

OCS News & Notes

DIRECT MAIL FUND RAISING TOPICS & EMERGENCY SERVICES NOTES

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Donors are not ATM Machines



Just because someone may have some disposable income and you ask for it, does not mean you will get it. A donor should be viewed more as an investor. Nobody wants to just give money away, but they will invest it in something that will result in a significant return. This return on investment could come as a personal gain such as a tax deduction or the possibility of winning a prize or other financial gain. In most cases when someone donates to a non-profit organization it may be a different type of return that attracts them. This could be the betterment of people or the community. They want to feel good, useful and proud. They want to know that their actions will help make a positive change. They want to make a difference. In today's society this is especially true. It is not only about the "ask" anymore. If you want your fund drive to be successful, you need to prove the money will have a positive effect. You need to make sure people understand why you are asking for the gift, and start by making sure you know why you are asking. You need to make it easy for the donor to come to the decision that your cause is the best place for their investment. We can help you do that. Together we can make your annual fundraising a success!

OCS Surveys

We want your comments and we value your feedback – so we are asking for it. A few years ago we got out of the habit of mailing out surveys on a regular basis. We feel that was not a good thing, so we have made the process better and easier for all our clients. After your main mailing and certain other selected tasks have been completed, we are requesting your comments through a short survey. Everyone who submits a completed survey will be entered into a quarterly drawing to win a prize. The winner's associated organization will also win a discount towards future services from OCS! If you are our main contact for the fund drive or other task performed, we will send the request to your email. Make sure we have your updated email address! A link to the on-line survey will be provided on the email. If no email address is available, we will send you a hard copy of the survey.

We would like to thank everyone who submitted the survey during the first quarter. We have had a good response and some helpful comments. We would like to congratulate Joseph Russo of Larchmont Volunteer Ambulance Corps, our first quarter winner! Joseph won a \$50 Olive Garden gift certificate and Larchmont Volunteer Ambulance Corps benefited with a \$75 OCS gift certificate. Congratulations Joseph and thanks for your comments!

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Donor Returns

We pride ourselves in how well we are able to manipulate and maintain list information. Marketing and history information is critical to expanding the usefulness of the database. Without it you have no feel for trends and the status of individual donors.

Knowing facts and specific criteria about your market area is valuable data. Just the mere fact of knowing more gives you an edge and the ability to direct (i.e. target) or fashion your marketing message or donor request better. Knowing more about your demographics and market also allows you to refine your mailing size; we can decide to target your packet or message to certain groups on follow-up mailings because of this history we maintain.

OMNI VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
Our Volunteer Fire Department is supported by "your" donations. Without your support we can not exist. Thanks for your help!
CIRCLE OR ENTER AMOUNT YOU WISH TO CONTRIBUTE. THEN RETURN THIS PORTION WITH YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION.

\$35	\$40	\$55	\$
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YOUR RECEIPT
FOR YOUR RECORDS
OMNI VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

\$35 is just 9 cents per day.
Every little bit helps!

DONATION AMT: \$ _____
CHECK #: _____ DATE: _____

7501 Village Road • Sykesville, MD 21784

Thank You!

Make check payable to: Omni Volunteer Fire Department

This brings us to the main point of this piece. One way we retain history information is to obtain feedback. One of those major pieces of feedback comes from those DONOR RESPONSE CARDS! We need those cards back from the mailings we perform for you, our fundraising clients. If you forget or throw those cards away – you are throwing away valuable history! Our service includes entering and retaining that donor response information for you. It is essential for analyzing your progress and to your future mailing formats. So – Get those cards back to us!

Passion Continues



In one of our prior newsletters (May 2003), Don talked about keeping the passion. In short, he mentions that there are always outside factors (such as a weak economy and decreasing donations) that can have a negative affect on your enthusiasm for your cause, i.e. your fund drive. Today's economy combined with recent storms and other negative factors can have a damaging influence on donations. If your focus stays clear your fund drive will be successful. Keep the passion as Don mentions because it can be contagious.

As I point out in the article "*Donors are not ATM Machines*" in this newsletter, contributors want to "feel good" about their investment. Your appeal should include a good balance of emotion as well as facts. A compelling story or experience may attract someone's interest to want to know more about your cause. Be polite and truthful. An exaggerated story can make the donor feel helpless and think that a donation would not make a difference. People want to feel they are helping. Show them how their donation can have a positive impact. Include facts and stats that back up your emotional appeal to ensure trust. The design of your packet can be professional and attractive, but that in itself is not enough reason to give. People need to feel an emotional pull. They need to feel your passion.

One Tasty Recipe

Chicken Bog-A Southern Delight

Found In the Myrtle Beach Guide



To honor our newest office in the Carolina's, we would like to share a dish that has become a tradition in the coastal areas of South Carolina. Starting with chicken, sausage and rice as the main ingredients, recipes can vary to satisfy those who like it moister, dryer, spicier, etc. We have included a more basic recipe here. Feel free to add your favorite ingredients like carrots, celery, herbs, spices, etc. to satisfy your taste. Like it hot? Top it off with hot sauce.

