

Capital campaigns for nonprofit organizations

Generating Awareness and Raising Money: The role of capital campaigns within nonprofit organizations

Your nonprofit organization needs to expand operations but there's no more room at the current location. To do so, it will have to purchase property and construct a new building. As the executive director, you're in charge of all things fundraising, including this next venture: a capital campaign to cover costs of building. The board of directors has approved the idea and set the goal at \$1 million over the next two years.

In all of your years leading this nonprofit, you've never had to take on such a huge project. Of course you're willing to jump in, but this is the first time you've run a capital campaign. You begin your research online and find that capital campaigning is intensive fundraising, much different from annual fundraisers. Capital campaigns are rare occasions for nonprofits centered around very specific and significant goals – like buying land and erecting a new building, making renovations to an existing structure or purchasing equipment without which the organization could not continue to help the community. As a result, gifts received during a capital campaign tend to be much larger than the average donation, a reflection of the enormity of the “asset-building objectives” at stake, ones that will ultimately contribute to the greater utility and value of your organization.¹

The problem is that your organization, like other nonprofits, was not built to generate revenue. As a result you must rely on community support and the general goodwill of others to make ends meet—this time you'll need their support more than ever before. “A million dollars from the community?” you think. “How will I ever manage that?”

It's possible!

You learn that sometimes, as in your case, capital campaigns are oriented on construction or expansion of a building, which are called “bricks and mortar” campaigns, while others are called “once in a lifetime” campaigns because of their grandiose scale. Indeed these campaigns require tremendous leadership and dedication from start to finish, a time frame that could endure for years depending on the size of the goal!

¹ Pierpont, Robert. “Capital Campaigns.” *Capital Campaigns* | Center on Philanthropy. The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. Web. 10 May 2012. http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/thefundraisingschool/precoursereadings/precourse_capitalcampaignspierpont.aspx.



One news story you find profiles a recent Stanford University® capital campaign that raised more than six billion dollars in just five years! You learn that Harvard® intends to do the same as it has announced its intentions to launch a capital campaign of similar magnitude in 2013.² “Wow!” you think. “If Stanford and Harvard can raise billions, \$1 million will be a cinch!”

But it's not that easy. Yes, capital campaigns can bring in lots of money, but they are a lot of work!

This Blue Paper® will take you through the three main phases of capital campaigning: Feasibility testing, the quiet phase and the launch. Read on to find out how to begin and manage a successful capital campaign for a nonprofit organization you'd like to see grow!

Feasibility testing: Finding out what you need to get what you want

First thing's first. Is your organization ready to take on a capital campaign? An organization has to be prepared for the demands of what lies ahead “or it will flounder,” says Robert Pierpont of the Center for Philanthropy at Indiana University®.³ One way to test the preparedness of the nonprofit is to complete a feasibility study to assess organization and donor readiness.

Feasibility testing is a time to ask hard questions. These questions are asked in the form of interviews with 30-40 stakeholders such as board members, staff, volunteers of the past and present and prospective donors. Asking their opinions makes them feel like a more central part of the project. Recognizing them as a key part of the organization and its success may encourage them to contribute more significantly, too.

A feasibility study can be performed by in-house staff members if they are willing, able and qualified to do so, but many find that this phase is best done with the assistance of outside counsel. Consultants who specialize in capital campaigns will be able to offer experience as well as a fresh, objective perspective.

Here are some internal and external questions Indiana University recommends for your feasibility study:⁴



² Rouse, Hana, and Justin Worland. “Harvard Will Launch Historic Capital Campaign in 2013.” *The Harvard Crimson*. Harvard University, 3 Apr. 2012. Web. 17 May 2012. <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2012/4/3/capital-campaign-university-wide/>.

³ Pierpont, Robert. “Capital Campaigns.” *Capital Campaigns* | Center on Philanthropy. The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. Web. 10 May 2012. http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/thefundraisingschool/precoursereadings/precourse_capitalcampaignspierpont.aspx.

