

GUIDE

How to Get Your Board on Board With Campaign Communications

A guide to making the case for investing in your
campaign's success



MISSION MINDED

AMPLIFY THE GOOD

How to Get Your Board on Board With Campaign Communications

Campaigns succeed when boards understand the power of communications. But for many leaders, the link between story and revenue isn't intuitive. This guide gives you the language, confidence, and framing to explain why investing in campaign communications isn't a "nice-to-have," but fundamental to achieving—and exceeding—your fundraising goals.

You just finished reading about [campaign readiness](#). You're nodding your head thinking, "Yes, we need this. We need a clearer case, better tools, aligned messaging." And then you think: "**But how do I convince my board to invest 5-10% of our campaign goal in communications?**"

This is the conversation that keeps leaders like you up at night. Because you know what's at stake—but your board might see campaign communications as "nice to have" rather than "essential to success."

Let's change that. **Here's a list of reasons why boards hesitate and how to address each objection.**



Objection 1: “Can't We Just Do This Ourselves?”

Why they think this: Your board sees talented staff. They've read your newsletters. They've seen you lead other fundraising campaigns. They think, “We're smart people. Surely we can write our own case for support.”

What's actually going on: Internal teams are too close to the work. You're fluent in your own jargon. You make assumptions about what donors know. And you're juggling fifty other priorities—which means campaign communications get done in the margins, not with the focus they deserve.

How to frame this with your board: The conversation isn't about whether your team is capable—it's about whether they have the bandwidth and outside perspective this work requires.

- **Try framing it like this:** *“We absolutely have talented people. But asking our team to develop campaign strategy and tools on top of their current workload is like asking our CFO to also conduct our audit. Sure, they understand finance, but that's not the same as having specialized expertise and dedicated focus.”*
- **Emphasize that internal teams can't see what donors see.** You're so close to the work that you don't realize when you're using jargon or making assumptions. An outside partner catches those blind spots.
- **The practical reality:** Every hour your staff spends developing campaign materials is an hour they're not spending on their actual job. That has a real cost, even if it doesn't show up on a budget line.

Objection 2: “This Seems Expensive.”

Why they think this: Board members see a five or six-figure line item for “communications tools” and think, “That’s a lot of money we could be putting toward programs.”

What’s actually going on: Campaign communications aren’t an expense, they’re part of helping you achieve your fundraising goals, and your organization’s future stability. Without them, your campaign stalls. With them, you raise more, faster.

The way to think about this isn’t “marketing expense.” It’s fundraising infrastructure. It’s what makes every single ask possible.

How to frame this with your board: Start by giving context. The industry standard is to invest 5–10% of your fundraising goal in campaign communications. That’s not arbitrary, it’s based on what actually works.

- **Reframe the investment:** *“If we invest \$100,000 in communications and it helps us raise an additional \$2 million because our story is clearer and our tools are more compelling, that’s a 20x return. The real question is: can we afford not to not meet our fundraising goal?”*
- **Organizations with strategic campaign communications report faster donor decision-making, larger average gifts, reaching their fundraising goals faster, and exceeding goals rather than falling short.** For example, our partnership with Wesleyan University helped them surge past 80% of their ambitious \$600M goal with four years still to go.
- **The lost opportunity:** Without strong communications, campaigns can fall short of their goal. So if you’re trying to “save money” by skipping this investment, you’re likely leaving millions on the table. That’s not savings, it’s a lost opportunity.

Objection 3:

“We Already Have a Development Team. Isn’t This Their Job?”

Why they think this: Board members conflate fundraising with fundraising communications. They’re related but distinct skill sets.

What’s actually going on: Your development team’s job is to build relationships and make asks. A campaign communications partner’s job is to give them the tools to do that effectively, the story, the language, the visuals, the presentation decks that make every conversation easier.

This investment doesn’t replace your development team—it makes them more effective.

How to frame this with your board: Help your board understand that relationship building and strategic communications are different skill sets, and both are essential.

- **You might say something like:** *“Our development team is excellent at building relationships, soliciting gifts, and supporting board members with asks. But they need the right tools to do their best work—a clear case for support, compelling talking points, beautiful presentation materials, an inspiring video, and a campaign brand that inspires confidence. A communications partner creates those tools so our fundraising team can focus on what they do best: building relationships and closing gifts.”*
- **Support can amplify impact:** You wouldn’t ask your development director to also be your webmaster, video producer, or graphic designer. That’s not their expertise. A campaign communications partner equips your team with everything they need to be successful.

