

The Extreme Fundraising Ezine, Vol. II Issue 5

"Creating Donor Evangelists: Create a Cause"

Welcome to the last installment of our "Creating Donor Evangelists" series based on Jackie Huba and Ben McConnell's book "Creating Customer Evangelists." Today we'll explore Huba and McConnell's final theme in creating customer evangelists and apply it to nonprofits.

I. Creating Donor Evangelists: Create a Cause

II. Marc's Speaking: From L-A to LA!

III. I Could (Still) Use Your Help

I. Creating Donor Evangelists: Create a Cause

This is last installment in the "Creating Donor Evangelist" series! All the back issues are available at <http://fundraisingcoach.com> in the archives in the "ezine" section. As a reminder, Huba and McConnell's six "Creating Customer Evangelist" themes are:

1. Customer Plus-Delta: Understanding the Love
2. Napsterize Your Knowledge: Give to Receive
3. Build the Buzz: Spreading the Word
4. Create Community: Bringing Customers Together
5. Bite-Size Chunks: From Sampling to Evangelism
6. Create a Cause: When Business is Good

Today we'll explore number 6: Create a Cause.

CREATE A CAUSE

Fortunately, creating a cause is what nonprofits are all about! This one should be easy for us. McConnell and Huba quote Guy Kawasaki (formerly of Apple Computer) and his five goals for a company's cause:

1. A well-defined vision
2. Making people better
3. Generating big effects
4. Catalyzing selfless actions
5. Polarizing people.

How well does your nonprofit communicate these? Is the vision, your organization's "grand plan to change the world," clear and memorable? Is your organization committed to making people better--including its donors? Is it generating big effects and spurring others on to selfless actions?

How is it doing at polarizing people? Huba and McConnell note that because causes have the power to change society, they naturally tend to polarize people into groups. Does your nonprofit's vision do this? Should it?

Huba and McConnell devote a section on adopting a charitable cause. They tell of how American Express gave a percentage of all purchases toward a fund to reopen the Statue of Liberty. Customers often want to be associated with companies making a difference in this way. Are there natural corporate relationships your nonprofit can create? And, should it?

One very important point that the authors make is that causes should be easy to join. They report on their experience trying to join several "causes" including: the Microsoft Developer Network, Handgun Control, Inc., NRA, the National Audubon Society, Planned Parenthood, and the Sierra Club. This section is worth reading on your own.

They often couldn't tell if they'd joined the cause or merely signed up for an email list. Hint: those are not the same thing. People joining a cause want to be more actively involved than passively receiving email.

The easiest cause to join was the Sierra Club. They clearly posted a "Join or Give" button on their front page. That linked to a page with clear membership benefits including how donated money is used. Joining at the lowest level cost \$25 and filling out the form and credit card information led them to a confirmation page. They received a hardcopy of the Sierra magazine a couple weeks later and a special backpack shortly after that.

Does your nonprofit make it easy to give? Many organizations make "giving" a hard option to find on its website.

Huba and McConnell sum it up very well: "Rallying supporters to join your cause is like dating: once they're ready to commit, don't jilt them at the altar."

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Is your cause compelling? What kind of difference are you making in the world? Why not have a "join the cause" page on your site?

How many clicks does it take to get to your giving page? Take a moment to go through the process as though you were visiting the web site for the first time. If you were a first time visitor, would you make it all the way to giving money and joining the organization's database? Can you even accept money online? If you can't, why not? I mentioned a simple, relatively low-cost alternative is in my "\$100,000 Guide to Email Solicitation." If you need a refresher you can find a PDF of a draft of the Guide in the resources section of <http://fundraisingcoach.com>.

This week survey the web sites of some politician running campaigns to get some great ideas about involving people in a cause. They all have donation options, multiple volunteering options, and gear for people that support their cause to wear. Why shouldn't your organization have all that?

II. Marc's Speaking

The "How to Ask for Money Effectively" in L-A (Lewiston & Auburn, ME) went incredibly well! If you're interested in having this 3 hour seminar brought to your region or organization, email me at marc@fundraisingcoach.com.

My next speaking gig is March 14 & 15 in the other LA (Los Angeles, CA). I'll be conducting seminars on crisis and time management and on alumni directing. Drop me a line if you'll be in LA. I'd love to grab a cup of coffee with you!

April 27, I'll be giving a brand new 3-hour seminar called "How To Handle Objections." It is a follow up to my "How To Ask for Money" seminar. If you don't know what to do when you make an solicitation and the donor doesn't say "yes" or "no," this seminar is created for you!

III. I Could Use (Still) Your Help

I'm still a finalist in Seth Godin's latest book project "Bullmarket 2004: Companies That Can Help You Make Things Happen." It's an incredible honor...but not a sure thing.

One thing that could help me make the final cut is being mentioned by you. Would you be willing to nominate yourself and mention how The Fundraising Coach helps you in your work? The form is at:

<http://www.sethgodin.com/bull/application.asp>

Thank you! To your extreme fundraising success,

Marc

Marc A. Pitman is an executive coach to nonprofit leaders. An expert in helping people identify their natural abilities, he's committed to providing down-to-earth information that will decrease stress and put the "fun" back into fundraising!

The Extreme Fundraising Ezine is a complimentary newsletter of The Fundraising Coach <http://fundraisingcoach.com>. Feel free to pass it on!

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