⁴ *Ibid.*

1. How is the organization viewed by prospective donors? Do they think your organization has a long-term vision and strategic direction?
2. Does the community understand the importance of the proposed improvements? Are there sufficient resources within the community to help your nonprofit reach its stated goal?
3. Is there an up-to-date record of donations and has the organization actively pursued large donors in the past?
4. Do you have enough support to carry out the capital campaign? Is it a matter of bringing in additional volunteers, or an issue of hiring others with specific skills such as recordkeeping and accounting?
5. Will the existing internal financial resources be enough to sustain the communication efforts of the campaign?



The answers may not be easy to hear, but they will result in a general consensus as to whether or not the organization is able to manage a capital campaign without faltering, and whether or not the community is prepared to provide the support needed. This study can be informally done or made more formal with the addition of number values and scoring. However it is completed, the study will give some direction for the upcoming campaign, or alert leadership to perceived weaknesses and areas for improvement prior to asking for donations.

Identifying the committee and finding leaders at all levels

The interview process of a feasibility study is also a great opportunity to recruit especially passionate individuals to become a member of the campaign committee. Capital campaigns are long, intense undertakings, so competent and unwavering leadership is fundamental to success. Many times, leadership and key personnel are comprised of the upper end of a community's business and civic leadership.⁵ There are many different leadership positions available in a capital campaign, all of which are central to the campaigns success. Here are some examples of leadership roles needed in a capital campaign and the responsibilities associate with each:

- To be in an executive position is not just to exercise authority, but also to be very visible within the community. Executive directors believe wholeheartedly in the mission and vision of the organization. They are confident, eloquent and able to convey their conviction to would-be donors with ease.

⁵ Poderis, Tony. "Capital Campaigns: Building for Now." RaiseFunds.com. Zuri Group. Web. 16 May 2012. <http://www.raise-funds.com/1999/capital-campaigns-building-for-now/>

- A nonprofit typically has a board that oversees organizational matters, but during a capital campaign there is also a special committee to manage the campaign. The committee is responsible for all things related to the campaign. It approves or disapproves certain plans of action and meets regularly in order to “engage with critical issues and clarify policy.”⁶
- Program staff are considered subject-matter experts within an organization. They are the go-to people in the event of specific questions or concerns related to the cause.
- Fundraising staff are those people able to manage finances. For some organizations that do not have staff with sufficient accounting and record-keeping expertise, this may mean hiring external counsel for guidance.
- The capital campaign committee is a group of business and civic leaders who believe in the work of the nonprofit organization and understand the importance of the capital campaign’s success. These volunteers help in three ways. First, they are willing to support the campaign financially. Second, they are willing to talk about the campaign in the community. Finally, they meet with and ask their peers to support the campaign as well.

Volunteers are a very valuable, often-overlooked resource during a capital campaign. Devote some time and energy to recruiting volunteers. Start by including friends and family of board members, committee members and staff. As your campaign progresses, so too will the interest in it. That’s when you’ll be able to start recruiting interested volunteers from within the community you serve. Enlist them to support different administrative and fundraising duties, as mentioned above.

The director and campaign chairperson will be the most visible person on the campaign. It is their duty to see and be seen by members of the community, talk to them about the cause and generally raise awareness as well as money. Other board or committee members are decision-makers, too. Indeed they are all people of [enough] “socioeconomic clout to stir the constituency to action,”⁷ in order to solicit large gifts from others. However, they must also be prepared to make considerable personal contributions,



⁶ Pierpont, Robert. “Capital Campaigns.” *Capital Campaigns* | Center on Philanthropy. The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. Web. 10 May 2012. http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/thefundraisingschool/precoursereadings/precourse_capitalcampaignspierpont.aspx.

⁷ *Ibid.*

too. “Studies show that people are more likely to support a cause if they see proof that others like them support it.”⁸ As one who has already given to the cause, it is much easier to ask and persuade others to do the same if they’ve already demonstrated their commitment.

Author William Krueger of the website Capital Campaign Resource notes the importance of discussions on a “variety of issues to insure that ... the internal leaders fully understand other internal leader ideas and opinions. From open discussions, consensus can be reached.” The chances of a future dispute are greatly diminished by first taking the time to examine and approve program needs that align with program goals.

