

Welcome!

6 Proven Strategies to Optimize Your Email Appeals
will begin shortly...



What: A conference to advance the future of fundraising

When: September 28-29

Where: Fort Worth, Texas

Tickets: NIOSummit.com



6 Proven Strategies to Optimize Your Email Appeals

A Few Quick Things

- **Thank you! We are delighted that have made time to join us today**
- **A video recording will be made available**
- **Also, links to all of the experiments and additional resources will be sent**
- **We want your questions!**

Nonprofit Innovation & Optimization Summit



What: A conference to advance the future of fundraising

When: September 28-29

Where: Fort Worth, Texas

Tickets: NIOSummit.com

Top Thought Leaders and Practitioners



Marcus Sheridan

Professional Speaker & Founder at
The Sales Lion



Matt Bailey

Internet Marketing Speaker,
Consultant & Best-Selling Author



**Mackenzie (Mack)
Fogelson**

Founder & CEO at Genuinely



Tim Kachuriak

Chief Innovation & Optimization
Officer at NextAfter



David DeMambro

Principal Inbound Marketing
Specialist at HubSpot



Jon Lewis

Senior Manager of Direct Response
at Hillsdale College



Flint McLaughlin

Managing Director at MECLABS



Michael Aagaard

Senior Conversion Optimizer at
Unbounce



Lee J. Colan, Ph.D.

Author, Speaker & Executive Coach
at The L Group, Inc.



Amy Harrison

Copywriter, Consultant & Speaker at
Write With Influence



Amanda Mark

ePhilanthropy Director at
Caringbridge



Mark Santiago

Online Marketing Supervisor at
Jewish Voice Ministries
International

Nonprofit Innovation and Optimization Summit



Tickets: ~~\$1295~~

**Last Chance to Save:
\$1095**

Nonprofit Innovation and Optimization Summit



~~Tickets: \$1295~~

~~Last Chance to Save:
\$1095~~

Your ticket: \$995
(valid for one week)

Discount Code: EARLYBIRD

www.NIOSummit.com

Today's Speaker



Jeff Giddens

*Senior Vice President,
Optimization
NextAfter*

@jagiddens



6 Proven Strategies to Optimize Your Email Appeals

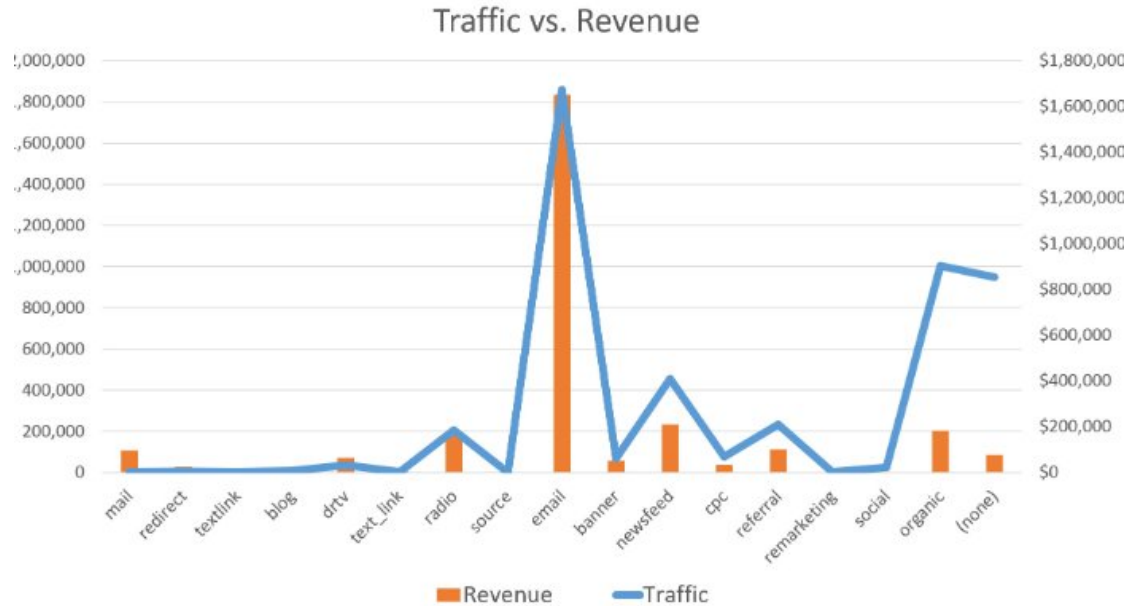
Why are we talking about
Email?

Shouldn't we be talking about...



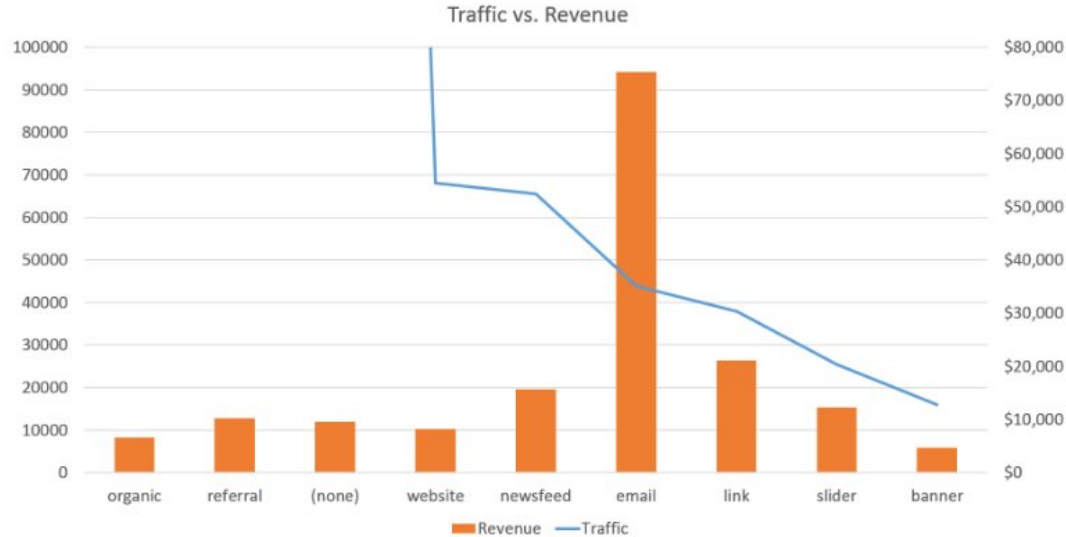
Web Traffic Sources – Email Ecommerce

Client 1 – Email represents 800,000 visitors and \$1.6 million



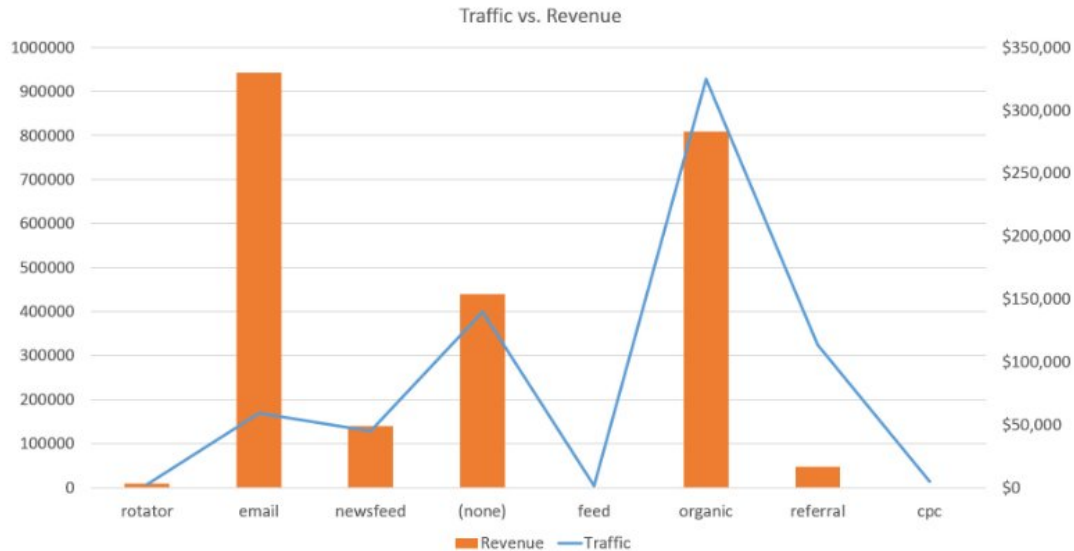
Web Traffic Sources – Email Ecommerce

Client 2 – Email represents 40,000 visitors and \$72,000



Web Traffic Sources – Email Ecommerce

Client 3 – Email represents 18,000 visitors and \$320,000



We are not going to talk about
“best practices”

