



E-Newsletter for United Ways



March 2008

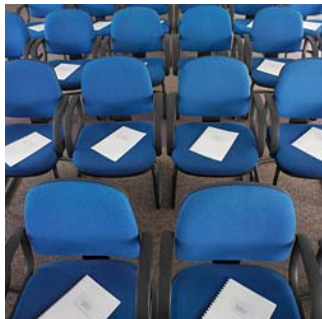
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Community Impact at Great Rivers

By Gary M. Goscenski, Director of Consulting Services



In my three days at the 2008 Great Rivers Conference, perhaps the word I heard more than any other was "how?" More than 400 attendees from United Ways throughout the Midwest and beyond had the opportunity to learn at a variety of sessions, and enjoy the company of others in the United Way family. Some special events included a celebration of Chinese New Year and a dinner at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis. I am certain all who attended took away wonderful memories of a valued time together with

colleagues.

However, upon returning to the office, the challenge remains: How? No one seems to question "what is community impact?", but rather, "how do we implement community impact in our United Way?" In his keynote address at the conference, United Way of America President Brian Gallagher shared the recent history of United Way and the move toward community impact. People listening to the keynote around me nodded appreciatively as he articulated a vision of community impact for United Way.

While Mr. Gallagher's keynote was inspirational, it stopped short of how to implement community impact. During the conference, I attended several sessions with community impact in the title, hoping to learn the "how-to" part of community impact. At one session the topic of discussion at my table was not "why implement community impact" or even "should we implement community impact", but "how do we do this?" Despite valiant efforts from the presenters, few answers were forthcoming.

Featured Article

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Did You Know?

After many years of community, donor, non-donor, and partner research for United Ways, I can safely say that the awareness of the United Way name is good. The perception of what United Way does is not so clear - to most people United Way means fundraising. A select few may understand United Way's role in assessment, prioritization and allocation. But, the challenge United Way faces now is even greater because without the "how" of community impact implementation, perceptions of what United Ways accomplish will become even less clear.

Left to interpretation and hit-and-miss approaches to implementing community impact, in five years it is likely that one United Way will look even less like another United Way. A United Way that has implemented community impact will look entirely different to a donor accustomed to supporting every nonprofit through their United Way contribution. Until community impact is consistently implemented in United Ways throughout the United States, it is unreasonable to expect donors, the community, and partner agencies to relate to this new vision.

"How" isn't easy--even UWA President Brian Gallagher conceded that after five years of efforts toward achieving community impact, results have been slow. United Ways need the how - at every level. Presidents and CEOs of United Ways, need to know how to effectively implement community impact. Donors to United Way need to know how they benefit from supporting a community impact driven United Way. Lastly, partner agencies need to know how community impact shapes their future.

Take a Closer Look at Your United Way Donors: Are they Returning Donors?

For most nonprofit organizations, updating donor lists has become an ongoing chore to the fundraising process. With retention rates for donors falling and the cost of targeting new donors rising, ensuring a second gift from donors becomes more critical.



Steve Froehlich, director of development analytics at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals discusses what he thinks the best way is to bolster those second donations. "It's not a relationship (with the donor) unless it happens a second time," said Froehlich.

Froehlich listed six techniques to ensure your nonprofit receives those second donations:

1. A quick thank you note for the first check. With that note, enclose a request for further donations and a self-addressed envelope. Above all, do not let a lot of time pass in sending the thank you.
2. Reply with a monthly donation call three-to-four months after the first gift.
3. Do not put the donor's name on a list exchange for the first few months.
4. Post online leads for the donor to further integrate them in the organization.

- A recent study finds nonprofit leaders more effective than corporate heads

- The study shows nonprofit leaders outscored their counterparts across the board in 14 out of the 17 dimensions of leadership practice

- Peer rating of nonprofit leaders were higher than peer ratings of for-profit leaders in all 17 dimensions

For more information about this study, visit www.nonprofitquarterly.org

Featured United Way

Would you like your United Way highlighted in a future issue? Send information about your organization, accomplishments, and/or goals to info@perspec.com to reserve a spot!

Featured Blog

[10 Reasons Why Every Nonprofit Must Have a Blog](#)

By Lance Trebesch and Taylor Robinson

Posted Feb. 5, 2008

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Develop success from failures. Discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success.

-Dale Carnegie

United Way CD-ROM

5. Pursue disaster donors. Retention rates are low for people who contribute for the first time in response to a catastrophe. But, these people write checks for higher than average amounts, so it is worthwhile to lose money on mailing to them.

6. Among lapsed donors, give priority to those who gave at least two gifts. No second gift before lapsing is an indicator of poor future prospects.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. has worked with United Ways to help them understand their donor base through community and donor surveys. For more information about what services we provide for United Ways, visit our website, www.perspec.com, or email info@perspec.com.

Source: "Donors...6 Ways to get a Second Gift." *Nonprofit Times*. Feb. 2008.

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A resource developed for especially for United Ways. CD-ROM includes all the information about Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc.: who we are, and what we do. Request a copy of our United Way CD-ROM by e-mailing info@perspec.com or call (800) 724-9994.