Setting a campaign goal

The most common mistake of capital campaigning is an out-of-reach goal.⁹ The board’s capital campaign committee and executive director should talk to program staff to make the best decision about a possible goal. Then, upon deciding on a dollar amount, the board’s capital campaign committee will review it with the full board. That dialogue will yield a more definitive dollar amount, one that should be utilized and referenced during the feasibility study. The campaign goal should also be revisited by the board’s capital campaign committee after feasibility testing in order to give them the chance to make any changes based on the study’s findings. It is likewise important to review the campaign goal with the entire campaign committee. Pierpont says “those who have to assume responsibility for raising the money should be given the opportunity to accept the goal or to suggest any modifications they feel are necessary.”



Planning the plan

A campaign-specific timeline should arise from the feasibility study. It should be “time-limited” with a “specific beginning and end,” according to Kim Klein of the Grantsmanship Center® in Los Angeles.¹⁰ Here are some thoughts on how to effectively plan your upcoming campaign:

- The timeline is contingent on prospective donors. If there are not enough substantive contributors, both the goal and the timeline need to be reevaluated. “If it is clear that you don’t have enough donors to meet the goal, lower [it] before announcing the campaign to the

⁸ A. Pitman, Marc. *Beyond Fines - Part 2*. Fundraisingcoach.com, Feb. 2011. Web. 23 May 2012.

<http://library.fundraisingcoach.com/page2/>

⁹ Poderis, Tony. “Capital Campaigns: Building for Now.” RaiseFunds.com. Zuri Group. Web. 16 May 2012.

<http://www.raise-funds.com/1999/capital-campaigns-building-for-now/>

¹⁰ Klein, Kim. “Planning a Capital Campaign for Grassroots Groups.” *The Grantsmanship Center*, 2001.

Web. 16 May 2012. <http://www.tgci.com/magazine/Planning%20a%20Capital%20Campaign%20for%20Grassroots%20Groups.pdf>

public ... extending the campaign will only humiliate your group.”¹¹

- Everyone within the organization must be able to adhere to a rigid timeline so that at least half of the goal is collected before publicly launching the campaign.
- Klein also recommends embracing the experience as an opportunity to learn, especially because a capital campaign—with most gifts being over \$1,000—will affect annual fundraising. However, done the right way, Zimmerman Lehman, a nonprofit from the San Francisco area, believes that “today’s capital campaign donor is tomorrow’s annual supporter.”¹²
- If you are raising funds for a bricks and mortar campaign, consider showcasing the architectural plans to give potential donors a more tangible sense of forward momentum.

Thorough planning will almost always ensure that your capital campaign is a successful one.

Budget requirements

It’s important to remember that it costs money to raise money. Costs typically range from 5 to 15 percent of the goal, so be sure that the campaign will be able to incur those excess expenses!¹³ Building a comprehensive budget is no easy task. Here’s what you’ll need to keep in mind:

- If you are new to the concept of budgeting and capital campaigns, take a look at other organizations of similar size. What were their experiences? Ask those associated with them what they found to work well or not work well in their own capital campaign endeavors.
- Plan on everything from the cost of office space, additional phones, computers, printers, fax and copy machines for staff and volunteers, as well as payroll expenses for staff and outside counsel if necessary. If outside counsel is an option your organization would like to pursue, only pay them according to the time expended, versus percentage or commission.¹⁴
- Don’t forget to incorporate inflation if the campaign is going to last for more than year, as most contemporary campaigns do.



¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Zimmerman Lehman : “Capital Campaigns: Ten Steps to Success”” *Capital Campaigns: Ten Steps to Success*. Zimmerman Lehman, 2007. Web. 15 May 2012. <http://www.zimmerman-lehman.com/capital.htm>.

¹³ Pierpont, Robert. “Capital Campaigns.” *Capital Campaigns | Center on Philanthropy*. The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. Web. 10 May 2012. http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/thefundraisingschool/precoursereadings/precourse_capitalcampaignspierpont.aspx.

¹⁴ Poderis, Tony. “Capital Campaigns: Building for Now.” *RaiseFunds.com*. Zuri Group. Web. 16 May 2012. <http://www.raise-funds.com/1999/capital-campaigns-building-for-now/>.

- Printing materials and hosting events come at a price, too. Waste no expense on promotional items. Even the use of high quality paper to convey the seriousness of your campaign is a small investment that could make a big difference to prospects.

It's important to keep your goal in mind as you are confronted with costs. While budgeting may seem complex, it comes down to meeting your needs.