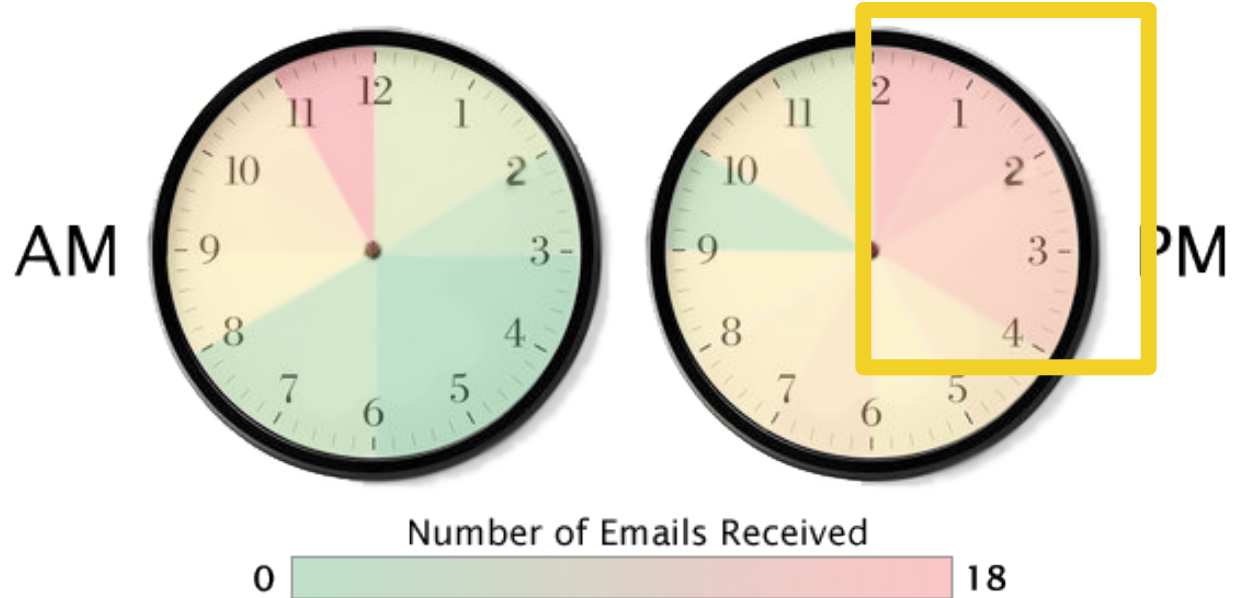
5 Ways to Cut Through the Clutter



We analyzed a lot of email

<input type="checkbox"/>			Dr. Ed Young, The Win. (3)	It's coming up - There's just two days left to request my 'Unmasking Evil' CD series. View this email online The Winr	10:06 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Bible Society Australia	Bible Society Australia Daily Bible - Performing the Prophets Day 5 - No Images? Click here Bible Society Australi	10:00 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Michael J. Nyenhuis, . (2)	Your support in action: Ecuador earthquake - Continuing our lifesaving work around the world thanks to your supp	9:44 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			FEBC	150,000 Need the Gospel in Cambodia - Here's what you may have missed in July... a global Christian missions or	8:37 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			TUA Tony Evans	Margret - Penetrate the Culture - Read this week's devotional from Tony Evans. Not rendering correctly? View th	8:36 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			TUA Tony Evans	Eddie - Penetrate the Culture - Read this week's devotional from Tony Evans. Not rendering correctly? View this	8:34 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Senate Conservatives (2)	Most Important Senate Candidate - He's the only non-incumbent, conservative who in position to win a Senate race	6:38 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			The Daily Signal (2)	What Bernie Sanders Supporters Said When Asked If They Were Socialists - July 27, 2016 We're keeping an ey	6:37 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			WNYC Morning Brief	Why Russia Wants Trump for U.S. President - WNYC Morning Brief ✱ Stand clear of the "hot cars." Sunny today	6:19 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Save the Children (2)	When a child's brain is 90% developed... - Kids love learning. Together we can keep that spark alive. View on wel	6:12 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Jack Graham, PowerPoint .	PowerPoint Ministries - View in a browser PowerPoint Today - Daily Devotional with Pastor Jack Graham CURREN	6:05 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Back to the Bible	Today's Program: Tear Down the Walls - Back to the Bible Today's Teaching on Back to the Bible Tear Down the W	6:03 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			FCA International	Are You Tough or Fluff? - Be inspired by what God is doing among the nations through FCA International. July 2016	6:01 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Covenant House	Covenant House - Daily Reflections - Covenant House Daily Reflections SHARE THIS > July 27, 2016 Failure is d	6:01 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Lead Like Jesus (3)	Online Devotional - Are You Blessed - Lead Like Jesus Online Devotional View this message on our website. Lead	6:01 am
<input type="checkbox"/>			Daily Hope with Rick . (2)	Embracing God's Best for Your Body - Embracing God's Best for Your Body CURRENT TEACHING SERIES Whe	5:44 am

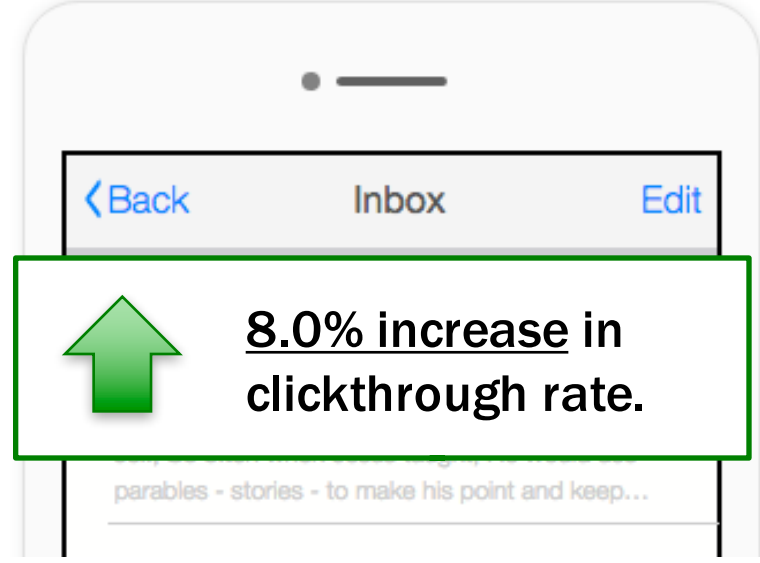
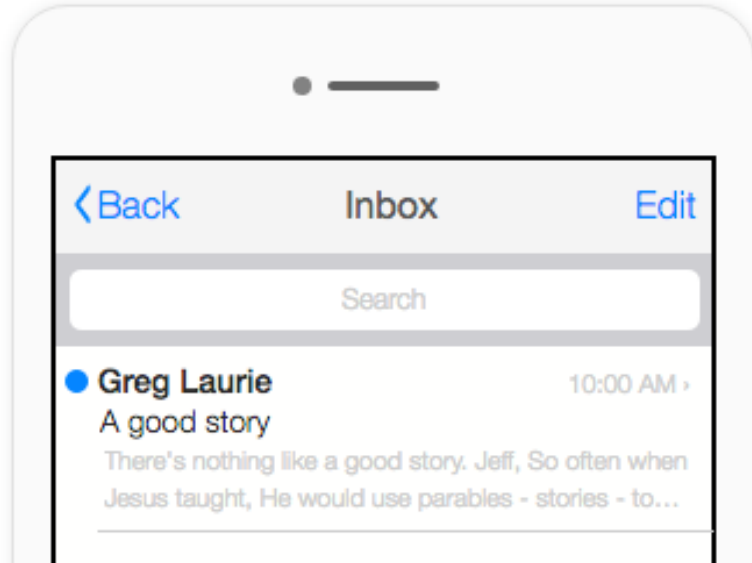
Everyone sends at the same time.



“Best practices”, when adopted universally,
quickly become ineffective.

*What does it mean for a strategy to be
proven?*

Proven strategies



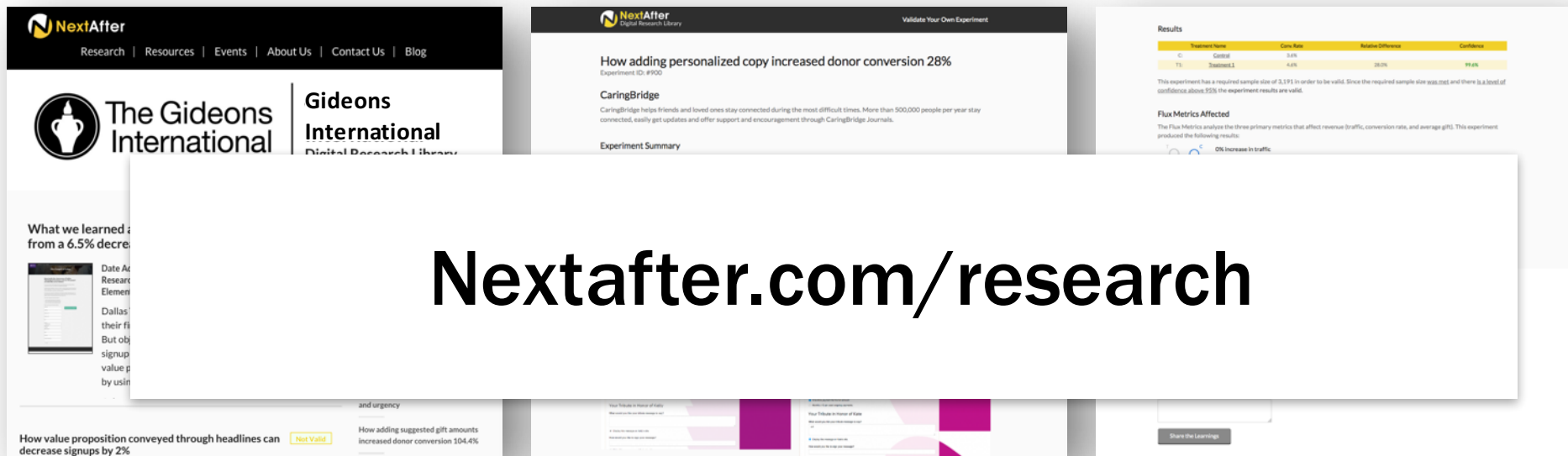
The Fundraiser's Creed

ARTICLE 3

We Believe testing trumps speculation and that clarity trumps persuasion. Fundraisers need to base their decisions on **honest data**, and donors need to base their decisions on **honest claims**.

NextAfter Research Library

More than 450 fundraising experiments with documented results.



The collage features several screenshots from the NextAfter Research Library website. The top left shows the site's navigation bar with links for Research, Resources, Events, About Us, Contact Us, and Blog. Below this is the logo for The Gideons International and a snippet of an experiment titled 'How adding personalized copy increased donor conversion 28%'. The top right shows a 'Results' section for an experiment, including a table with columns for Treatment Name, Conversion Rate, Relative Difference, and Confidence. The bottom left shows a snippet of an experiment titled 'How value proposition conveyed through headlines can decrease signups by 2%'. The bottom right shows a 'Share the Learnings' button.