- 6 cups water
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 whole chicken or 6 chicken breasts
- 2 cups long-grain white rice (not instant)
- 1 pkg each of hot sausage and mild smoked sausage (beef, turkey or pork) sliced into chunky pieces
- 4 cubes chicken bouillon

1. In a large pot, boil chicken, onion, spices and bouillon until chicken is tender.
2. Remove chicken from broth to cool. Debone and cut into chunks.
3. Brown sausage in a large skillet.
4. Measure 4 cups broth then add rice, chicken and sausage to it. Bring to a boil.
5. Reduce heat to low, cover. Stir occasionally until rice is fully cooked and all liquid is gone.
6. Enjoy!

Shows

Once again we would like to thank everyone who stopped by our booth at past shows. We appreciate your business and enjoy seeing you. Here is a list of shows we have scheduled for the remainder of 2008.

Harrisburg Fire Expo
Harrisburg, PA
May 16th – 18th

MD State Firemen's Convention
Ocean City, MD
June 16th – 18th

SCSFA-SC Fire-Rescue Conference
Myrtle Beach, SC
July 17th – 19th

Firehouse Expo
Baltimore, MD
July 24th – 26th

VA State Firefighter's Convention
Hampton, VA
August 14th – 15th

NJ State Firemen's Convention
Wildwood, NJ
September 12th – 13th



LIFE BEFORE THE COMPUTER

- * Memory was something that you lost with age
- * An application was for employment
- * A program was a TV show
- * A cursor used profanity
 - * A keyboard was a piano
 - * A web was a spider's home
 - * A virus was the flu
 - * A CD was a bank account
- * A hard drive was a long trip on the road
- * A mouse pad was where a mouse lived
- * And if you had a 3 1/2 inch floppy
....you just hoped nobody found out



List Data

Names and Addresses or Mailing Lists, are a very unique animal. The average person will usually react to a list of addresses and say, "Oh, no problem just go to the post office they can tell you who lives where". Well today there is a lot more to it than that. First of all the USPS does not give out lists. These consumer files, as they are generally referred to, are a major business and critical to any mailing.

Lists are no longer just a list of names and addresses, they are life styles, income classifications, historical data, specialty groupings or market segmentations, profiling, etc. How these names and addresses are put together is a major undertaking. Like everything in life nothing is easy and there are degrees of what is good & what is better.

A list can be developed or created in many, many ways. One of the obvious and simplest is to create it in-house with your own available data. These sources are: your existing client database, names from response cards and general mailing responses, guest books, any phone contacts, past benefactors, and such. You could also access public record information, such as tax lists, voter records, chamber of commerce data, building permits, other related organizational files, phone books, the internet and so forth and so on. But, this is a lot of work!

We have many types of clients. They are in different industries and organizations that relate to various groups. We have basic type mailings, where all we want is to effectively penetrate an area by covering all the addresses in a county or town by their zip codes. Then there is the same situation, but we want to "target" the area by mailing to certain market segmentations, demographics or geography, i.e. family income levels, house values, age, sex, children present or a specific part of town or particular communities, etc. These specialized mailings require obtaining addresses appended with the parameters that will help us target those

individuals that hopefully have those criteria that best meet the profile the client is trying to approach.

We have years of experience and a knowledgeable staff that works with the client to determine what "criteria" would be good for them to use. This is done so that they can best match the audience they are trying to reach, with the message, request or offer they are presenting. Obviously like many mailing facilities OCS does not have all the address lists in-house, so they must obtain certain other information from select resource centers or brokers. For nearly 30 years OCS has developed a relationship with a select few centers that have a track record for reliable list data and are able to tailor the data the way we want it. For example, we can obtain new mortgages in an area for the past five years...which provides updated names and new residences. We can obtain a full list of residents by zip code to compare to our existing database for purpose of expanding our overall list. This is just the tip of the iceberg as to what we can do to develop and improve lists.

We are somewhat unique because for most of our clients we maintain and further develop your lists. In these situations we will keep the data and add personal notes, history information and donation response input, if applicable, as the information becomes available. Many mailing houses are just "middlemen" whereas we are a complete service. We insure that your lists are USPS qualified and fully deliverable addresses, and we check for correctness and duplications.

The over riding point is that OCS is a full service company. We help you with all aspects of your needs. We assist with the project plan, the mailing time frames, the solicitation or informational type packet formats, the designs and graphics, the printing, the addresses of course, complete mailing services and follow-up reporting. With OCS everything is important. Obviously the list is a major part of any mailing, but yet it is only one part. Nothing, especially lists, are absolutely perfect, but we do everything we can to make sure you get your money's worth and that your mailing produces the results you are trying to achieve!

Can I ask again?