Charting donations

Feasibility testing will help zero in on who the top donors will be, but they do not necessarily have to be individuals. In reality, gifts come from an array of sources, and don't forget that those sources should be seen as stakeholders that you should interview during feasibility testing, too!

Some examples of top donors are:

- Foundations
- Corporations
- Government agencies
- Religious philanthropies
- Major individual donations
- And modest individual donations



Campaign support staff should compile a comprehensive list of past donors in addition to a well-researched list of prospective donors. Large donor prospects should at least be known by someone from the inside with a good idea of how much the prospect is able to give. In the end, people are driven by what their friends do, and they give to causes they know because of the people behind them.

A crucial characteristic of successful capital campaigning is the idea of sequential funding, or front-loading, meaning that the largest gifts are sought first. Actually, major individual gifts will drive the campaign from the get-go. Only after those gifts are secured—at least half of the goal—can lower-level donations be solicited. Klein describes it this way: “the vast majority of the gifts you get will be small, but the majority of the income will be from a few big donations.”¹⁵ So no matter how intensive lower-level participation is, it will not be able to replace money lost because of inadequate high-level participation.¹⁶

¹⁵ Klein, Kim. “Getting Major Gifts.” PDF file. *The Grantsmanship Center*, 1994. Web. 23 May 2012. <http://www.tgci.com/magazine/Getting%20Major%20Gifts.pdf>.

¹⁶ Pierpont, Robert. “Capital Campaigns.” *Capital Campaigns | Center on Philanthropy. The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University*. Web. 10 May 2012. http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/thefundraisingschool/precoursereadings/precourse_capitalcampaignspierpont.aspx.

Therefore, the first people to ask are those who can make the biggest gifts. “Of these,” Klein says, “start with the people who are closest to your organization. This may mean that rather than starting with the biggest gift needed, you start with the person most likely to say yes.”¹⁷ Unfortunately, not everyone identified as a prospective donor will contribute. In fact, Klein notes that “the actual number of different people you will need as prospects should be about two-and-a-half times as many as the number of actual gifts you are seeking.” Draw up a gift range chart to help guide you.

A gift range chart might seem unnecessary, but a fundraising campaign cannot be thought of in terms of the total amount split equally by the number of prospects. Author Marc A. Pitman of the online platform Fundraising Coach® is aware that it makes sense mathematically to simply divide the total between prospects, but “decades of fundraising research show that money doesn’t come that way.”¹⁸ See the sample gift range chart below:

GIFT RANGE	# GIFTS REQ.	# PROSPECTS REQ.	SUBTOTAL	CUMULATIVE TOTAL	CUMULATIVE %
25000	1	5	25000	25000	25%
15000	1	5	15000	40000	40%
10000	2	10	20000	60000	60%
7500	2	10	15000	75000	75%
5000	3	15	15000	90000	90%
2500	4	20	10000	100000	100%
2000	6	30	12000	112000	112%
1000	8	40	8000	120000	120%
500	10	50	5000	125000	125%
250	12	60	3000	128000	128%
Total:	49	245		128000	

Source: www.giftrangecalculator.com

A Message that Matters

Perhaps the best way to get the ball rolling for the messaging in a capital campaign is to revisit the mission statement. The mission statement is the heart and soul of the campaign. It will help determine which needs are the most critical to the organization and which should be focused on during the capital campaign. It is important to remember that everything the organization decides to strive for must directly benefit those it exists to serve.

¹⁷ Klein, Kim. “Planning a Capital Campaign for Grassroots Groups.” *The Grantsmanship Center*, 2001. Web. 16 May 2012. <http://www.tgci.com/magazine/Planning%20a%20Capital%20Campaign%20for%20Grassroots%20Groups.pdf>.

¹⁸ A. Pitman, Marc. *Beyond Fines - Part 2*. *Fundraisingcoach.com*, Feb. 2011. Web. 23 May 2012. <http://library.fundraisingcoach.com/page/2/>.