NextAfter
Research | Resources | Events | About Us | Contact Us | Blog

The Gideons International
Digital Research Library

How adding personalized copy increased donor conversion 28%
Experiment ID: #1900
CaringBridge
CaringBridge helps friends and loved ones stay connected during the most difficult times. More than 500,000 people per year stay connected, easily get updates and offer support and encouragement through CaringBridge Journals.
Experiment Summary

Results

Treatment Name	Conv. Rate	Relative Difference	Confidence
C Control	0.4%		
T1 Treatment 1	0.4%	20.0%	99.4%

This experiment has a required sample size of 2,591 in order to be valid. Since the required sample size was met and there is a level of confidence above 95% the experiment results are valid.

Flux Metrics Affected
The Flux Metrics analysis the three primary metrics that affect revenue (traffic, conversion rate, and average gift). This experiment produced the following results:
0% Increase in traffic

What we learned
from a 6.5% decrease in signups

How value proposition conveyed through headlines can decrease signups by 2% Not Valid

How adding suggested gift amounts increased donor conversion 104.4%

Share the Learnings

Nextafter.com/research



Review: elements of a fundraising email appeal

Element #1: Sender

From: "Big Brothers Big Sisters" <donotreply@bbbs.org>

Date: July 19, 2019 at 4:55:09 PM CDT

To: "Jeff Giddens" <jeff@nextafter.com>

Subject: **Big Impacts: A Bond Nearly Three Decades Strong**

Reply-To: <donotreply@bbbs.org>

Element #2: Reply Email

From: "Big Brothers Big Sisters" <donotreply@bbbs.org>

Date: July 15, 2015 at 4:53:09 PM CDT

To: "Jeff Giddens" <jeff@nextafter.com>

Subject: Big Impacts: A Bond Nearly Three Decades Strong

Reply-To: <donotreply@bbbs.org>

Element #3: Send Time

From: "Big Brothers Big Sisters" <donotreply@bbbs.org>

Date: July 15, 2015 at 4:53:09 PM CDT

To: "Jen Giddens" <jen@nextafter.com>

Subject: **Big Impacts: A Bond Nearly Three Decades Strong**

Reply-To: <donotreply@bbbs.org>

Element #4: Subject line

From: "Big Brothers Big Sisters" <donotreply@bbbs.org>

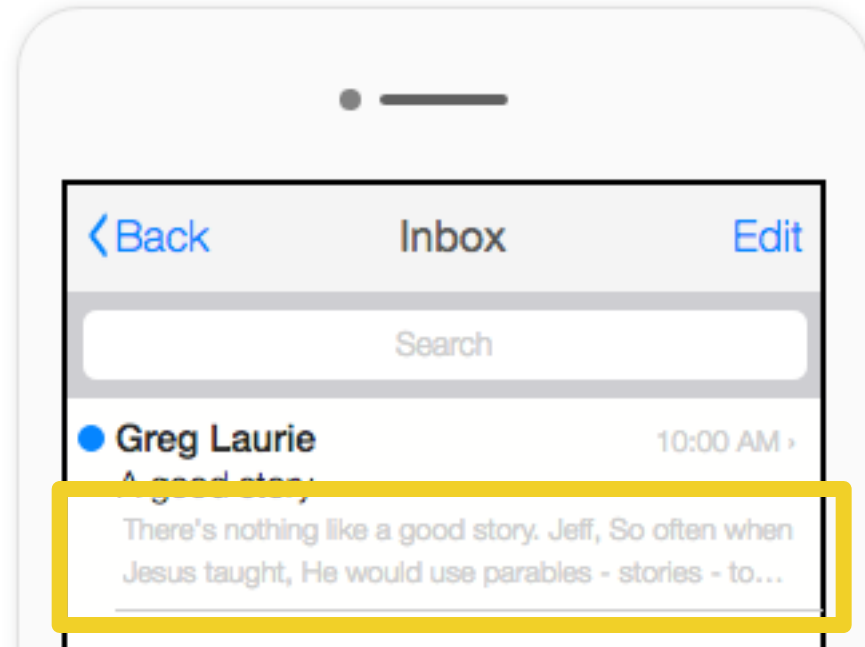
Date: July 15, 2015 at 4:53:09 PM CDT



To: "Jeff Ciddens" <jeff@nextafter.com>

Subject: Big Impacts: A Bond Nearly Three Decades Strong

Reply-to: <donotreply@bbbs.org>

Element #5: Preview Text



BRING HEARTS TOGETHER

Hello NAME,

I want you to meet Graham. This adorable little boy was diagnosed with retinoblastoma, a rare eye cancer, when he was just six months old.

His family embarked on a trial of strength through nearly three years of treatment. CaringBridge helped get them through.

Double Your Impact


You can help families like Graham's get through their most challenging journeys, too. When you donate by midnight March 16, our generous Advisory Council member will **double** your gift. **Rik** will match your donation, up to the \$15,000, and **Donor Join Rik** will make a gift to **double the love and support that families like Graham's need.**

"Graham has had so much happen in his short life," his mom, Erica, says. "Because of the support we've received, we have the strength to be there for him."

Now's the time for you to give double the strength for families going through a scary time. **Donate today and Rik will personally match your donation, up to \$15,000.**


Yes! Match My Donation Now!

In health,



Sona Mehring
CaringBridge Founder & Chief Ambassador

P.S. There's no time like the present. **Please donate now to double the strength you can offer families like Graham's during the \$15,000 match opportunity.**



Our mission is to amplify the love, hope & compassion in the world, making each health journey easier.

Hello First name

I am blown away. I knew CaringBridge supporters were loyal, but when I offered up my first match donation, I did not anticipate the outpouring of generosity that followed. CaringBridge is such a beloved organization.

I'm so committed to CaringBridge and inspired by all the donors who stepped up to join me that I decided to offer up another match. [If you donate between now and midnight March 31, I will double your gift, up to \\$10,000.](#)

I know that kindness is contagious firsthand—I have watched CaringBridge grow from its inception, and I have had three CaringBridge websites myself. In fact, I just recently re-read my guestbook from years ago—what a loving walk down Memory Lane.

If you join me in this match, together we'll provide double the love, strength and support families need during a health journey. That means double the ability to keep CaringBridge a safe, protected and ad-free space to let families focus on what they need most: connection and healing.

Together, we are stronger. Your donation is vital to bringing hearts together.


Yes! Double My Donation!

Yours in strength,

Q. H. L. L.

Rik Lalim
CaringBridge Advisory Council member & donor

P.S. Join me in donating to CaringBridge during today's match opportunity. [Donate now!](#)







Having problems? [Join us on Facebook](#)

What are your summer plans?

Go with Jewish Voice to Africa and help put a smile on his face.

GO WITH US

© Jewish Voice for Africa Canada

P.O. Box 25111 | London, Ont. M6 2G9 (CA)
 Tel: 416-491-4444 | [Canada](#)
[JewishVoice.ca](#)

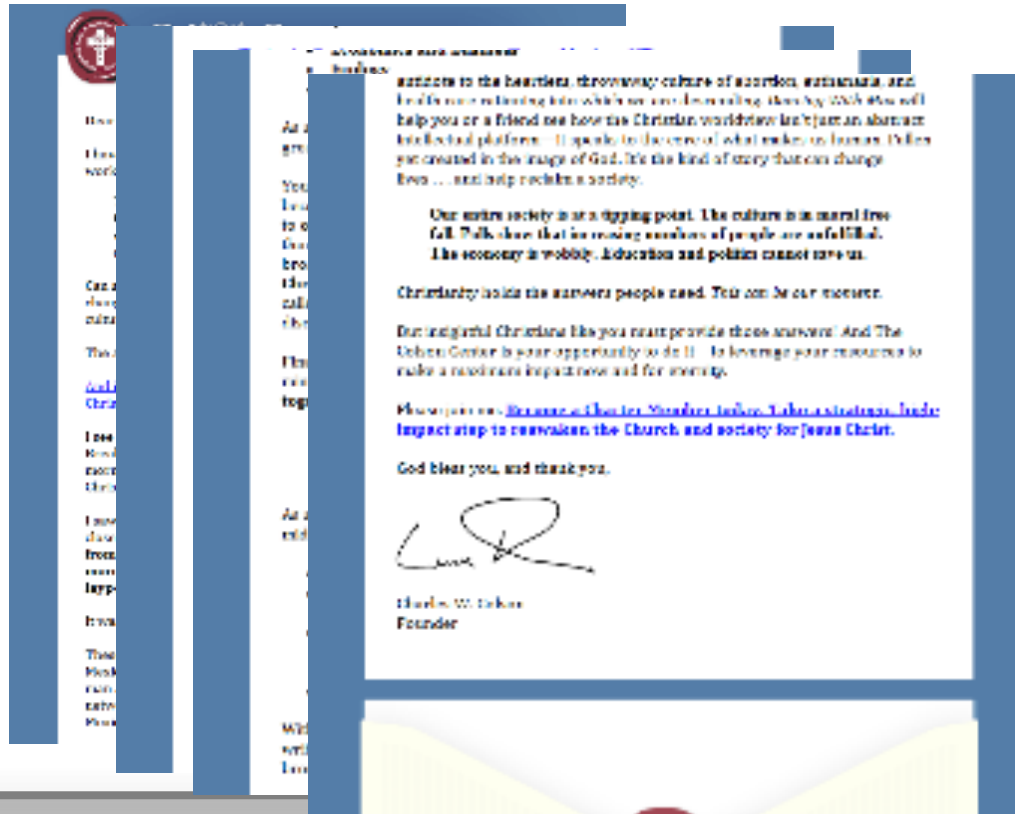
If you're eager to make a difference, please [contact us](#)




blackboard
adaptive software



Element #7: Copy





the Chuck Colson Center
FOR CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

Dear Friend,


Our society is in moral free fall . . . and politics can't save us.

But a reawakened, robust, reinvigorated Church can! Christians applying a bold biblical worldview to every area of life—from government to business to family and more—can save us. Because **that** is the kind of faith that has true spiritual power.

[If you are interested in fearlessly advancing that kind of Christianity, I invite you to join me and become a Charter Member of The Colson Center for Christian Worldview.](#) Your participation could be one of the greatest spiritual blessings you could give to our society and the Kingdom of Christ. I want you on my team.