Objection 4: “How Do We Know This Will Work for Us?”

Why they think this: Leadership and board members want proof. They want to know organizations like yours have succeeded with this approach.

What’s actually going on: This is where case studies become your best friend.

How to frame this with your board: Come prepared with stories of organizations similar to yours that made this investment and exceeded their goals.

- If you’re a school, talk about [San Francisco University High School](#) exceeding their \$65 million goal.
- If you’re working on environmental issues, share how [Save the Redwoods League](#) turned donor fatigue into renewed excitement and raised \$139 million against a \$120 million goal.
- If you’re smaller or regional, point to the Season of Sharing Fund successfully evolving their brand to inspire a new generation of donors.

What do they all have in common? They invested in getting the story and tools right—and it paid off. Then share the bigger picture: Mission Minded’s clients have collectively raised over \$1 billion in the past five years. That’s not luck. That’s what happens when organizations invest in getting the story, the alignment, and the tools right.

The ROI Reality Check

WITHOUT Strategic Campaign Communications	WITH Strategic Campaign Communications
Team struggle to articulate the vision clearly	Everyone tells one confident, compelling story
Members of leadership tell different versions of the story	Donors immediately understand the vision and their role
Donors take years or months to make decisions	Decision timelines compress from months to weeks
Asks feel awkward and uncertain	Fundraisers feel equipped and confident
Average gifts are smaller than capacity suggests	Average gifts increase
Campaign momentum slows down	Campaign creates excitement and delivers on results faster
You meet 75-85% of goal	You exceed your goal (or reach your goals faster)

What to Share When Making the Case:

When you're making this case, share:

- [Is Your Organization Ready for a Record-Breaking Fundraising Campaign Readiness Guide](#) so they can see the strategic framework
- **2-3 relevant case studies:** Organizations similar to yours that succeeded
- **The ROI slide breakdown above:** Easy comparison of with/without
- **Budget breakdown:** Show them exactly what 5-10% means for your goal, and all the expertise you get for it.
- **Timeline:** When you'd start, when you'd launch (typically 4-6 months)
- **The one sentence to share:** *"Investing in strategic campaign communications isn't about making things look pretty, it's about making it easier for donors to say yes and for our team to ask with confidence."* That sentence reframes the entire conversation. It's not about design. It's not about marketing. It's about making fundraising work.



Respond to Objections: Quick Cheat Sheet

Objection	Response
Can't we do this ourselves?	We have talented people, but this requires specialized expertise and dedicated focus our team doesn't have bandwidth for.
This is expensive	It's 5-10% of our goal, industry standard. If \$100K in communications helps us raise an extra \$2M, that's a 20x return. Saving money upfront costs us far more on the backend.
Isn't this development team's job?	Development builds relationships and makes asks. Communications gives them the tools to do that effectively. Different skill sets.
Will this work for us?	Share a relevant case study . Organizations like ours that invest in strategic communications meet their goals faster or exceed them.
Can we pick and choose what to invest in?	Yes, Mission Minded will work with to prioritize which areas we can focus on if budget is a concern. Maybe we can start with strategy and case development, and add tools later. The campaigns that see the biggest success usually invest in both, but they'll be happy to phase it based on what makes sense for us.

You're Not Alone

Every leader who has made this case has felt the same tension: “Will they see the value? Will they think we’re being extravagant? What if they say no?” It’s normal. And most importantly— it’s fixable.

Boards want campaigns to succeed. They just need help understanding why this investment isn’t about “making things pretty” and it’s about building the infrastructure that makes every single ask more effective.

You now have: readiness guide, the case studies, the ROI data, the budget breakdown and the talking points. **And you have one more thing: a vision that matters.**

Your mission deserves the kind of campaign that doesn’t just raise money, it expands what’s possible for your community. And remember boards respond to clarity, confidence, and evidence—and you now have all three.

Go make the case. **You’ve got this.** And if you need a little help preparing for your board conversation? [Grab 30 minutes](#) with a Mission Minded strategist or email us at amplify@mission-minded.com—we’re happy to help you think through your specific board dynamics and how to position this investment. No charge, no pitch.

