



Question of the Day!

Voting results and the thoughts and ideas from fundraising leaders at the AFP International Conference in San Antonio, TX and AFP Advancement Northwest conference in Bellevue, WA in 2019

1. Restricted or Unrestricted?
2. Stories or Stats?
3. Direct Mail or E-Mail?

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Restricted voter comments:

- Donors will give more to a specific need
- Makes impact reporting easier
- We are a community-based hospital; we need restricted dollars in order to set us up for future independence success
- Donors care about specific projects and needs, not the annual fund
- Gives the donors a way to fund their interests
- Unrestricted is desired, but raise most in restricted
- Donors like to meet a specific need
- Specific needs rock
- Better to build relationship for future gifts
- Helps to meet a gift matching goal
- By giving to a specific need/passion, donors will be more inclined to trust and give an unrestricted gift
- Specific needs are more compelling and our individual basis is the same
- Sometimes the nonprofit knows best!
- Restricted dollars funds where we need support the most
- Larger gifts – institutional support
- Designate a percentage of restricted gifts to unrestricted/ops support
- Donors can give to what they are passionate about!
- Easier to raise!
- More invested donors give more
- Trying to raise bigger gifts

Unrestricted voter comments:

- Because you need to fund infrastructure and that word isn't sexy
- Needs change and flexibility is important
- Can use funds where they are needed most
- The donor should trust the board to invest where there is the most need
- No restrictions = strong administration
- Can put funding where it needs to go
- Flexibility
- Only if the future of your nonprofit organization depends on it
- Can use for the program most in need
- Budget relief
- Money from heaven for priorities
- Allows us to use dollars where we need it most
- To meet the most pressing needs of the organization
- Can meet whatever needs arise and direct to area of need:
- Keep the lights on: to pay for administrative and other staff salaries
- Trust the organization
- Can be used where it's needed most
- Unrestricted gifts allow us to build the organization and provide more resources
- The org needs unrestricted to operate
- Area of greatest need is more appealing to general audience
- Unrestricted gifts = flexibility

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Stories voter comments:

- Emotion, connectivity, humanity goes to the heart
- Emotion drives decisions
- Stories = heart
- Stats are boring and irrelevant without context
- It's more about the heart than the numbers
- “Duh!”
- Stories engage and stats provide back up to support stories
- We can engage more donors with stories :-)
- Our stories show our impact :-)
- People give to people and need to relate personally to others
- People make heart decisions - stories speak to them
- How your organization changes lives inspires larger gifts
- More impactful plus speaks from the heart
- If the stories touch my or the staff's heart they will touch the donor too
- Storytelling throughout time is real and relatable
- Because stories move hearts and stays forever in our minds!
- Stories share human connection which equals impact
- Shares impact to both the donor and organization and speaks to the heart.
- Stories are real
- Stories are the heart connection
- Stories! They articulate impact, compassion, other donors gratitude!
- Stories connect people to causes
- Stories pull at the heartstrings and compel donors to give more than facts and data
- Ties in your mission and comes from the heart
- Capture their hearts!
- Stories and inspire donors to give!
- Stories help donors see themselves
- Stories inspire: stats stagnate!
- Stories speak to donors about the impact of their gift
- Stories touch the heart, soul and mind
- Transformational gifts come from stories
- Stories are very interesting to donors: human effects by emotions
- Stories through stats can feed the story
- Donors want to see themselves
- Stories inspire!
- Donors and friends love to hear their impact!
- Stories are more fun and engaging
- Pulls at the heartstrings!
- Stories show passion and reason (not numbers)
- Stories speak for themselves
- Stories pull at the heartstrings and draw donors in
- “Heart” sign
- It's always so much more inspiring to hear the impact of donations from the people who benefit
- Stories bring out emotions and make connections
- Stories are personal, they connect us with real people in real need.
- Vision statements
- There is nothing more powerful than human connection through empathy. Stories are the way.
- Emotions = Generosity
- Stories resonate – we all have stories!
- Stories are the intersection of knowledge and sympathy
- Communicates donor impact
- Speaks to the heart
- Stories tell ‘why’ we should support
- Stories draw on emotion
- Stories inspire donors to engage with us

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Stats voter comments:

- Stories are short-term, stats are long-term
- How about telling a story with your stats!
- I can see longer and larger impact
- People want to see proof of How their money helps
- Stats inspire the stories
- The stats are behind the stories and show more impact
- Love stats to strengthen our stories
- Donors give more to advance proven results
- Stats back up the stories and give them a strong foundation
- “Heart sign”
- I’m an MBA and need to prove ROI
- Stats because partner agencies don’t know how to tell their story
- It’s all about the metrics of impact
- Facts tell stories
- Stories followed by stats that show their stories keep happening with the donors gifts
- Stats demonstrate ROI and drive budgets
- Stats draw facts to tell a story of a population
- Data helps support stories; it helps rationalize emotional reactions
- Facts
- Data/information inspires and informs
- Analysis

Stories + Stats voter comments:

- Stories with stats produce the best results!... True story!
- Telling stories with stats or using stats to enhance the story!
- Depending on who I am speaking to: either stories or stats are the best
- Stories well supported by metrics!
- Stories and photos move hearts. Need some stats to back it up.
- “1/3 stats and 2/3 stories”
- We need both to share the full picture
- Can’t have one without the other
- They are not mutually exclusive
- Both! Depends on who you’re targeting and the environment

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Direct Mail voter comments:

- Majority of our owners are still “old-school” and it works!
- Most baby boomers still like snail mail
- Direct mail is still more effective!
- DUH!
- ROI is worth it for the impact
- I get dozens of emails and only a few letters
- Our group responds to direct mail
- Greater impact
- Next GEN excited to get real mail
- Now days mail is exciting :-)
- Seems to get more response now
- Doesn't get buried in their in box
- Our donors appreciate our mailers
- Not a big enough email list potential for donor base so use direct mail

E-Mail voter comments:

- Easier to send emails on the fly, also cheaper
- Easier and less expensive but must get it “open”
- Sending birthday emails and special occasion emails is good
- I prefer email because of the quickness of delivery
- Email makes it easier to connect with people in real time
- Raised more connections and retention with emails this year
- Younger donors email

Direct Mail + E-Mail voter comments:

- Use an integrated campaign
- Use multi channels
- It depends!
- Do for the right audiences!
- Both. Depends on the audience.
- Both, it depends
- Both!
- Mix it up to keep it fresh and depends on audiences

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