Together, we can help revive the Church and spark a spiritual reformation of our whole culture. [Learn more about what your charter membership will help achieve.](#)

God bless you, and thank you,



Charles W. Colson
Founder

Element #8: Tone

With only a few days until the new Congress swears in, now is the time to make a bold statement by standing with The Heritage Foundation.

[Stand with The Heritage Foundation today >>](#)

When you stand with Heritage, lawmakers know exactly what you believe. It means you stand up for your principles . . . it means you do not back down in the face of adversity, or when you're in the minority . . . it means you are well-informed . . . it means you are not one to be swayed from your convictions.

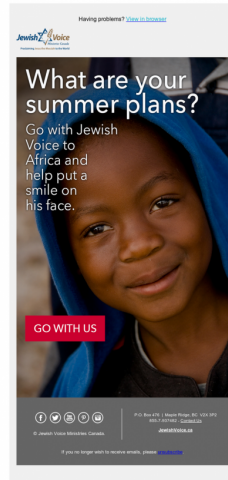
I wanted to check in to see if you'll be able to contribute towards Heritage's million dollar goal by the December 31 deadline.


Your gift will go straight to supporting your conservative principles in 2015. We're going to arm and equip the new Congress with the intellectual ammunition they need to win conservative victories. And we're going to work to move more and more Americans to our side.

[You can make your year-end contribution here.](#)

I hope you'll be able to stand with us by the end of the year. Thanks for your support, and have a very happy new year.

Element #9: Images






Teach Truth. Love Well.

Dear friend,

Today, I am delighted to extend my personal invitation for you to enroll in our brand-new free online course, [Genesis](#). This course is sure to broaden your understanding of the first book of the Bible and its implications for your life.


You'll be studying with Dr. James Allman, a beloved professor of Old Testament Studies at DTS. Dr. Allman has served at DTS for almost 30 years, training thousands of pastors and church leaders. Now you can learn from his thoughtful instruction on the [Book of Genesis](#).



Genesis
A free online course
from Dallas Theological Seminary

[Activate your free course now.](#)

Blessings,



Dr. Mark Bailey
President
Dallas Theological Seminary

Element #10: Call-to-action

[Read More](#)

Donate to Treat Every Patient

Give Now

our mission to rescue children and serve families. You can help us keep our mission moving forward by [making a donation of \\$265](#) to help rescue

Donate Now



DONATE



“I need your help.”

Who is sending your emails?

91%

of the email appeals we received this morning were sent from the founder, president, or figurehead of the organization.



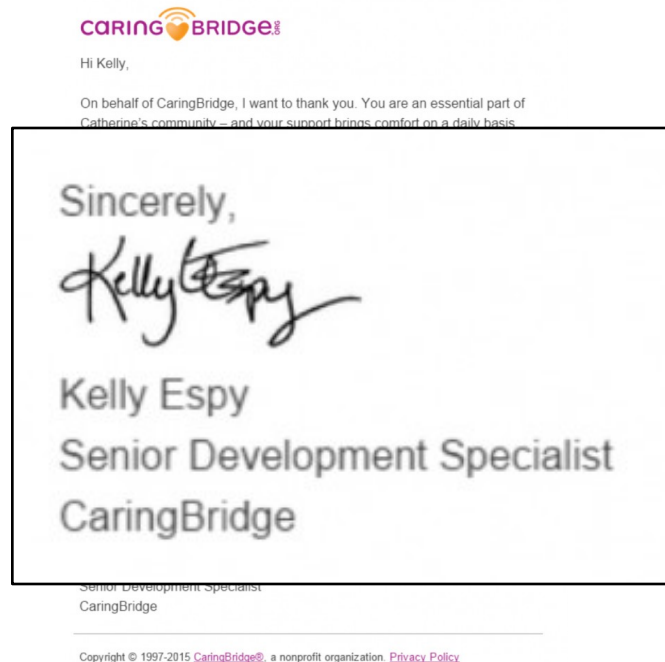
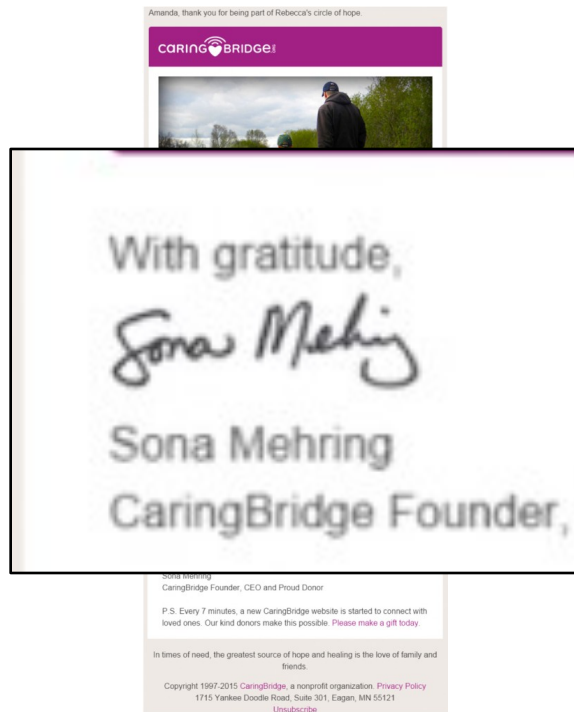
Strategy #1:
Test a different sender.



How a more personal email affects performance metrics

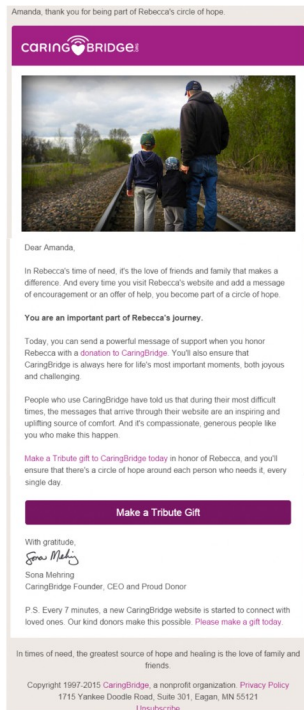
Experiment ID: #3334

How a more personal email affects performance metrics



How a more personal email affects performance metrics

Control



- Heavily designed email
- Sent from the founder
- Makes calls to action with large buttons

How a more personal email affects performance metrics

Treatment



Hi Kelly,

On behalf of CaringBridge, I want to thank you. You are an essential part of Catherine's community – and your support brings comfort on a daily basis.

CaringBridge is a powerful resource. Every 7 minutes, a new CaringBridge website is started. **And we're happy to offer this safe, protected service free of charge as a nonprofit organization.**

That's why I'd like to give you the opportunity to [honor Catherine with a gift to CaringBridge today](#).

Each CaringBridge website, including Catherine's, is powered by donations from people like you who understand the importance of community during life's most challenging times.

Your gift to CaringBridge on behalf of Catherine ensures that the website that delivers so much hope, healing and comfort stays up and running as long as needed.

[Make my gift to CaringBridge in honor of Catherine](#)

Sincerely,

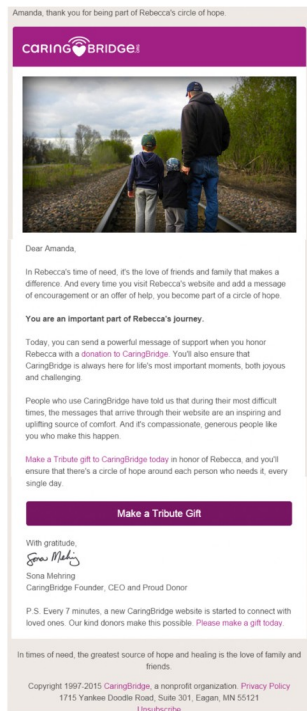
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Espy".

Kelly Espy
Senior Development Specialist
CaringBridge

Copyright © 1997-2015 [CaringBridge®](#), a nonprofit organization [Privacy Policy](#)

- Designed to mimic “Outlook” emails
- Sent from a member of the development team
- No “designed” elements except logo and signature

How a more personal email affects performance metrics



Hi Kelly,

On behalf of CaringBridge, I want to thank you. You are an essential part of Catherine's community – and your support brings comfort on a daily basis.

CaringBridge is a powerful resource. Every 7 minutes, a new CaringBridge website is started. **And we're happy to offer this safe, protected service free of charge as a nonprofit organization.**



6.3% increase in
open rate.

[Make my gift to CaringBridge in honor of Catherine.](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kelly Espy".

Kelly Espy
Senior Development Specialist
CaringBridge

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How a more personal email affects performance metrics



6.3% increase in open rate

Version	Open Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	49.6%		
Treatment	52.7%	6.3%	100.0%

Key Learning:

- ✓ A different sender and subject line (from someone they had previously not heard from) was able to successfully increase open rate.

