

The information below is an overview of requirements and for further more detailed information, support and guidance plus associated templates etc please contact the BVA Group Development team via telephone 01256 423816 or email admin@bvaction.org.uk (please quote "BVA Group Assistance" in title). www.bvaction.org.uk

Basic things you should be doing right now

Many charities shy away from the idea of marketing, thinking it is only something for big brand organisations or private sector companies with deep pockets. The fact is if you promote your organisation in any way, try to get people to do something, if you fundraise, sell services or products, promote membership, courses or consultancy, then you're doing marketing.

And the better at marketing you become, the more awareness, money and impact you will generate, and the more products, services, courses and consultancy you will sell.

Here are eight basic things you should be doing right now. If you're not, these simple actions offer a massive opportunity to have a huge impact – almost overnight.

1. Qualify your leads

How do you currently ensure those most likely to support your organisation, or most likely to have sympathy with your cause, end up on your database? Your marketing should be geared towards not just getting any people into your database, but the right people. If you know dog walkers are the very likely to support your conservation campaign, consider offering a free guide to 'The Best Places to Walk Your Dog' in exchange for joining your mailing list. Those who sign up have 'qualified' themselves as your target audience – non dog walkers wouldn't be interested in your guide

2. Do more with your existing supporters

Are you putting most of your effort into recruiting new members and supporters, at the expense of those who have already made a commitment? It takes far less time, money and resources to get an existing supporter to give more, or take an action, than to recruit a new one. Are you asking enough? Communicating enough? If you're not communicating with your existing supporters at least twice or three times a month you're almost certainly missing an opportunity.

3. Pin down your USP

Do you know why someone should support your charity, rather than the next one? What makes you different, special, unique? Pinning down and then articulating your Unique Selling Point can make an incredible difference to your marketing success. Tell your target audiences how you do

things differently and what makes you stand out from the crowd. Don't be just another charity doing pretty much the same as any number of others in your sector. Tell people about your difference.

4. Follow up

You'd be surprised how many organisations receive calls, interest, enquiries, offers of help and more, then have a lacklustre follow up that goes nowhere. They will call back won't they? If your target audience show an interest in your campaign, or responds in any way, make sure they get follow up emails, letters, calls and more until they take action. Your audience need to be reminded of their interest and continually offered an opportunity to turn it into something concrete. Many actions only take place on the fourth, fifth or sixth time of asking.

5. Use a marketing mix

Your single leaflet, web page or advert will not work effectively. Your target audience needs to receive your messages in a variety of different ways before they will take action: social media, leaflets, the press, word of mouth, email, direct mail, telephone calls, events and more. By having a marketing mix, you'll reach more people and reach some people numerous times. Start with one new marketing method a month, and build on it over a year.

6. Consider the lifetime value of your supporters

If you knew each supporter donates around £1,000 during their long-term relationship with you, wouldn't you spend £100 getting them into that relationship in the first place? Try to think of your supporters not in terms of their initial donation or action (which might be quite low) but in terms of their lifetime value, if you can build and maintain a strong relationship with them. Make that relationship building at least as important as getting them through the door in the first place.

7. Segment, then target

The more specific your marketing material is to your target audiences, the more success you will have when you communicate with them. If someone has shown an interest in, say, your asylum seeker project in the past, make sure they are 'tagged' as such in your database. Then send them asylum seeker specific material in the future. Tone down the asylum seeker based marketing to those who have never shown an interest. The best marketing returns come from charity databases that are ultra segmented, only delivering marketing and content directly relevant to each supporter. Think of what happens when you buy a book from Amazon. What other books does Amazon tell you about?

Track, test, evaluate

For every piece of marketing, every campaign email, every webpage, leaflet, Tweet or event, find a way to measure the results you get. Of the actions that were taken, how many were produced from which marketing method? Tracking doesn't have to be sophisticated. A simple spreadsheet monitoring what you put out, and the results you get from it, is a good way to start. Use the information you collect to analyse what works for your audience. Then do more of what works, and less of what doesn't.

Acknowledgement to www.ngomedia.org.uk