

# OCS News & Notes

DIRECT MAIL FUND RAISING TOPICS & EMERGENCY SERVICES NOTES

Volume Number 3

[www.ocsmail.com](http://www.ocsmail.com)

April 2004

## My Comments

Don Stoetzer, President & CEO - OCS, Inc.

### *Direct Mail and the Marketing Mix*

What is new, and do the tried and true methods continue to work? Technology appears to be never ending. There is always a new gadget or device on the market. The enthusiastic and creative fundraiser has a variety of sources by which they can communicate with their donors and prospects. In Mal Warwick's November 2003 and January 2004 Newsletter on Successful Direct Mail he discusses various media channels that are valid options to consider.

One very interesting communication channel is Direct Dialogue. Here solicitors actually engage people on the street to distribute their message. There are co-op mailings, here various organizations group together to present their case. There is the planned face-to-face contact, door-to-door canvassing, newspapers, magazine ads and inserts in shipped packages. There are also appeals via the radio, television, telemarketing and over the web. There is even text messaging. Though a potentially controversial approach, due to making contact via cellular telephones or other wireless handheld devices, it could have future possibilities.

With all these solicitation contact methods, there remains the standard tried and true Direct Mail contacts and a newer kid on the block, e-mail. So just how well does the vintaged postal Direct Mail stack up to the newer e-mail? Lets take a look at some Pros and Cons about each.

#### **E-mail Pros...**

- E-mail is cheap. Doing a test mailing or sending follow-ups don't cost a lot, except maybe in time.
- E-mail is fast. You want to make a large number of people aware of something quickly, then e-mail is a great resource.
- E-mail is good for testing something new. You can float a new idea or thought and get virtually immediate response.



#### **E-mail Cons...**

- E-mail messages need to be short. Readers generally want the information presented quickly. If it does not come from a friend or colleague many items may not be read.
- The environment for e-mail can be poor. This is due a lot to spam. Sorting through e-mail can be a drag. Many people still do not have or use e-mail, though it is growing rapidly and others often change their e-mail address.
- E-mail can limit your creativity. You don't have a lot of time or space to develop a case. Graphics are possible, but are limited to attachments or embedded photos.

#### **Direct Mail Pros...**

- The overall environment is good. In general postal mail is received at home and can be viewed at your leisure. Whereas e-mails are mainly viewed at work or at a desk where you are staring at a monitor and usually busy. The perception of the postal piece is thus better received.
- Postal mail is more salvageable. There is a greater chance the direct mail piece will be saved or "placed" aside. With e-mail you are just a right click away from deleting it.
- There is space where you can develop your case.
- You can create emotion. If you inspire and motivate, the reader will stay with you. With e-mails it is generally "just the facts ma'am, just give me the facts".



#### **Direct Mail Cons...**

- Probably the one big negative is cost in comparison to e-mail. Postage is high. Non-profit rates are definitely more reasonable than profit rates, but they are still high. There is also the expense of the solicitation piece itself.
- Direct Mail requires more thought and time to put things together, though time does help create a better piece.

So what is new? Well a lot of things, but e-mail appears to be one of the things you would want to consider among the many newer formats available. Yet, that tried and true method of what some may call "snail mail" is still a vital approach. It is a method that will generate continuous results and is essential to your overall marketing mix!

7501 Village Road • Sykesville, Maryland 21784-7427

(410) 781-6435 • 1-800-877-4627 • Fax: (410) 795-7261 • E-mail: [ocsinc@ocsmail.com](mailto:ocsinc@ocsmail.com) • [www.ocsmail.com](http://www.ocsmail.com)

## Our Staff

### *Congratulations!*

Some staff updates...just so you know...

In the last newsletter, we told you that **Heather Stoetzer**, Executive Assistant, had purchased a home. Now we would like you to join us in congratulating her on her engagement. Heather and her fiancé have an early July 2004 wedding planned.

**Jim Timberman**, also newly engaged, recently accepted a promotion to lead Graphic Artist. Congratulations on your promotion and best wishes on your engagement Jim!