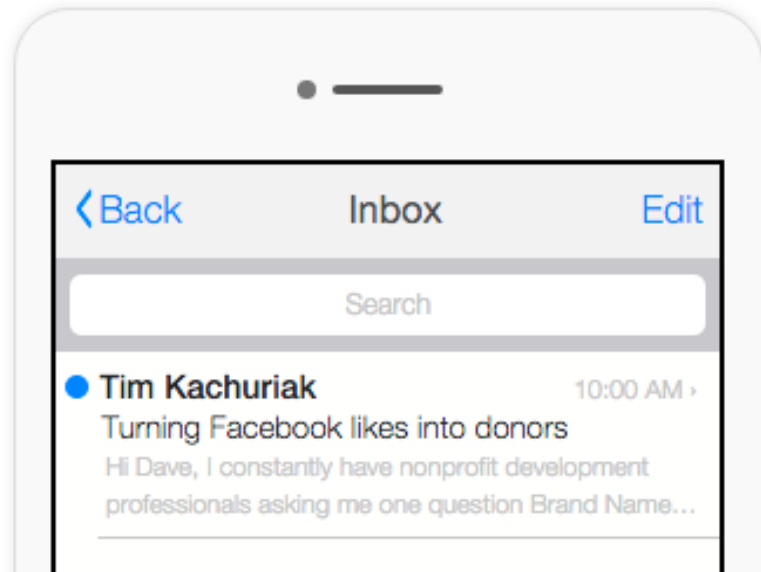


How a brand in the sender field affects email open and clickthrough rate

Experiment ID: #3334

How brand addition affects open and clickthrough rate

Control

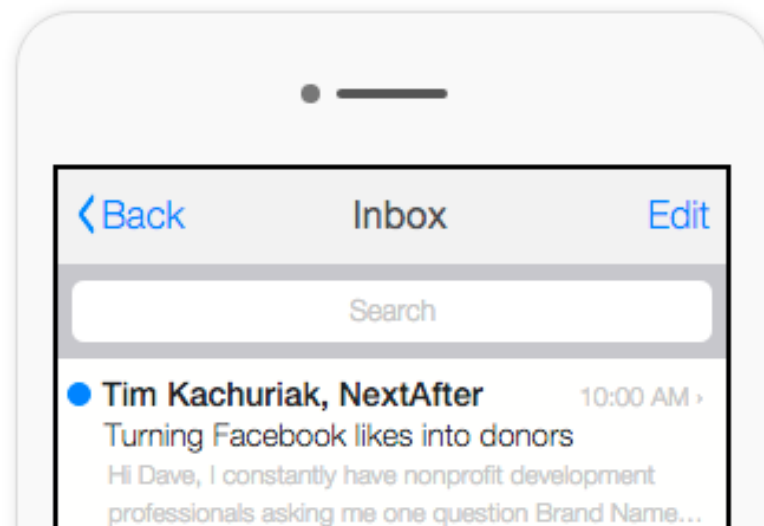


- Sender is an person
- Sent to a borrowed email list
- Low perceived familiarity

How brand addition affects open and clickthrough rate

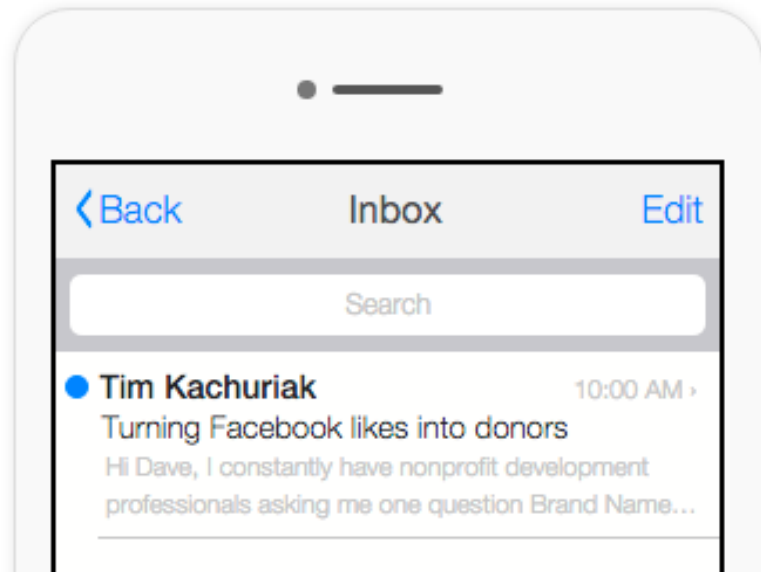
- Added brand name in to increase potential familiarity
- Gives “anchoring” to the email when sender might be unknown

Treatment



How brand addition affects open and clickthrough rate

Treatment



**10.1% decrease in
open rate.**



**20.7% decrease in
clickthrough rate.**

professionals asking me one question Brand Name...

How brand addition affects open and clickthrough rate



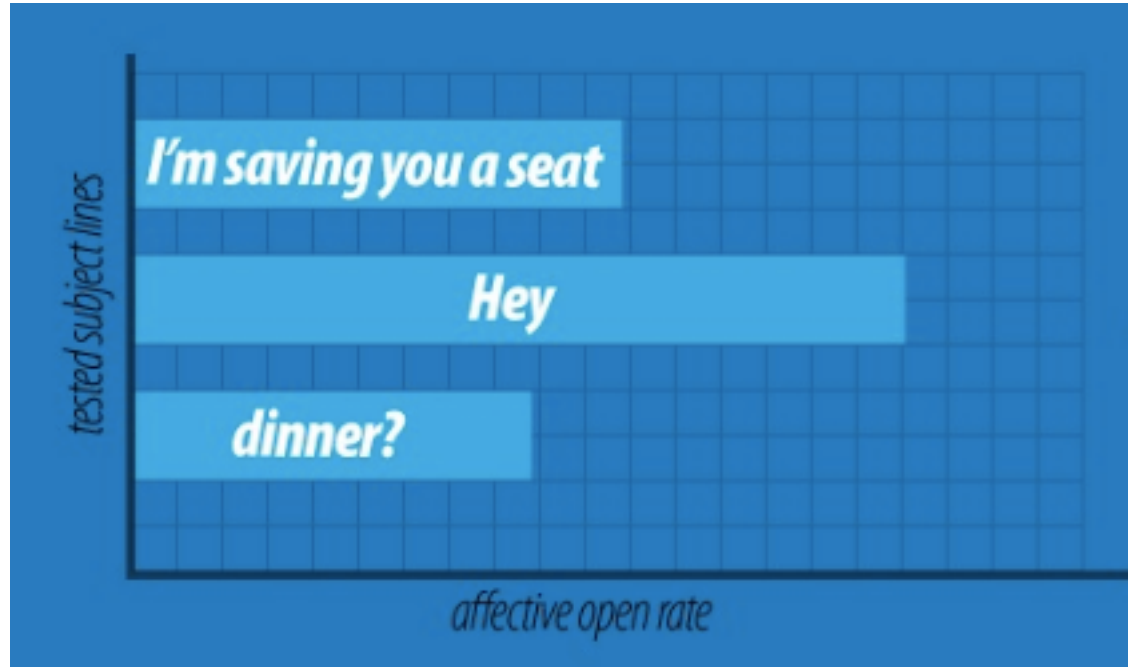
20.7% decrease in clickthrough rate

Version	CTR	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	1.3%		
Treatment	0.9%	-20.7%	96.2%

Key Learning:

✓ Sometimes, in the quest to increased perceived familiarity, we can actually decrease the personal feel of an email and inadvertently remind our reader that they don't know us.

2012 Obama Campaign



Subject Line / CTA Agreement

51%

of the email appeals
we received this
morning had subject
line & CTA agreement.



Strategy #2: Measure every metric, even when just testing subject lines.

Subject Line / CTA Agreement

Supporter Match Status: Active

Dear Friend,

Time is running out. There are only five days left before our 2016 Match Challenge ends. Can we count on you to double your impact to help families in their fight against hunger and poverty around the world?

We're getting close to our \$1.5 million goal, but we won't get there before the July 31 deadline without your help.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

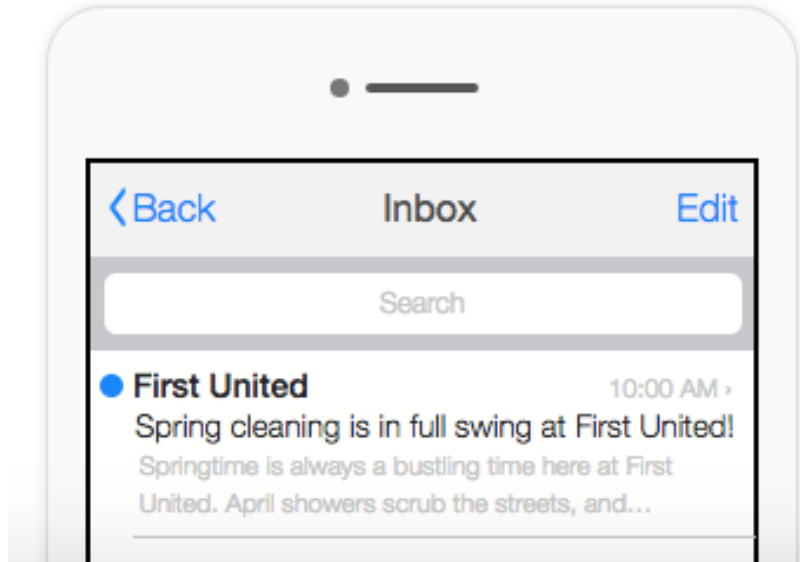


How subject line clarity affects email clickthrough rate

Experiment ID: #4057

How subject line clarity affects clickthrough rate

Control

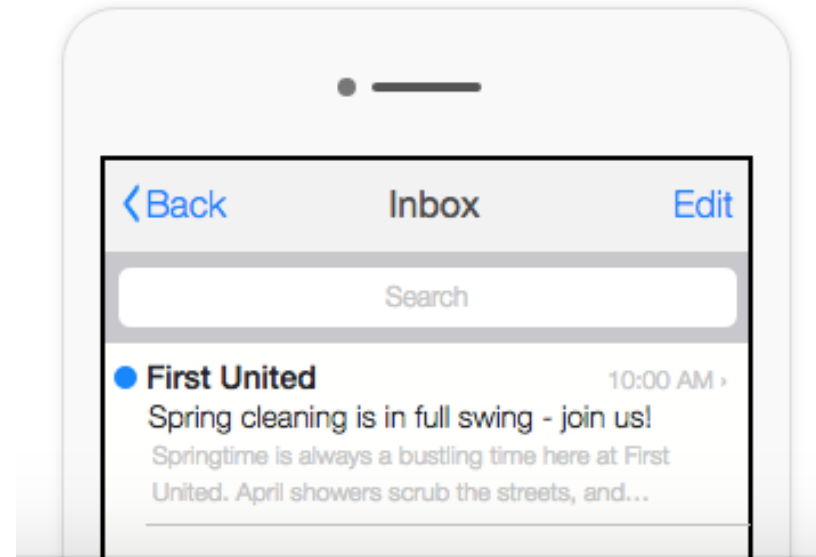


- **Sender is an organization**
- **Subject line is informative, cheery**
- **Low incentive to click.**

