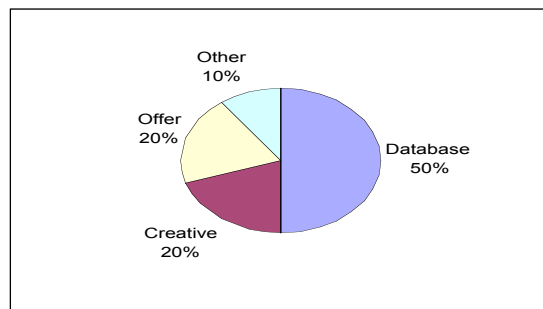


## A Direct Mail Fundraising Appeal

1. If you don't ask, you're not going to get.
2. Donor selection or list selection (if prospecting)
3. Always test one element at a time, or test a whole package

### Goals:

- Raises \$ - gross/net/ROI
- Meets or exceeds expected response rates
- Acquires or recaptures donors/members/helps grow file
- "Sends the right message" consistent with organization's image and other campaigns.
- Meets or exceeds the expected average gift.
- Upgrades or retains or reactivates donors/members



*Importance of different elements in success of direct mail appeal*

### Package evaluation:

#### A. The Case for giving: (hook, theme, message)

- Short, concise, easy to understand reason for asking for money
- Shows a clear need
- Builds the emotional connection
- Creates subtle guilt
- 'Closes the sale'
- Emphasizes VALUE of the donor's contribution and the organization
- Gives donor the feeling that his/her money can make the difference
- Can accommodate programs, campaigns, benefits
- Overall look of the package: personalized versus non-personalized, expensive versus inexpensive look. Overkill does not work.

#### B. The Letter

- Appropriate to message: long message calls for long letter etc.
- Personalized versus non-personalized
- Johnson box?
- Clear, large font -- readable by older people -- white space
- Uncluttered or with Pictures? Graphics?
- Always have a P.S.

#### C. The Ask:

- Pre-printed or laser variable
- Ascending or descending amounts
- Specified or unspecified.

#### **D. Outer Envelope**

- Size, # 10, # 8, # 6 x 9 etc.
- Shape
- Windows - left/right/one or two/how to use cleverly
- What is showing
- Teaser
- Picture(s)
- Color
- Return Address & logo on rear flap or on front
- Stamp or indicia

#### **E. Reply Envelope:**

- Reply envelope or Business Reply envelope
- Message on the front stresses urgency: e.g. Deliver by June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Thank you
- Addressed to someone in the organization specifically
- Other:...
- change of address
- option to request more information, e.g. about planned giving

#### **F. Reply Slips:**

- Attached or separate
- Perforation
- Different color
- Messages on them....handwritten? Special offers? Preferred levels, specific amounts?
- Easy and quick to fill out and send in.

#### **G. Other Elements That Enter Into the Equation:**

- Buck slip or lift note
- Premiums - front and back end....e.g. labels, bookmarks, tote bag
- Post-it, handwritten note
- Payment types offered? Credit cards or check and cash options only
- Timing
- Color of paper

**Notice: no brochure. They don't seem to work in fundraising.**

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