

DIRECT MAIL FUNDRAISING GUIDE

ENGAGE YOUR DONORS
& RAISE MORE MONEY!



BOONE GRAPHICS
printed communication solutions

Santa Barbara - San Luis Obispo

boonegraphics.net



BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE APPEAL LETTER

GET PERSONAL!

Raising money is all about relationships so it is important that you remind your donors that you know who they are and appreciate all that they have done for the organization. At a minimum you should use a personalized salutation, try and avoid “Dear Friends” at all costs. But even better is thank you for the last gift they gave the organization. It says “we know and appreciate you!”



PRO TIP: Reminding donors of the last gift amount allows you to start your ask at that level instead of at a generic dollar amount.

An extra way to personalize your appeal is to let donors know how much you appreciate all they have done for the organization.

Set the stage for your donors to either match or increase their gift by starting your ask at a level they are currently comfortable with!


MAKE IT EASY TO GIVE!

Including a remit device that already has the donor name, address, and even donor number will not only make it easy for your constituents to respond but will save you time when entering the gift into your database.



PRO TIP: An intergrated letter/remit, as seen here, avoids having to match up remit slips with letters and envelopes... and can save money since all of the information can be printed in one pass! Add a perforation line and donors can easily detach the slip and mail back their gift.

Populate the remit device with the donors information so they don't have to write it all out again and include their donor ID so you can quickly find them in your database.



CHALET HOSPITAL

Bob & Sarah:

When you or a family member is ill or injured, where do you turn? If you're like most in our community, you go to Chalet Hospital. Why? Because you know you will receive the best medical care available. And, you also know that you'll be treated like a real person, by a team of dedicated, compassionate health professionals, in a warm, caring environment.

Your contributions totalling over \$[Cumulative Gift] have helped make Chalet Hospital the leading health care provider in the region. We are incredibly grateful to you for helping to create and support such an important resource in our community.

You are helping our caregivers touch the lives of thousands – whether patients are facing an urgent need, a devastating disease or seeking to improve their quality of life.


The past 20 months have been the most challenging in our history but we are proud to say, with your help and support, we have been able to rise to the occasion and meet the dramatic increase in need.

We hope that you will match your gift of \$[LastGift] from last year or even consider increasing it by ten, twenty, or even fifty percent! All of our caregivers are counting on your support.



As medical care advances, your hospital is committed to staying at the cutting edge – for you, for your loved ones, for every person in the community. Please help to make this possible with your contribution.

Your donation is helping to make our community healthier, right here - right now.

Thank you so much for your support and commitment!

Sincerely,

Lori Fridley
Board Chairwoman

Chalet Hospital is an IRS recognized nonprofit.
Your gift today is tax-deductable to the fullest extent of the law. #71-00000



YOU CAN COUNT ON MY GIFT OF ☐ \$[LASTGIFTAMOUNT]

I'd like to make a gift of:
☐ \$[10%] (10% increase) ☐ \$[20%] (20% increase)
☐ \$[50%] (50% increase) Other: \$ _____

Salutation LastName
Address
City, State Zip

W16V1 - [IDNumber]

☐ Check Please Charge My: ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ Amx

Credit Card # _____

Exp Date: _____ CSV# _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Please make my gift in: ☐ Honor ☐ Memory of: _____

COMMUNICATE WITH WORDS AND IMAGES!

Each reader will process the information you are presenting in various ways. Some people will read your letter from beginning to end. Some will skim the letter picking up what they believe to be essential, this includes words that are bold and the images you select. And yet a third group will merely look at the piece and make a decision about how to proceed based on the overall look and feel. Your goal - write for all three. Create clean and concise copy that gets to the point and is defines your call to action. Use images to support the narrative, and, select a few key sentences that you can bold aimed at those who skim instead of read.



PRO TIP: Stock images have come a long way. Gone are the days of cheesy “clip art.” Now there are a number of pay for use and free stock sites. Check out [AdobeStock.com](#) and [Unsplash.com](#). Both are great resources for quality images.

Write for those of us who skim instead of read. Using a few sentences in bold allows you to do this easily.

This letter says:

1. Thank you for being such a great donor.
2. Can you keep being a great donor?
3. We are so thankful you are a donor!

ASK FOR THE RIGHT AMOUNT!

Empirical research has shown that asking at a specific level appropriate to the recipient yields far greater returns than a generic giving ladder. So why not start at the donors last gift amount and then ask for 10%, 20%, or 50% more?



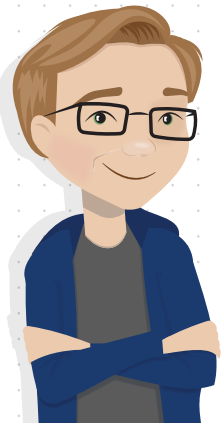
PRO TIP: The team at Boone Graphics can build a variable giving ladder based on the donors last gift amount. This kind of personalization reminds donors they have a relationship with you and that they have given before.

If a donor always gives you \$100 why not grow that to \$110, \$120 or \$150? A custom giving ladder will help do just that.

LET'S TALK FUNDRAISING!

Rob Grayson is our in-house Creative Director. However, before joining the Boone Team he worked as a Development Director and Fundraising Consultant for over 20 years. Rob is more than happy to chat with you about your upcoming appeal and help build your best appeal yet.

To schedule a conversation, email: rgrayson@boonegraphics.net



PLANNING YOUR CAMPAIGN

- ☐ **Set A Campaign Goal**
How much do you need to raise? You can't reach your goal if you don't have one.
- ☐ **Review & Segment Data**
Knowing who you're mailing to will help you create a budget for your campaign.
- ☐ **Set A Campaign Budget**
A budget will help you decide what your campaign will look like.
- ☐ **Major Donor Review.**
 - How many do you have?
 - Will they get the same piece as everyone else?
 - Will you need personalized notes for these donors?
- ☐ **Create Your Giving Matrix**
This will ensure you know how many gifts are needed to meet your goal.
- ☐ **Contact Boone Graphics (or whomever your print and mail vendor will be.)**
Let your team at Boone know what your campaign will look like. Things to consider:
 - Who will be the primary contact in managing edits, proofs, payment, etc.
 - How many pieces will you need?
 - Will your piece use variable data?
 - Can your piece be automated for production?
 - What kind of paper and envelopes would you like to use?
 - Order "overs" for those last minute additions that can be sent out by hand.
 - When do you want the piece to drop?
- ☐ **Personalized Notes to Major Donors**
If you plan on including a personalized note to your major donors, start collecting them early... this can... and probably will delay the process!
- ☐ **Draft Your Letter & Giving Ladder**
When designing your letter consider variable giving ladders based on giving history, giving frequency, or capacity. Variable giving ladders help raise more money!
- ☐ **Design & Layout**
Meet with your graphic designer, to review copy, art, photos, logos, and colors. A graphic designer can help ensure your direct mail letter looks its best and communicates your message effectively.
- ☐ **Gather Feedback**
Share a draft of your layout with leadership, board members, or anyone else who may need to give feedback. Be sure to ask for comments by a specific date to keep things moving forward.
- ☐ **Final Draft of Appeal**
Give yourself and your team a deadline by which to produce your final draft. This will help keep you on track.
- ☐ **Final Data Selection**
This list should represent all your segmented data. Remember to remove all "do not mail" and "deceased" records from your lists.
- ☐ **Data & Artwork to Printer**
Plan 5 - 7 business days for production, once your proof is approved before your campaign is dropped at the USPS.



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70 S. Kellogg Avenue | Goleta, CA 93117
805.683.2349 | boonegraphics.net



(805) 683.2349

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