and have seen how other organizations are successfully using them, it's time to link your audiences, goals, and messaging to tangible strategies. The example below from Knowhow Nonprofit's Communications Strategies outlines an easy way to start thinking about how to



Choosing Your Methods and Tools

do this.

Audience	Key Communication Messages	Key Communication Channels
Service-users	We provide useful, practical information and support. We are trustworthy and reliable. We put services users first and value their opinions.	Service user e-bulletin Quarterly service user meetings Service user representation on the Board Media training for service users who are keen to act as spokespeople
Politicians	We have a strong evidence base and our calls are grounded in robust evidence. We have knowledge of the policy environment. We are a well-respected, authoritative organization	Quarterly policy briefings on specific policy areas Look into creating an All Party Parliamentary Group Ensure all press releases are sent to relevant government department in advance Positive media coverage

Pro-Tip

For each audience, there will probably be several appropriate communications channels. For example, if one of your target audiences is potential donors and it might be most effective to try to reach them through multiple channels including different social media platforms, email and direct mail. Just make sure that you are reimagining your message specifically for each communication

Now, use the [Communications Grid](#) from Medium by Target below as a guide to tie not only multiple audiences to your messaging and channels, but your organization's goals as well. The template on the following page is filled out with an example, and a blank template to use can be found in Appendix A.



Choosing Your Methods and Tools

Goal: Motivate people to donate on Giving Day

Key Message: On North Texas Giving Day, your dollars go further for your favorite cause!

		Medium						
		Web	PR	Events	Direct	Email	Social	Paid/ Donated
Targets	Donor	CFT Website: News, Registrations, DB Website: News, Toolkits, YouTube	Experienced as a member of the Community: NTGD success stories	9/14 Donor Breakfast to celebrate with prize-winning nonprofits featured on TV at Victory Plaza	Newsletter recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give early The role NTGD plays in fulfilling mission Include invitation to bring friends and family to Plaza event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate NTGD nonprofit Successes Make sure your nonprofits are participating New social sharing feature CFT channels: 2x week 	Experienced as a member of the community: TV partnership, Good Morning Texas
	Community at Large	DB Website: News, Toolkits, YouTube, CFT's role as underwriter	NTGD success stories			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrates past NTGD nonprofit successes Link to feature stories The gift of unrestricted funds How matching works Set up profile early New Social Sharing feature 		TV partnership, Good Morning Texas
	Non-Profits	DB Website: News, Toolkits, YouTube CFT Website: News, Registrations,	NTGD success stories •6/14 Plaza celebration			NTGD prep: kickoffs, workshops, webinars, emails, social	DV channels daily Content repurposed by nonprofits to their channels Additional assets available	TV partnership, Good Morning Texas



Marketing Plan

Part Four: Marketing Plan Template & Assessment

Setting a timeline and defining responsibilities

It's time to put everything together into a tangible plan complete with roles, responsibilities, and benchmarks. Use one or more of the SMART marketing goals you laid out earlier to answer these guiding questions from the [Right-Things, Right-Now, Nonprofit Marketing Plan Template](#) from Getting Attention! You can then plug those answers into the marketing plan template provided at the end of this section.

→ Remember that a lot of communication tools discussed thus far do not require a lot of funds or manpower. Think about how you can divide new responsibilities among existing staff members or create a specific volunteer or internship position dedicated to marketing or social media.

Who does what? Existing staff? New staff? Outsource? Social capital (board members, volunteers, other connections)?

What training (if any) is necessary to build necessary skills? Who will provide that training?

How much is it going to cost? It is ideal to begin planning process with an idea of what you can spend so you can plan realistically.

By when do you want to reach this goal? Set benchmark dates.



Marketing Plan

How many hours (per week or month) is it expected to take?

Making Success Measurable

While quantifying the impact of communications efforts can be challenging, it has its rewards. You'll be able to ascertain what's working and what's not so that you can make adjustments to your plan. You'll be able to demonstrate to your board, in concrete terms, the value of funding a comprehensive communications program for your organization. And you'll know that your efforts are making a real difference in reaching your constituents and supporting your nonprofit's mission.