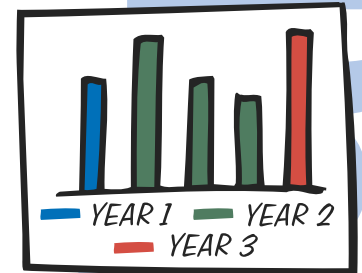
Grassroots Matters

The organization's mission statement is also the most basic message of the campaign, so it needs to be strong. Unfortunately, the mission and the message that stems from it are often-overlooked elements of capital campaigns. Remember: An inspiring message will move people to contribute, and a really compelling message will move them to become personally involved in the campaign and the organization.

The next step is to draft a case statement, a document that presents the organization to potential donors and explains why "your cause is worth an investment."¹⁹ Have a brief executive summary as well as a longer version on-hand for various interested donors. According to a report written by CampaignIncubator.org, you can make a case statement stronger by including "how you will overcome organizational weaknesses or how you will capitalize on organizational strengths,"²⁰ (both of which will have been revealed by a thorough feasibility study).

In addition to a thorough description of the organization, the case statement should include a run-down of verifiable goals, a budget, an organizational plan for the next three years and information about how to contribute and gain recognition in so doing.

Put the case statement into a letter format and, as mentioned before, have them printed on stationary that conveys the earnestness of your campaign. Develop supporting materials like a brochure or informational packet with your mission, vision and campaign goals. Be sure to include compelling graphics and photography to support the content.



The quiet phase: Learning "the ask"

After the feasibility study and prep work is finished, it is time to move on to phase two – the quiet phase. This is the first time you will have to ask for funds. You will do so in a very quiet way, long before any marketing and public relations efforts begin. And, the campaign will start with you. This means that the board and/or committee members give large gifts themselves, thus demonstrating the popular cliché: "Charity begins at home." After internal members of the organization have made a contribution that is significant for them, it is time to approach prospective donors to do the same.

Approaching people for financial gifts can be a nerve-racking experience, but it doesn't have to be. So whether the donor list originated on the website or with

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ "Creating a Capital Campaign Plan." *Capital Incubator*, n.d. Web. 16 May 2012.
[http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/pdfs/Guide_to_Creating_a_Capital_Campaign_Plan\[1\].pdf](http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/pdfs/Guide_to_Creating_a_Capital_Campaign_Plan[1].pdf)

a volunteer staff member tasked with compiling a list of past donors, fundraising staff should take extra time to thoroughly review the list and do additional homework.

Make sure everyone working within the campaign has been trained to solicit gifts with confidence and conviction. Take time to go through role-playing exercises, especially for newer members, in order to help them speak candidly with their peers about giving, as well as organization specifics, so they are well-prepared to answer pointed questions. Here are some ways to practice:

- Stress that “the ask” is about building relationships, the first step of which is the ability to speak to someone openly and honestly.
- Teach interpersonal skills and help them practice with a nonmonetary ask to begin.
- Admit that “No” is a possible outcome and teach them not to be afraid of it.
- Emphasize the use of tangible goals as a reminder of exactly where their money is going and what it will do.
- Write a script if you have to, but here’s how they typically go: First come the pleasantries, then the transition. Next, make a connection and pull at the heart strings a little.
- Thank the potential donor genuinely and repeatedly.



Remember, too, that the top ten largest gifts will set the standard for the entire campaign. Devote enough resources to identifying those particular donors. To lose sight of the top-down ideal is to compromise the well-being of the entire campaign. Below are some thoughts on how best to accommodate the different needs of your donors:

- Provide an option for longer commitment in an effort to encourage greater support because unfortunately, “If you go into your community to raise money, you will notice that a few people give a lot, a few more give less, and a lot of people give a little ... Half of the people you ask will not give and half of those who do will give less than the amount you asked for [meaning] you’ll need to identify and ask about four to five times as many people as you need.”²¹
- Major contributors like to be recognized. Identify those five to ten key donors and take the extra time to develop a special way to acknowledge and thank them for their support.

²¹ Klein, Kim. “Planning a Capital Campaign for Grassroots Groups.” *The Grantsmanship Center*, 2001. Web. 16 May 2012. <http://www.tgci.com/magazine/Planning%20a%20Capital%20Campaign%20for%20Grassroots%20Groups.pdf>.