**Michael Lingg** from our IT Department recently became the proud father of his fourth child. Congratulations Michael on your new baby girl!

### *Some Other Updates -*

Among the great team we have at OCS, we would also like to mention some of the newer troops. We have two new pressmen, Jeff Thompson and Daniel Contreras. In addition, we have a new office assistant, Jean Proudlock. Join us in welcoming Jeff, Daniel & Jean to the OCS family.

## Reminders

### *Reminder Mailings Are Very Effective*



Do *reminder* mailings really work? In a word, YES! If you have a large area, you may want to “target” your reminder mailing to potential or previous donors, which have a greater propensity to give. You can send the same basic flier as the first mailing, we can just simply add the word “Reminder” or we can change the whole message. Since Direct mail is targetable, we can send different messages to different groups or previous donors. Using *targeting* can help strengthen your *relationships* with *donors* and reduce your *investment* in *non-donors*. Not sure what is best for you? Call us. That is why we are here! We will share our advice and experience, then offer suggestions or go over various options you can choose. You don’t have to do a reminder for every mailing, but they DO work!

## Appreciation

### *Show Your Appreciation!*

An article in *Strategies For Success*, by Hartsook on Philanthropy, discusses donor recognition vs. appreciation. Most donors want to feel that their donation is valuable and appreciated. The article states that a small investment in appreciation can reap a large return; a donor who is genuinely appreciated will find it easier to continue to support a particular institution. On the other hand, the cost of not demonstrating appreciation can be huge. A donor who is not treated with appreciation will be less inclined to give in the future and will not refer others who might want to give.

Some suggestions to show your appreciation without high costs might include: a simple Thank You Post Card, a more personal Thank You Letter, a special Invitation to an Open House or even a Banquet for those larger donations. Level of donation Plaques and small gifts for higher levels of donations are also a consideration. Don't forget those message signs many of you have in front of your building. Include a “Thank You For Your Support During Our Recent Mail Drive” on that sign!



## Your Flier

### *Did You Put That On Your Flier?*

As I talk to my customers, I often hear them speak with pride about something their company has that may be unique and valuable. Whether it is a significant life saving service, a vital piece of apparatus or personnel with special training, tell the neighborhood! People will not only be interested, they will be proud. If you think there is something special about your department, *shout* about it! Let us put it in your flier.

## Thanks Again!

In 2003, we hit another record year! Thanks to ALL of our clients for allowing us to serve you, and again thanks for referring us to your neighbors!

# Addresses

## *Our List Maintenance Department*

Okay, so you spent time on the theme, copy, and design of the packet. It looks great! However, will it really reach its intended destination? When was the last time you updated your address list? This is a very important part of the fund drive that often is overlooked.

If you know of new developments in your area, get the addresses and send them to us! Did you tear down an old apartment complex or shopping center? Tell us so we can take it off your list. Need help? Ask us. OCS has a List Maintenance Department ready to assist you. We can get new addresses; update names for existing houses sold or develop an address list from the start.



Before your initial mailing each year, we compare your address list against customized *postal* software. This allows us to standardize the addresses according to postal regulations so we can automate your mail and save you a lot of money on postage! While we are working with your list, we check for duplicates and review our error reports. These error reports alert us to potential problems.

We even call the local post offices when necessary to verify the accuracy of the addresses in question and make changes to improve your list. Unfortunately, this process alone does not give us new addresses. If your address list needs updating and you need help, give us a call and we can discuss what various services OCS has to offer.

# Promotions

We have always offered a limited line of *Promotional Items*, but we are now expanding! We have included Pocket Calendars, Trading Cards, Business Card Magnets, etc. in your mailings or you have used them for Open Houses. Promotions are great for offering that follow up thank you and your name is on the piece. So if you are looking for that perfect Pen & Pencil set, Key Rings, Cups or Cupholders, Calculators, Golf items, novelty Tool Sets, Emblem Pins, Desktop Accessories, stylish Award items or whatever, give us a call...we can help.

