

MARKETING GUIDE

Your Capital Campaign Needs a Brand

8 Steps for Creating Irresistible Donor Campaigns

INTRODUCTION

You've worked with a top-notch fundraising consultant. The feasibility study you commissioned shows that donors are open to your plans for a capital campaign. You're all set to launch the quiet phase of your campaign with your most important major donors, but when you unveil your case for support to them, it falls flat—and no one is sure why.

The answer is brand.

At Mission Minded, we wholeheartedly believe in the power of brand to help nonprofits present unique value to their audiences—we're talking about promises that help organizations to differentiate themselves from others and stand out as compelling choices.

Successful capital campaigns need to have a brand, too—big organizing principles that enliven every single aspect of the campaign. And while your school, fine arts organization, or social services agency already has a brand (or reputation), developing a distinct brand for your capital campaign helps you define how you want your audiences to receive it. It helps your campaign succeed.



Using "Dream With Us" as the campaign theme, Mission Minded helped the the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center (now the Los Angeles LGBT Center) develop fundraising materials that conveyed the emotion, urgency, and rationale of the campaign.

For a successful campaign, here are eight steps you must take to ensure you deliver your campaign's brand consistently and effectively:

1 Know Your Assets

A tagline that's easy to remember will help people connect with your mission. Make it bold and brief don't forget the emotional punch.

2 Fall in Love with Your Donors

Create a character to represent each of your most important audiences. Figure out what makes this person tick. What will make them unreservedly support the idea of giving to your campaign? Get to know them so you can create a brand, messages, and case for support that they will find irresistible.

3 Answer the Question "Why?"

Why must this campaign succeed, and what positive outcomes will result from its success? Don't just list what your organization will acquire, build, or create. Think big picture. Will your new library facilitate research that will set scholars on the course of new discoveries that will benefit mankind? Your campaign needs grand-scale ideas, because people invest in ideas and benefits, not buildings.

4 Make Your Promise

What's the single big idea your donors get to be a part of? This is the brand promise that will become the heart and soul of your campaign. Remember what makes your donor tick and create the promise from their point of view—not your own. Is it "a world-class symphony for a world-class city?" That sounds quite different from a new music hall, doesn't it?

“We are very grateful for the message platform you provided for the [capital campaign] case. We appreciate the amount of work you put into all that you did. Mission Minded engaged this [KQED] board, and brought them closer to a common perception of where we are headed.”

Kay Sprinkel-Grace
Consultant to KQED

5 Find Your Theme

Now that you’ve articulated your brand promise, you’re ready to create the theme of your campaign and then turn that theme into a headline for the case. The theme turns the brand promise into an idea that’s easy to share with donors. The theme drives the writing of the case headline. If your theme is “Strength in Numbers,” for instance, then everything should bring this theme to life, from the case brochure headline “Together We’re Stronger” to the case content and its visual design.

6 Talk the Talk

Next, you’ll create the talking points for the campaign. What’s the elevator pitch? How do you succinctly share the WHY of the campaign? What stories can you tell to help a donor imagine the possibilities? Let your brand promise guide you when you write messages and you’ll end up with potent, memorable phrases that will draw in donors.

7 Keep Your Promise

Once you’ve clarified your brand promise it should also inform your design and content. For example, when Mission Minded helped Crystal Springs Uplands School create their admissions campaign, we took the promise “Building Brilliance” and used it as the foundation for a brochure that reflected that idea visually and reinforced it with deliberate language

8 Ready, Set, Go!

Now that you have your brand promise, campaign theme, brochure headline, and a set of strong talking points, you can begin writing your case. And the best part is, having gone through the first steps, you’ll know exactly what your donors need to hear.

Learn More

Mission Minded is a branding firm that works exclusively with nonprofit organizations.

We believe that a brand that sets you apart is essential to a nonprofit’s success. Every day we guide nonprofits to uncover the big, bold idea that will attract more people to their work. Because in today’s world, a worthy mission is not enough. You’ve got to communicate what makes you unique at every opportunity.

Our clients successfully raise more money and attract the support they need to achieve their goals. To find out how Mission Minded can help your organization, call us today at 415-990-9360.