- Where possible, utilize both stories and statistics to support your case. “To fundraise effectively, you must speak to both the head and the heart.”²²

Plan on reaching out to prospective donors with a phone call and a personal meeting. The most promise lies in a face-to-face meeting, especially for smaller, more local organizations because it helps “make the case in a personal way [and] demonstrates your commitment to the cause.”²³ Call ahead to arrange a time because advance appointments are “the most ethical and effective strategy ... when seeking larger gifts.”²⁴

During the meeting, start small. Talk about things that don’t necessarily have anything to do with the matter at hand, then transition into your goals. Ask them questions to get them talking about their affinity for your nonprofit organization. If they have contributed in the past, thank them for their past support. Next, describe your organization, some of its programs and its significance to the community. Tell a story. “We human beings...like to think in terms of stories,” says Joe Garecht from the website The Fundraising Authority. “There’s something about them that speak to the innermost part of our being. We like to get caught up [in] stories...and adventures bigger than ourselves, to join together for a common goal and a common good.”²⁵ Think big. Even if you’re a small organization, tell a big story. Create a vision and help prospective donors get lost in it.

Then make “the ask”. “Be clear, explicit and straightforward ... Once you’ve asked for the gift, wait ... Don’t make excuses or start to backpedal before the donor has a chance to respond. Just sit quietly and wait.”²⁶ In the event of objections, respond as best as you can. If they are unable to contribute as much as you’ve requested, present a different option.

In the quiet phase, “the ask” isn’t always between strangers, but among friends. Indeed it requires “a lot of people asking a lot of people.”²⁷ From volunteers to the campaign director, “asking” is a peer-to-peer process which is why it’s best done in person.

²² A. Pitman, Marc. *Beyond Fines - Part 2*. Fundraisingcoach.com, Feb. 2011. Web. 23 May 2012. <http://library.fundraisingcoach.com/page/2/>.

²³ Robinson, Andy. “The Major Gift “Ask”.” PDF file. The Grantsmanship Center, 2004. Web. 23 May 2012. <http://www.tgci.com/magazine/The%20Major%20Gift%20Ask.pdf>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Garecht, Joe. “The Story of Your Non-Profit.” *Volunteer Fundraising Do’s and Don’ts*. The Fundraising Authority, n.d. Web. 22 June 2012. <http://www.thefundraisingauthority.com/volunteers/volunteer-fundraising/>.

²⁶ Robinson, Andy. “The Major Gift “Ask”.” PDF file. The Grantsmanship Center, 2004. Web. 23 May 2012. <http://www.tgci.com/magazine/The%20Major%20Gift%20Ask.pdf>.

²⁷ Klein, Kim. “Capital campaign phases.” *Launch and the Public Phase*. Fundraiser Basic. Web. 04 June 2012. <http://www.fundraiserbasic.com/library/fruniv/108-capital-campaign-phases-part-1.html>.



Consider a fundraising method suggested by Klein: Have each capital campaign committee member tell a friend about a donation they've made and ask the friend to do the same. Klein believes that every person knows 250 people and that this "Circle of Wealth" method is more likely to result in a higher gift in comparison to other soliciting strategies. "People want to help," she says, "And they want to give big gifts."²⁸ Keep this in mind as you continue to solicit donations and stay optimistic!

The launch phase

Only after at least half of the financial goal has been met in the quiet phase should you announce the launch of your campaign to the public. To kick it off, host an event to give the campaign a face. Have it at your headquarters or at the new construction site if you're leading a "Bricks and Mortar" campaign. Invite friends and family of campaign intimates, volunteers, donors from the quiet phase as well as members of the press!



Benefitting from the Internet and social media

Generate interest by launching a website to publicize your campaign. Just as you utilize the internet to access information from various sources, so too will your donors! It is an immediately accessible place for people to find out more about the *Who, What, Where, When, Why* of your organization. Include a regularly updated blog to give your community an idea of what kind of progress is being made. It's also a reliable platform for your messaging in general, all of which should be optimized, meaning search engines will have an easier time locating it among the Web's countless other pages.

If you'd really like to create an online presence and generate a substantive following, integrate social media, too. With the dynamic and fast-paced nature of capital campaigns, the Internet is a place to collect and disseminate information all while maintaining transparency about campaign progress, opportunities to contribute and upcoming events.

Additionally, contributions made through the website are easily collected and catalogued. After someone visits the site and demonstrates interest, reach out more directly with a phone call, mailing, or face-to-face meeting.