# OCS Changes

In preparation for our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year, we are making a few cosmetic changes. If you see us at some of the upcoming trade shows, you will see part of that new look. We are excited about our new Exhibitor Display unit and would like your comments (positive comments only please ☺). We also have a new logo that will appear on some specialty items. We are also planning a few things for our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and will keep you informed as plans are finalized. Here is a peek at our new logo:



# Firehouse Recipe

## *Grand Vegetable Chili* (Serves 5)

- 2 tbsp. oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 sweet red pepper, diced
- 1 sweet grn pepper, diced
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 medium zucchini, diced
- 2 tbsp. chili powder
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1 can stewed tomatoes (14oz)
- 1 can black beans (19oz), drained and rinsed
- 1 cup corn kernels
- ½ cup canned vegetable broth



Heat Oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onions, red, green and jalapeno peppers. Saute for 5 minutes. Now add the chili powder, cumin, salt and pepper. Stir in the tomatoes, black beans, corn and vegetable broth. Simmer for 20 to 25 minutes or until reduced and thicken.

# Seaford Responds

## OCS Helps Battle Hurricane Isabel



Here John Stevenson, President of Seaford VFD hands over the Engine Title to Jeffrey Stotesberry, Swan Quarter's Fire Chief. Also pictured is Rich Toulson past President of Seaford.

Maybe it was a coincidence or maybe it was meant to be. OCS received an e-mail from the National Volunteer Fire Council forwarding a plea for help from The Swan Quarter Volunteer Fire Department. Hurricane Isabel devastated the Swan Quarter area, which is located on the Pamlico Sound in NC. The Swan Quarter VFD, was virtually wiped out. The insurance did not cover enough to refurbish their fleet of apparatus, so while they continued to answer calls for help with apparatus borrowed from neighboring companies, they put out their plea.

We received this e-mail from the NVFC about two days after speaking with members of the Seaford VFD in Delaware. Seaford was preparing to replace their still active 1980 Pierce Pumper, valued at about \$10,000. As soon as we received the e-mail, we made a quick call to Rich Toulson of Seaford VFD and shared the news. Rich acted quickly, presenting the plea to the Seaford membership, who unanimously voted to donate the pumper, along with hoses and equipment. Several of the Seaford volunteers delivered the engine to the grateful Swan Quarter VFD. We feel a sense of pride in the small part we played in this generous act.

*We would like to THANK the Seaford VFD and all its members for this unselfish show of brotherhood!*

# Trade Shows

Here is a list of just some of the trade shows we plan to attend for the remainder of 2004. If you attend any of these, don't forget to stop by and say hello. We look forward to seeing you!

- FDIC April 29th - May 1st Indianapolis, IN (booth #437)
- Harrisburg Fire Expo May 21<sup>st</sup> - May 23<sup>rd</sup> Harrisburg, PA (booth #822A&B)
- MD State Firemen's Cnv. June 14<sup>th</sup> - June 16<sup>th</sup> Ocean City, MD (booth 2024/5-hall A)
- Firehouse Mag. Expo July 15th - July 17th Baltimore, MD (booth #326)
- NJ State Firemen's Cnv. Sept. 17th - Sept. 18th Wildwood, NJ
- FDIC East Oct 28th - Oct. 30th Atlantic City, NJ

# Just for Fun

A blonde female police officer pulls over a blonde gal for speeding. She asks the driver for her driver's license. The driver searches through her purse in vain. Finally she asks, "What does it look like?"

The blonde police officer tells her, "You know, it's that thing in your purse with your picture on it."

The blonde driver searches for a few more seconds, pulls out her compact, opens it, and sure enough sees herself. She hands the compact to the blonde cop. After a few seconds looking at the compact, the blonde cop rolls her eyes, hands the compact back to the blonde driver and says, "If you would have told me you were a police officer when I first pulled you over we could have both saved a lot of time."



If you know anyone else who might like to receive our newsletter, or you would like to make any comments or suggestions, please call us and ask for Don, Diana, Mary or Tanya.