

# TOP TIPS — COVID 19 EDITION: Love and Fundraising in the time of COVID-19



Lynne Boardman



David Kravinchuk



**1.** Many of our clients are wisely using this time to focus on existing donors more than ever. By phone call, "thinking of you" cards, thank you notes, impact reports - whether by TM bureau, formal mailings, or one person at a time.



**2.** Instead of asking "How can I get our donors to support us again?" perhaps we should ask "How can we serve our donors?" There are many seniors isolated at home. Can you phone them just to check-in and say Hi? (Tip: share this initiative amongst the team, and ask other people to help — we know board members who are also pitching in right now!)



**3.** This is a great opportunity to check in with your superloyals, mid-level, monthly and bequest donors. Thank them for their support without asking them for more. Donors will remember this later. Especially when our traditional 'giving' season arrives later in the year. Those charities that stayed connected to their donors, and focused on them for a change, will be remembered.



**4.** A number of our clients have redeployed events staff or in-house face-to-face teams to do donor stewardship calling. They are getting great feedback from donors, and the people making the calls are enjoying it!



**5.** Keep up your fundraising asks. Donors who are able to give will continue to be generous. But make sure that every appeal carries "Coronavirus" language — acknowledging the challenges everyone is facing at this time, and asking them to give only if they are in a situation to do so. Making sure they know how grateful you are for all their past support.



**6.** If you are a charity that is receiving lots of donations from brand-new donors, we highly recommend getting a welcome & conversion strategy in place ASAP! Don't let this opportunity go by without using digital, telephone, mail to bring these donors closer to your cause and build your monthly giving program. We will provide more detail on this in a later edition of Top Ten.



**7.** Be innovative. Our local burger joint includes a hand-written thank you card with our take out order. "We are so grateful you are still supporting us and helping us stay "a-float." Please take care, stay safe, stay well." If White Spot can do it, so can we!



**8.** Give donors something helpful. If you are a mental health charity, offer them emails about how to manage stress and anxiety. If you are an Arts organization, can you curate a special online concert or sing-along for your supporters with a few of the actors or musicians who should have been appearing on stage?



**9.** If you have a fundraising crisis caused by the Coronavirus, tell your donors about it. Ask them to help. This will be one of two cases for support: either your services are more in demand than ever so your costs have gone way up (food banks, hospitals, etc.), or you are in a fundraising crunch because of cancelled events, cancelled corporate gifts, etc. Those situations absolutely call for urgent Coronavirus appeals. If your donors are in a position to do so, they'll give generously. We've seen tremendously high results for many charities in direct mail, digital and phone appeals during this crisis.



**10.** Don't stop talking about legacies with your donors, but DO overhaul your messaging. Stay tuned for A LOT more on legacies in our next edition – see you next week!

For more information, to ask a question, or to contribute a Top Tip of your own, email [lynne@harveymckinnon.com](mailto:lynne@harveymckinnon.com).