How subject line clarity affects clickthrough rate

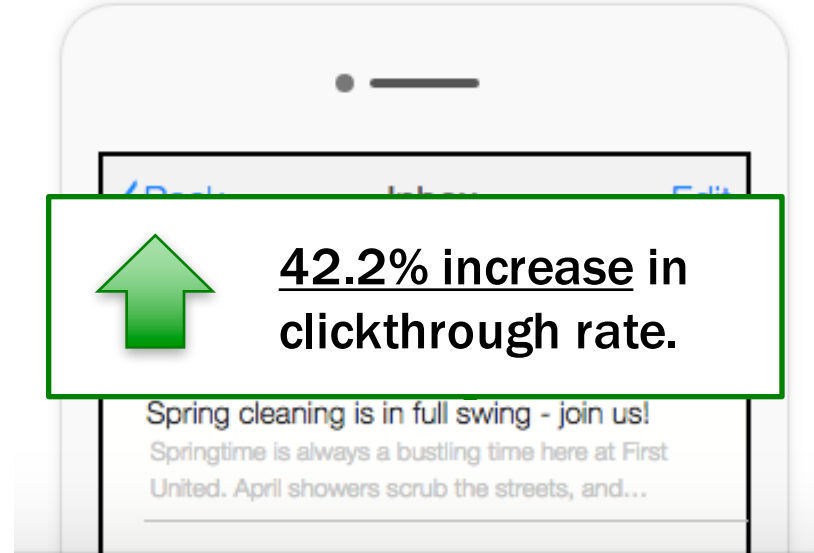
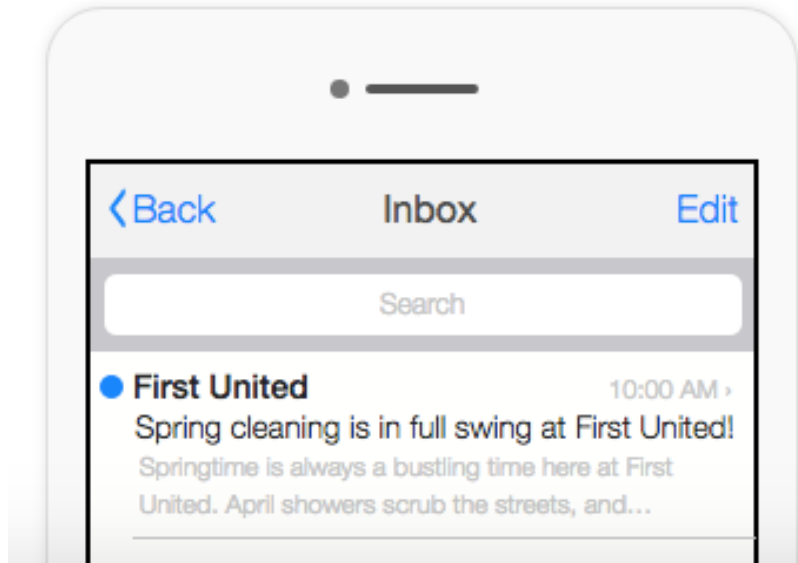
- Subject line includes a call to action.
- What does “join us” mean?
- How can I “join”?

Treatment



How subject line clarity affects clickthrough rate

Treatment



How subject line clarity affects clickthrough rate



42.2% increase in clickthrough rate

Version	CTR	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	6.1%		
Treatment	8.7%	42.2%	98.8%

Key Learning:

- ✓ Subject lines don't live in a vacuum. Agreement between the subject line and the call-to-action can have a significant impact on the likelihood that the recipient will take the intended action.

Do your donors know you are talking to them?

87%

of the email appeals
we received this
morning had no first
name personalization.



Strategy #3: Test personalization of your emails

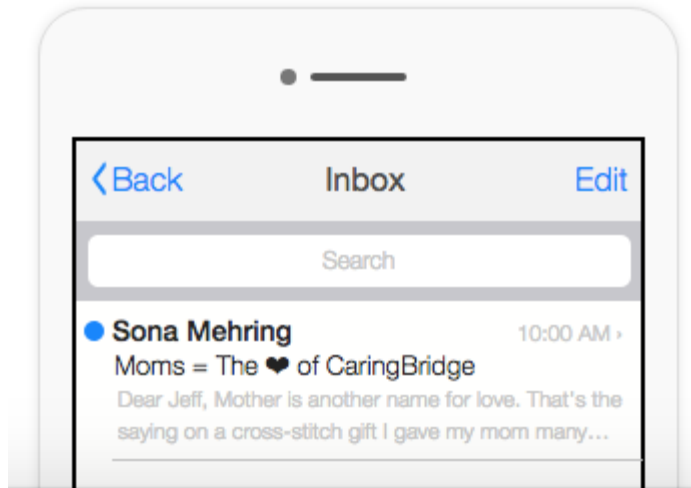


How subject line personalization affects open rate

Experiment #4307

How subject line personalization affects open rate

Control

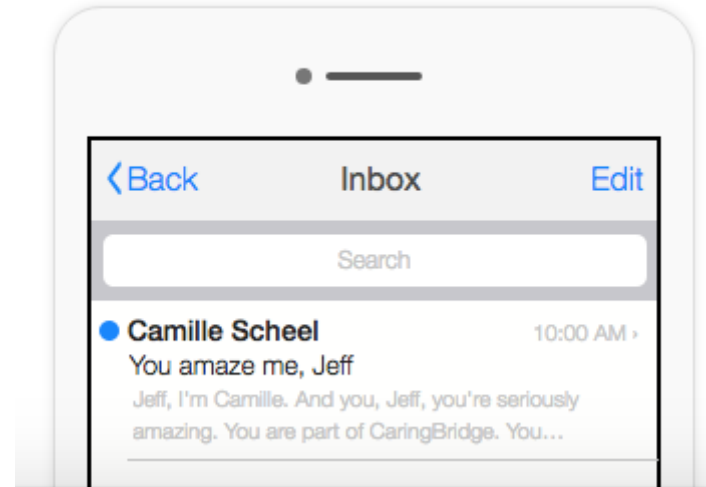


- Sender is relatively well-known to audience
- Highly relevant subject line (near Mother's Day) with emoji

How subject line personalization affects open rate

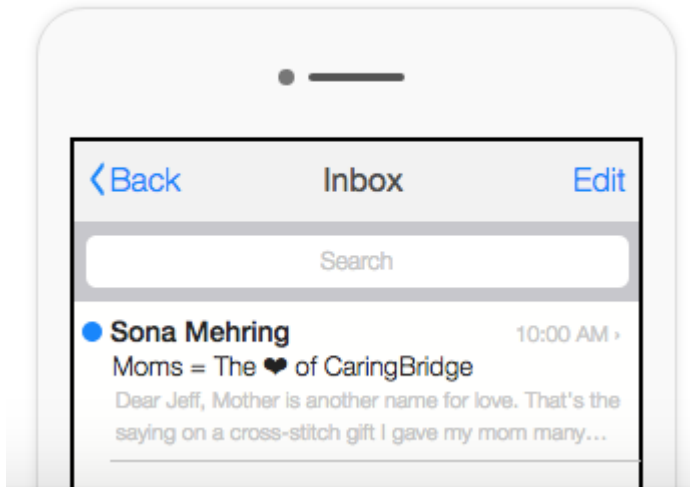
- Sender is unknown to audience
- Subject line employs personalization to overcome lack of name recognition
- Preview text also includes personalization

Treatment

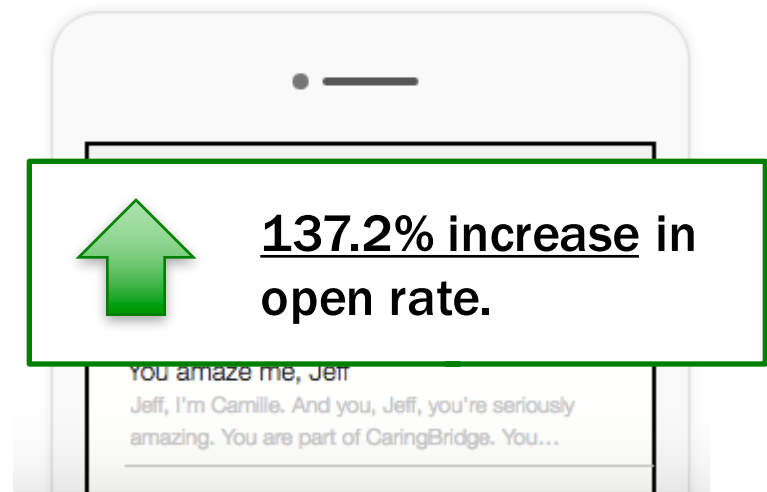


How subject line personalization affects open rate

Control



Treatment



How subject line personalization affects open rate



137.2% increase in open rate

Version	Open Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	7.6 %		
Treatment	18.1%	137.2%	100.0%

Key Learning:



We tend to think that our senders need to be consistent and our subject lines need to use “marketing” language. But people may be more likely to engage if they believe our email came from a person.