Begin by establishing of baseline of where your organization is now. If you are able, survey your key audiences about their perceptions of your organization and its communications strategies as they are now. You will then conduct a similar survey after the launch of your new plan to measure the differences your communications made to your audiences' perceptions. *See Appendix B for a sample audience perception survey from the Cause Communications Toolkit by Hershey Cause.*

Keys to Effective Evaluation

- Set benchmarks in advance.
- Establish clearly defined goals.
- Segment your audience.
- Test along the way.
- Be creative in what and how you measure.
- Routinely review and readjust your

Planning for Longevity

Use the marketing plan template in Appendix C to put all the pieces together. Copy and paste when you can from the early activities in this toolkit. You will want to make a marketing plan that plans at least one year ahead, but do not be afraid to be flexible and adapt your plan as you are learning along the way. Be sure to segment and test your vehicles along the way. For instance, if you are planning a direct-mail fundraising appeal, you should try out a couple of different approaches on



Marketing Plan

select portions of your audience to determine which is likely to yield a higher response rate.

Prepare for success! If you exceed your marketing goals, how can you readjust your plans to meet capacity? You can partner with other institutions to help handle your overflow. Or you can pitch a donor on funding a short-term and/or long-term solution, such as helping you lease a temporary space, underwriting additional performance or building a new facility.

Closing Thoughts

Special thanks to Top Nonprofits, Network for Good, Hershey Cause, Getting Attention!, Knowhow Nonprofit, and Ideal Ware for the free marketing and communications resources they offer online to nonprofits nationwide. These sources were used in the compilation of this toolkit and are linked to directly in the Links and Resources portion of the toolkit. The importance and value of sharing information and best practices in the nonprofit space is invaluable to our joint success and our gratitude to these organizations is not unnoted.

We hope that this toolkit has helped you create or enhance your marketing plan and communications strategy so that your organization can affect the biggest change possible in your community. Best of luck to your program and please reach out to the creators of this toolkit so that we can best support your implementation efforts! We thank you for the work you do for the people of Colorado, as well as your commitment to educating our communities.

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Links & Resources

Links and Resources

Marketing vs. Branding

- [The Nonprofit Village](#)

Vision and Mission Statements

- [Top Nonprofits](#)

Nonprofit Marketing

- [Network for Good Branding Guide](#)
- [Network for Good 7 Step Marketing Plan](#)
- [Hershey Cause Communications Toolkit](#)
- [Getting Attention! Tagline Report](#)
- [Getting Attention! Right-Things, Right-Now Template](#)
- [KnowHow Nonprofit](#)
- [Nonprofit Tech for Good](#)

Online and Social Media Communications

- [Hershey Cause](#)
- [Idealware](#)

Legal Considerations

- [Principles & Practices for Nonprofit Excellence in Colorado](#)

Best Practice Examples

- [No More](#)
- [V-Day](#)
- [National Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)
- [End Abuse 4 Good](#)



Appendix A

Appendix A: Communications Grid

Goal:

Key Message:

		Medium						
		Web	PR	Events	Direct	Email	Social	Paid/ Donated
Targets	Donor							
	Community at Large							
	Non-Profits							



Appendix A



Appendix B

Appendix B: Sample Communications Survey



1234 Any Street | Any Town, USA 98765 | T 310.458.2823 | F 310.656.0613 | www.abcnonprofit.org

SAMPLE COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY

1. How often do you hear information/news about ABC?
Circle one:

1/week 2/month 1/quarter 1/year Other Never

2. How often do you want to hear news/information about ABC? Circle one:

1/week 2/month 1/quarter 1/year Other Never

3. Are you satisfied with the way ABC communicates with you about work in progress, activities and achievements?
Circle one:

Yes

No

4. What are your main sources of news about ABC?
(rated on a sliding scale of 1 = Infrequent and 5 = Frequent)

Advertising

Radio	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Print	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Direct Mail	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Media Stories	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Newsletters	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Annual Report	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Website	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
E-Communications	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Sponsorships	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

5. What was the most memorable/most effective communications effort that ABC has undertaken?
Circle one:

Radio Advertising	Annual Report
Print Advertising	Web site
Direct Mail	E-Communications
Media Stories	Sponsorships/Events
Newsletters	N/A

6. How does news about ABC reach you? Circle one:

Radio Advertising	Annual Report
Print Advertising	Web site
Direct Mail	E-Communications
Media Stories	Sponsorships/Events
Newsletters	N/A

7. What is your preferred way of learning about ABC events and news? Circle one:

Radio Advertising	Annual Report
Print Advertising	Web site
Direct Mail	E-Communications
Media Stories	Sponsorships/Events
Newsletters	N/A

8. What communications tools does ABC use that could be more effective? Circle one:

Radio Advertising	Annual Report
Print Advertising	Web site
Direct Mail	E-Communications
Media Stories	Sponsorships/Events
Newsletters	N/A

9. What other nonprofits do you feel communicate well about their activities and achievements?

10. What do you expect from ABC's communications efforts?

11. What is ABC not doing (from a communications standpoint) that you would like to see it do?