Every nonprofit must learn to regard the internet as its most powerful direct marketing medium. Why? Because the Internet allows an organization to engage in a kind of dialog marketing that creates

28 *Ibid.*

opportunities to develop conversations with prospects and donors. Engaging in conversations with people, over time, gives nonprofits the ability to make more and better friends, turn those friends into donors, and grow those donors into loyal donors.

“Nonprofit Websites: Cutting through the Emaze,” Grizzard Communications Group, Inc., 2001, www.grizzard.com

Remembering volunteers

Running a capital campaign requires dedication from many people in many different roles. Those interested in giving their time and energy can serve on the committee, in campaign support staff roles or as non-board volunteers, which can be one of the most valuable assets to any nonprofit organization.

Provide volunteers with materials and support. Encourage them when fatigue is setting in, give them constructive feedback when they need it and reward work well done with growth opportunities like team management.

Volunteers are on the frontlines. They’re doing any number of different tasks, the most important of which is spreading the message. In fact, the more they learn and the more involved they become, the more likely they are to talk about the campaign to friends and family. Word-of-mouth, an ongoing grass roots marketing tradition, is the one people are most likely to trust. Ultimately, people give to causes because of their respect for the people behind them.

Post campaign

As you near your end deadline and draw closer to reaching your financial goal, begin to plan a celebration of the campaign’s success. That way you’ll have one more chance to display your organization and your campaign publicly. Invite major donors and use the event to build a more established planned-giving program for the future.

After the event, the process of collecting the remaining pledges and writing the final reports should only take a couple of months, but it may take longer depending on the size of the goal and the kinds of pledges that were made. However, before completely letting go and breathing easy, William Krueger recommends a number of things to remember:²⁹

- For donors who made a long-term commitment, you will still have to send payment reminders on a monthly basis. Send the reminder along



²⁹ Krueger, William. “The Post Campaign Phase.” *Capital Campaign Management*. Capital Quest. Web. 24 May 2012. http://www.capitalcampaigns.com/campaign_management/manage_post_campaign_phase.php.

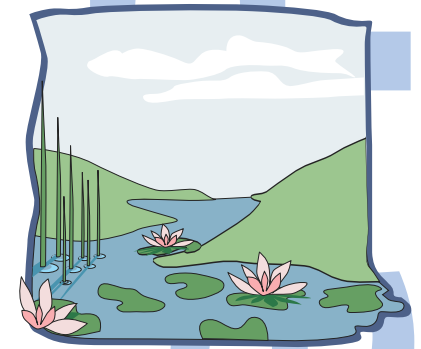
with a “personal, positive update letter [and] a simple statement indicating total gift, amount paid to date and the balance remaining.” Have a spreadsheet where donor information can be safely stored and regularly maintained.

- Send a regular newsletter so that you are able to keep donors up-to-date on the progress of whatever you were raising the money for (such as the construction of a new building).
- Look back at records for one-time cash gifts and send a thank you note one year later with another opportunity to contribute.
- Host events to celebrate important dates, like a groundbreaking or a grand opening, especially if yours was a Bricks and Mortar campaign. This way, you can sustain a good degree of enthusiasm among your donor constituency. Use these events as a time to speak to the goals everyone has committed to and remind them how much closer the organization is to successful completion of the project.
- Make it a priority to redeem all of the gifts that have been promised to you!

Don't forget to praise and perpetually thank the volunteers that helped make everything happen. They could have spent their time and energy in many other places doing many other things, but they choose to do it as a volunteer for your organization.

At this point, you've begun to slow down with the campaign and really move forward with the actual project you've been working so hard to make happen. Investments you worked so hard to attain will begin to render a real impact on your organization. With the increase in funding you'll begin to notice a strengthened case for community support of your organization.³⁰ In turn, expect service levels to increase and perhaps more media exposure (to reach even more people)! All of these effects are incredible morale boosters for board and staff members. See – it wasn't so bad after all!

Next, set your sights on project management and the exciting road ahead!



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³⁰ Lysakowski, Linda. "Life After the Capital Campaign." *Capital Venture*. *Capital Venture*, n.d. Web. 22 June 2012. <http://www.cvfundraising.com/resources/tutorials/ppslife-after-the-capital-campaign>.