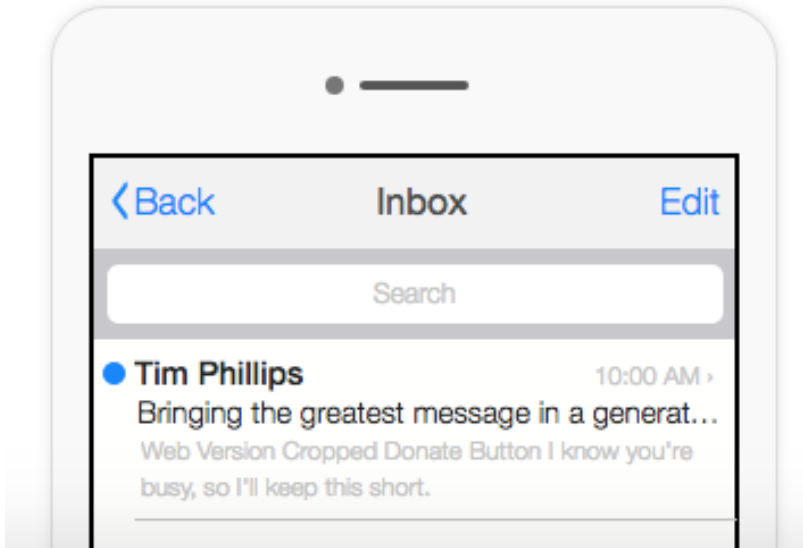


How subject line tone affects email open rate

Experiment #4116

How personal tone affects open rate

Control

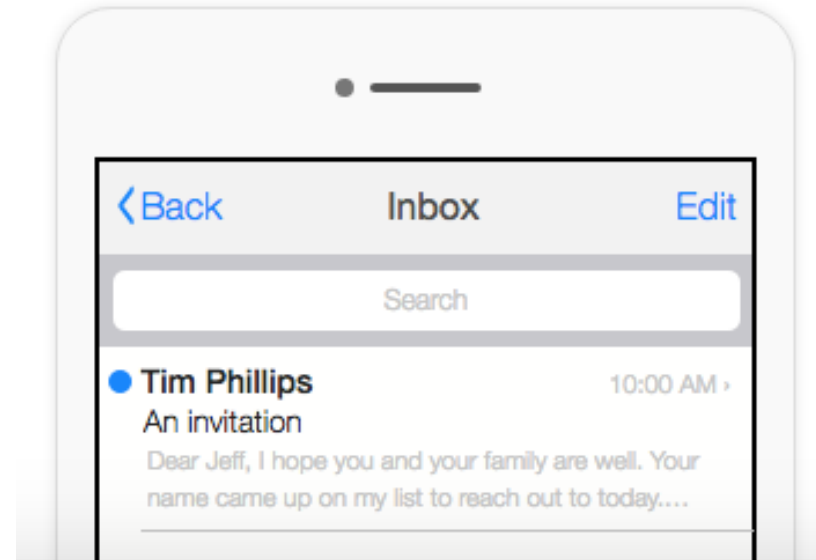


- Sender is a person, not an organization
- Subject line is unclear and cut off
- Alt text for images and web version is inserted into preview text

How personal tone affects open rate

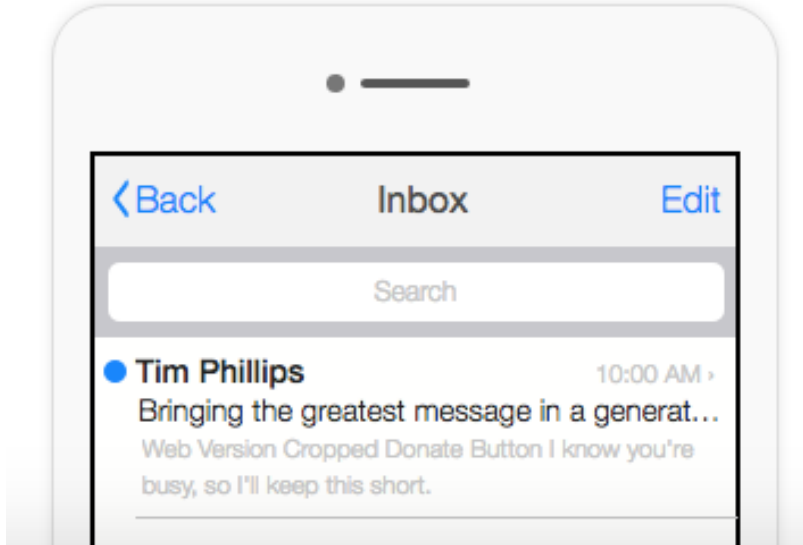
- Subject line is personal, heightens interest
- Preview text shows personalization

Treatment

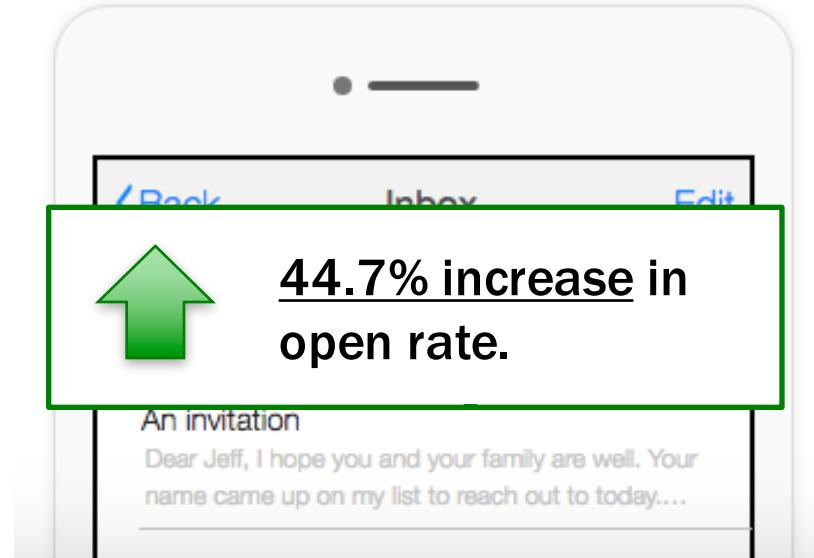


How personal tone affects open rate

Control



Treatment



How personal tone affects open rate



44.7% increase in open rate

Version	Open Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	10.2%		
Treatment	14.8%	44.7%	100.0%

Key Learning:

✓ We believe that people give to people...but they also open emails from people as well. Our communications must be transformed so that the recipient believes it comes from a person.

Are you asking for their name?

Stay Informed

Sign up to receive breaking news, preparedness tips
and ways to get involved.

Email Address

Your Email (Required)

First Name

Last Name

First Name

Last Name

Sign Up Today



Strategy #4: Test *copy length* and its effect on conversion.

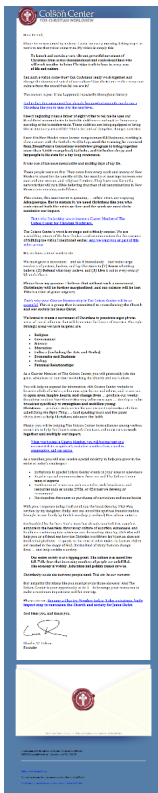


How longform email copy affects clickthrough rate and donation conversion rate

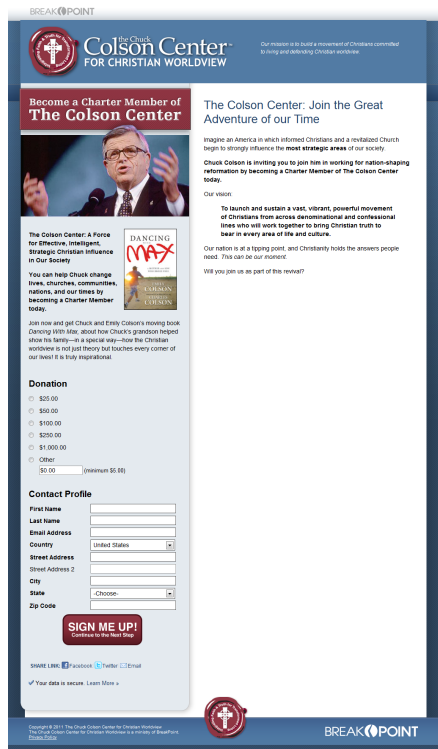
Experiment ID: #2555

Email Copy Length

Control



Control



Background:

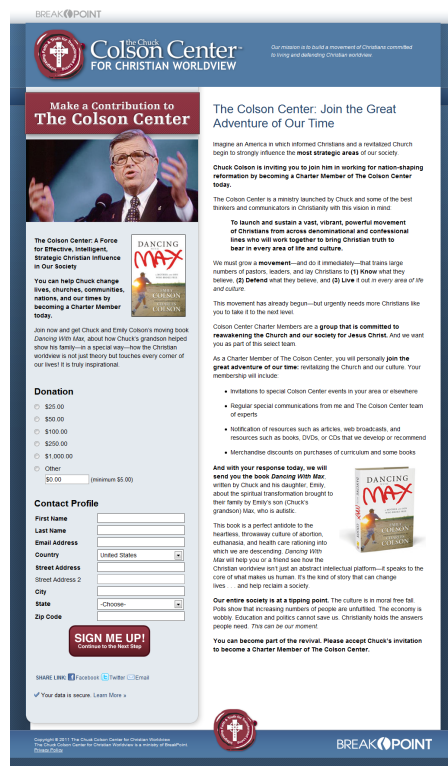
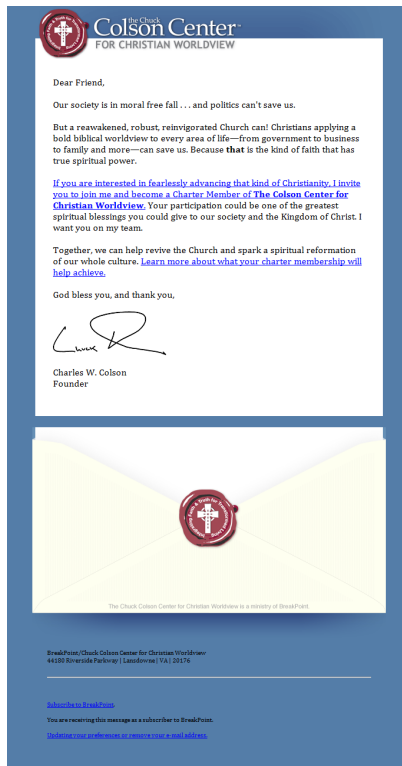
- Research Partner: Colson Center
- Longform Email
- Shortform Landing Page
- The ask is made in the Email

Email Copy Length

Tested Elements:

- Shortform Email copy
- Longform Landing Page copy
- The ask is made on the Landing Page

Treatment



Email Copy Length

Control

Colson Center
FOR CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

Our mission is to build a movement of Christians committed to living and defending Christian worldview.

Imagine an America in which informed Christians and a revitalized Church begin to strongly influence the most strategic areas of our society.

Chuck Colson is inviting you to join him in working for nation-shaping information by becoming a Charter Member of The Colson Center today.

Our vision:

To launch and sustain a vast, vibrant, powerful movement of Christians from across denominational and confessional lines who will work together to bring Christian truth to bear in every area of life and culture.