Once again I would like to highlight an earlier article from our May 2003 newsletter. The topic was “Multiple Appeals” and it drew attention to a study that was done on this subject by a nationally recognized Direct Mail Fund Raising Consultant, Mal Warwick. The study showed that the positive impact (donation responses) far outweighed the negative impact (complaints) of multiple appeals in a calendar year.

Along with other various articles from different consulting firms reflecting this same argument, many of our own clients have proved this theory through their own success of more than one fundraising request in the same year. If you are going to ask, you must have a valid purpose, but as long as you have a good cause, asking again makes sense. You may want to target your request to a particular audience on your mailing list or to a particular group of previous donors from your database, but don't eliminate contributors of your recent fund drive just because they “already donated”. You sparked enthusiasm and good feelings in that donor which may benefit you again. Just remember, while you are *not* asking again, someone else may be asking and benefiting from that “good feeling” you created.

Major Station Fire



Well, I'm sure that is something you don't want to hear. Unfortunately, this recently happened to one of our New Jersey clients. Holmes Marshall Fire Company in Piscataway, NJ was devastated as they got the call. The good news is that no one got hurt and they were able to get the major apparatus out of the building before they were damaged. The building along with the many essential items inside were destroyed. Several neighboring fire companies quickly came to their aid and proudly, they were able to continue their service to the community. They are currently operating from a temporary location until they can rebuild. Remember, emergencies can happen anywhere – so practice what you preach and stay safe!



Price Increase

No one can hide from the effects of the economy. As gas prices continue to rise, so does the increase of everything else such as paper and printing supplies. At OCS, we strive to keep increases to a minimum, if any at all. With the exception of a few adjustments, it has been several years since we have had across the board increases. With respect and concern of our customers, we have absorbed several cost increases over this time. We are now however, forced to make some minor alterations in our pricing schedule but again, promise to keep it as low as we can!

There is something many of you can do to help....In addition to material and general operating expenses, it is also costly to perform the numerous but necessary follow up contacts we make. You can help by making sure you return your work packet or job information, donor response cards, mock-up approvals or changes and address list approvals or changes back to us in a timely fashion. This will also help us meet your target mailing dates. If you have questions or need help at any point in your fund drive, just let us know. We are here for you!



Did you know? You can retrieve archived copies of our OCS News & Notes from our website. Just one more reason to visit www.ocsmail.com

Staff Notes

New Additions to our OCS Family include:

Alex Christoforakis, List Maintenance Department (Part-Time). Outside of OCS Alex sings opera in the Baltimore/Washington Area. She also teaches voice class at Sheppard University.

Carol Katz, List Maintenance Department (Part-Time). In her spare time, Carol enjoys spending time with her Grandchildren, gardening and creating greeting cards.

Melissa Sipes, Warehouse/Production. Outside of OCS Melissa loves spending time with her children and getting involved in outdoor activities.

Audrey Wingo, Office Manager. Audrey has been an instant asset to our organization bridging the gap between sales/customer service and production. Audrey contributes in many aspects including sales / marketing, customer service, quality control and the overall job flow. In addition to her tasks at OCS, Audrey enjoys spending time with her family.



A Special Addition:

Join us in congratulating Heather Stoetzer-James (Operations VP) and her husband Steven as they are expecting a new addition to their family in June. Look for updates on the new baby in our next newsletter.

Postal Increase

On May 12, 2008 the US Postal Service is once again changing some of the postal rates. The good news is that this increase should not effect the standard class bulk mail. Some high-density flats and saturation mail will actually drop in price. The single rate first class stamp will increase from 41 cents to 42 cents, but again there is good news. You can purchase forever stamps at the \$.41 rate before May 12th and they will continue to be good for your first class rate after May 12th, so purchase your forever stamps soon!



Interesting Facts

Every day more money is printed for Monopoly than the U.S. Treasury.

The first couple to be shown in bed together on prime time TV was Fred and Wilma Flintstone.

Many years ago in Scotland, a new game was invented. It was ruled "Gentlemen Only... Ladies Forbidden"... and thus the word GOLF entered into the English language.

Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.

Q. If you were to spell out numbers, how far would you have to go until you would find the letter "A"?

A. One thousand

In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase... "goodnight, sleep tight."

$111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 =$
12,345,678,987,654,321

Just for Fun

A nursery school teacher was delivering a station wagon full of kids home one day when a fire truck zoomed past. Sitting in the front seat of the truck was a Dalmatian dog. The children started discussing the dog's duties. "They use him to keep crowds back," said one child. "No," said another, "he's just for good luck." A third child brought the argument to a close. "They use the dogs," she said firmly, "to find the fire hydrants..."



More Fun

Children's Logic:

"Give me a sentence about a public servant," said a teacher.

The small boy wrote: "The fireman came down the ladder pregnant."

The teacher took the lad aside to correct him. "Don't you know what pregnant means?" she asked.

"Sure," said the young boy confidently. "It means carrying a child."

Stupid computer
keeps saying
"you got mail"





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