



A 'TDP Legacy Fund' volunteer works in Torres del Paine, Chile.

HANDBOOK 2

MODULE 3

Crowdfunding for Community Nonprofits

Knowing your Audience

Crowdfunding doesn't work without a crowd. It is essential that you know who you will be reaching out to in order to raise funds. This module will explore how to use social media and web analytics to identify your current audience and target your campaign accordingly, as well as highlight easy ways to expand your network and campaign reach.



Download Resources

As you complete this module, refer to '**Resource 3 - Getting to know your audience questionnaire**' which can be found as a download alongside this module on our website. Use this resource as a guide when you are planning your own crowdfunding campaign.

Who is your audience?

Before you target your campaign, you have to know as much as you can about the people that you want to reach, your audience:

Your Broad Audience:

All the people who have the potential to hear the organisation's message.

Your Target Audience:

The segment of that wider audience that is more likely to be sympathetic to the organisation's cause.

Your Network:

The people who actually engage with an organisation, online and in-person.

When considering where to focus your efforts when running a crowdfunding campaign, it's important not to waste energy and resources. You need to optimise your resources to maximise your donations. For this reason, it is best to focus on the second audience sector we have identified above: your organisations 'target audience'. Those who make up your 'broader audience' will prove difficult to engage unless you invest a huge number of resources, whilst your organisations 'network' will likely already be committed to your organisation.

Identifying your target audience in three simple steps

It's important to approach the process of identifying your audience methodically, putting pre-conceptions aside. Whilst you may think you have a good idea of the people that make up your target audience, you might be surprised when you start looking at the data and talking to your supporters. Indeed, your audience often have a very different understanding of your organisation than you do.

Follow this simple three step process to ensure you undertake a thorough analysis when identifying your target audience. If done methodically, you'll likely discover new subsets of your audience that could become a valuable source of support for your crowdfunding campaign.

Step 1 Identify who you believe to be your organisation's audience

The first step is to sit down as a team and brainstorm the type of people you believe your organisation appeals to. Your job is to try and profile the type of people who are currently engaging in your work, as well as those who would likely do so if they knew about it. Ask yourselves questions like:

- Do your supporters generally come from a specific geographic region?
- Is your audience concentrated in a particular age range or gender?
- Do you think your audience tends to identify a certain way politically?
- What connection do they have with your organisation or one of your projects?
- What aspects of your work do you think people find most appealing?
- What other interests do you think the people engaging with your organisation have?

While you want to avoid generalisations and stereotyping, having a rough idea of who your cause will appeal to can help you focus your energy in the right direction.

Step 2 Check your analytic data

The next step is to check the basic profile you created in step 1 against raw analytic data. There are three key places you can find this data:

- The host site you use for your email subscription
- Your social media accounts
- Your website's google analytics page

Through these analytic sources you can access a huge amount of information about the type of people who view, engage and interact with your organisation's online content.



Helpful Hint

Your email subscriber list is one of the most important resources you have to understand and engage with your key supports. If you don't have an email list yet, this should be a priority- it will be essential to your campaign's success.

- Put a sign-up button on your website and social media platforms.
- Make sure that your staff are collecting email addresses at events to turn offline-members of your network into online-members.
- Use an email management system like MailChimp or Constant Contact to collect demographic and engagement data, while simplifying the task of sending email updates to your network.

Using these tools, you can identify:

- Age
- Gender
- Geographic location
- What language they speak
- Interests and beliefs
- What type of content they engage with

Use this information to refine the profile you are creating of your target audience. Hopefully, you will be starting to see a clearer picture of the type of people you can focus your crowdfunding campaign marketing upon



Helpful Hint

You may notice that there are certain people or characteristics who you thought your organisation would appeal to in step 1, but that actually aren't represented in your analytics. Here, you need to consider whether these people are an important part of your audience (e.g. possible donors), and if so, identify ways you can better engage them in your work.

Step 3 Ask your supporters

The final step you can take to refining your target audience profile is the most obvious: ask them. Create a quick and easy survey to send out to your existing email list. Make sure that you are transparent about your motives – everyone is suspicious these days about giving away private information. Outline in the email that you want to better understand who your supporters are and what motivates them to be involved with your mission. Those who have signed up to your email list are likely your most loyal followers, so there is a good chance they will respond. Ask questions like:

- What are your hobbies/ interests?
- What is your current educational and/or employment situation?
- What kind of organisations/ projects do you support? Are you interested in a specific topic e.g. education, human rights, access to water etc.
- Do you donate to any organisation regularly? What amount on average per year do you donate?
- What aspect/past project of our organisation interests you most?
- What do you hope to achieve by supporting our work?
- If you were to tell a friend about us, what three words would you use to describe our organisation?
- What is the best way to reach you? E-Mail, social media, radio, newspaper, television, flyer etc.

The aim of this process is to fill in any of the gaps you may have in the profile you have created so far for your target audience. Make sure you thank your supporters for their information and ensure that you keep it private and confidential.



Download Resource

You can find a template to help you create an email for your supporters in; **'Resource 3 - Questionnaire: Getting to know your audience'** which can be found as a download alongside this module on our website.

Understanding how your audience engages with you online

Now that you have identified who your target audience is, it is important to understand how they engage with you online and identify ways to track this engagement. This is essential to successful crowdfunding, helping you to create marketing content that resonates with your target audience and allowing you to make real-time adjustments to maximise donations.

Emails and social media posts will likely be your most important marketing methods throughout your crowdfunding campaign. You can use the same analytic tools you used to identify your audience to help track their engagement with your campaign, gauging who is interacting with your content and how.

Places where you can track audience engagement	Most email hosts and social media platforms provide demographic information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has been reached by your posts and emails • Who has interacted with them • How frequently you are receiving these interactions.
	Social media management software, such as Hootsuite, can also help track audience behaviour and increase engagement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hootsuite allows you to monitor the accounts for multiple social media platforms in the same place. This allows you to look at how posts related to your crowdfunding campaign are being received as a whole.
	Most crowdfunding platforms will also collect analytics about who is engaging and donating to your cause. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can use this data to assess conversions – how many people who interact with your social media posts are going on to donate. For example, if on a certain day you see a spike in donations, there is a good chance that the type of social media posts or emails you sent that day were particularly effective.

By comparing the analytics from your social media and email campaigns with the analytics on your crowdfunding platform, patterns should easily become visible. There is no one-size-fits-all method to engaging your audience. Indeed, it's often best to use trial and error in order to craft an outreach strategy based upon the methods of engagement that work best for your organisation.

Finishing up

You should now have a much clearer understanding of who your target audience is and how they will likely interact with your crowdfunding campaign. In the next module, we will explore how to set the right target for your crowdfunding campaign in order to maximise donations.

This resource was produced by Grassroots Collective.

This is module 3 of our 10-part handbook for nonprofit crowdfunding. Find the full handbook at: www.thegrassrootscollective.org/grassroots-hub

Have a question about crowdfunding for social causes or want to learn about how we can support your organisation on its mission? Contact us at: info@thegrassrootscollective.org

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