The Colson Center: A Force for Effective, Intelligent, Strategic Christian Influence in Our Society

You can help Chuck change laws, churches, communities, nations, and our times by becoming a Charter Member today.

Join now and get Chuck and Emily Colson's moving book *Dancing With Max*, about how Chuck's grandson helped show the family—in a special way—how the Christian worldview is not just theory but touches every corner of our lives! It is truly inspirational.

Donation

☐ \$50.00
☐ \$100.00
☐ \$150.00
☐ \$200.00
☐ \$1,000.00
☐ Other: (minimum \$5.00)

Contact Profile

First Name:
Last Name:
Email Address:
Country:
Street Address:
Street Address 2:
City:
State:
Zip Code:

SIGN ME UP!
Continue to the next step

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☐ \$100.00
☐ \$150.00
☐ \$200.00
☐ \$1,000.00
☐ Other: (minimum \$5.00)

Contact Profile

First Name:
Last Name:
Email Address:
Country:
Street Address:
Street Address 2:
City:
State:
Zip Code:

SIGN ME UP!
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Treatment

Colson Center
FOR CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

Our mission is to build a movement of Christians committed to living and defending Christian worldview.

Dear Friend,

Our society is in moral free fall... and politics can't save us.

But a reawakened, robust, reinvigorated Church can! Christians applying a bold biblical worldview to every area of life—from government to business to family and more—can save us. Because that is the kind of faith that has true spiritual power.

If you are interested in fearlessly advancing that kind of Christianity, I invite you to join me and become a Charter Member of The Colson Center for Christian Worldview. Your participation could be one of the greatest spiritual blessings you could give to our society and the Kingdom of Christ. I want you on my team.

Together, we can help revive the Church and spark a spiritual reformation of our whole culture. [Learn more about what your charter membership will help achieve.](#)

God bless you, and thank you,

Charles Colson

1,209% increase in click through rate

BreakPoint/Chuck Colson Center for Christian Worldview
44130 Riverside Parkway | Leesburg, VA 20176

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Colson Center
FOR CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

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We must grow a movement—and do it immediately—that trains large numbers of pastors, leaders, and lay Christians to (1) know what they believe, (2) defend what they believe, and (3) live it out in every area of life and culture.

This movement has already begun—but urgently needs more Christians like you to take it to the next level.

The Colson Center is a ministry launched by Chuck and some of the best thinkers and communicators in Christianity with this vision in mind.

You can help Chuck change laws, churches, communities, nations, and our times by becoming a Charter Member today.

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☐ \$100.00
☐ \$150.00
☐ \$200.00
☐ \$1,000.00
☐ Other: (minimum \$5.00)

Contact Profile

First Name:
Last Name:
Email Address:
Country:
Street Address:
Street Address 2:
City:
State:
Zip Code:

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Email Copy Length



1,209% increase in email clickthrough

Version	CTR	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
C: Longform Email	0.99%		
T1: Shortform Email	13.0%	1,209.2%	100%

Key Learning:



By using shorter copy in the email, we reduced friction in the treatment which led to an increase in clickthrough of 1,209%

Email Copy Length

Control

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☐ \$100.00
☐ \$500.00
☐ \$1000.00
☐ \$2500.00
☐ \$1,0000.00
☐ Other (minimum \$5.00)

Contact Profile

First Name
Last Name
Email Address
Country
Street Address
Street Address 2
City
State
Zip Code

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☐ Other (minimum \$5.00)

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Treatment

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30.3% Decrease in Donations

Colson Center
FOR CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

BreakPoint/Chuck Colson Center for Christian Worldview
44100 Riverside Parkway | Landover, VA 20785

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Colson Center
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Donation

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☐ \$100.00
☐ \$500.00
☐ \$1000.00
☐ \$2500.00
☐ \$1,0000.00
☐ Other (minimum \$5.00)

Contact Profile

First Name
Last Name
Email Address
Country
Street Address
Street Address 2
City
State
Zip Code

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Email Copy Length



30.3% decrease in donations

Version	Donation Conversion	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
C: Longform Email	0.92%		
T1: Shortform Email	0.64%	-30.3%	100%

Key Learning:



By using shorter copy in the email, we increased clickthrough by 117%, but decreased donations by 30.3%.

Including images in emails

96%

of the email appeals
we received this
morning had an image
in the email.



**Strategy #5: Test
images. *Do they really
help?***



How urgency affects conversion and average gift

Experiment #412

Countdown Clock vs. Plain Email

Control

Dear << Test Salutation >>,

I wanted to send you a quick reminder to make your online gift to Dallas Theological Seminary today. Your gift is an investment that will produce a return greater than any worldly investment you could make.

Generous donors have already helped DTS meet the Challenge Gift of \$450,000, but it's not too late to make your gift! *Every penny counts* to help DTS equip servant-leaders to boldly proclaim the Good News of Jesus.

Before you help ring in the new year, help lay the groundwork to advance God's kingdom in 2015.

Make your year-end gift now.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Bailey, PhD
President
Dallas Theological Seminary

You are receiving this email because you donated to DTS and opted to receive emails.
[unsubscribe](#)

Background:

- Client: Dallas Theological Seminary
 - Last two emails in the CYE campaign
- Email has a direct call to action to make a gift



Countdown Clock vs. Plain Email

Tested Elements:

- Identical copy within the email
- Added an animated gif that counted down to Dec. 31st

Treatment

Dear << Test Salutation >>,

I wanted to send you a quick reminder to make your online gift to Dallas Theological Seminary today. Your gift is an investment that will produce a return greater than any worldly investment you could make.

DEADLINE: MIDNIGHT 12/31/2014

0	4	2	3	2	8	3	3
DAYS		HOURS		MINS		SECS	

Generous donors have already helped DTS meet the Challenge Gift of \$450,000, but it's not too late to make your gift! *Every penny counts* to help DTS equip servant-leaders to boldly proclaim the Good News of Jesus.

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Sincerely,

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President
Dallas Theological Seminary

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[unsubscribe](#)

Countdown Clock vs. Plain Email

Control

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Mark L. Bailey, PhD
President
Dallas Theological Seminary

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[unsubscribe](#)

Treatment

Dear << Test Salutation >>,

DEADLINE: MIDNIGHT 12/31/2014

04	23	28	33
DAYS	HOURS	MINS	SECS

I wanted to send you a quick reminder to make your online gift to Dallas Theological Seminary today. Your gift is an investment that will produce a return greater than any worldly investment you could make.

Generous donors have already helped DTS meet the Challenge Gift of \$450,000, but it's not too late to make your gift! *Every penny counts* to help DTS equip servant-leaders to

Before you
kingdom in

Make your

Sincerely,

Mark L. Bailey, PhD
President
Dallas Theological Seminary

You are receiving this email because you donated to DTS and opted to receive emails.
[unsubscribe](#)



51.1% increase
in response rate

Countdown Clock vs. Plain Email



51.1% increase in response rate

Version	Resp. Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
C: Plain Email	0.2%		
T1: Countdown Clock	0.3%	51.1%	95.6%

Key Learning:



The countdown clock in the email increased response rate by 51.1% and average gift by 106.6%. The added urgency has the ability to affect both a donors willingness to give and the amount they give.



How the placement of an image and call-to-action affects clickthrough rate

Experiment #2822

How placement of an image affects clickthrough rate

Control



When Lucy was five, I was carrying her down the stairs "the fun

Support God's Work »



When you give today, we'll send you a tool to help you plant spiritual seeds in a child's life: *The Biggest Story*, a beautiful children's storybook that shares the gospel in a captivating way. **Let's fill our kids' minds and hearts with God's love!**



Captivating way. Let's fill our kids' minds and hearts with God's love!

- Premium-focused appeal
- Image of the book is placed *after* the call to action

How placement of an image affects clickthrough rate

- Image of book is moved before the call-to-action to properly order the incentive and the CTA

Treatment



When Lucy was five, I was carrying her down the stairs "the fun way," meaning my steps were exaggerated to shake her up and down. She always loved that, of course.

order and receive it by Christmas!



We'd love to send you *The Biggest Story* for your child, grandchild, or loved one to put under the tree at Christmas. But time is running out for us to be able to ship it to you by December 25! All gifts must be made soon to ensure delivery by Christmas Eve.

Let's fill our kids' minds and hearts with God's love!

Support God's Work »

Support God's Work »

How placement of an image affects clickthrough rate

Control



When Lucy was five, I was carrying her down the stairs "the fun way," meaning my steps were exaggerated to shake her up and down. She always loved that, of course.

When we got to the bottom she asked me a question: "Papa, will there be stairs in heaven?"
"Well," I said, "I don't know. Why do you ask?"
"Because," she replied, "I want you to carry me down the steps of heaven the fun way."

Her question revealed something important: seeds had been planted in her life. Already at age five she knew that there is a connection between the feeling of joy and the reality of heaven.

Listen, a well-placed truth can last a lifetime.

At Harvest, we're in the business of planting seeds of truth, watering those seeds, and harvesting changed lives for God's glory.

Please stand with us in this work during these final days of the year.

Support God's Work >



When you give today, we'll send you a tool to help you plant spiritual seeds in a child's life: *The Biggest Story*, a beautiful children's storybook that shares the gospel in a captivating way. Let's fill our kids' minds and hearts with God's love!



When Lucy was five, I was carrying her down the stairs "the fun way," meaning my steps were exaggerated to shake her up and down. She always loved that, of course.



**87.7% increase in
clickthrough rate.**

glory. Support the ministry of Harvest today and we'll send you a tool to help you plant spiritual seeds in a child's life: *The*



**89.4% increase
in donor conversion**

Let's fill our kids' minds and hearts with God's love!

Support God's Work >

How placement of an image affects clickthrough rate



87.7% increase in clickthrough rate

Version	CTR	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	3.5%		
Treatment	6.6%	87.7%	100.0%

Key Learning:

✓ Email templates may reinforce the brand and increase the authority of an email, but they also tip our hand to the recipient that our email is “marketing”. Thus, fewer people to take the intended action and click.

Email design: does it help?

98%

of the email appeals
we received this
morning were in some
sort of designed
template



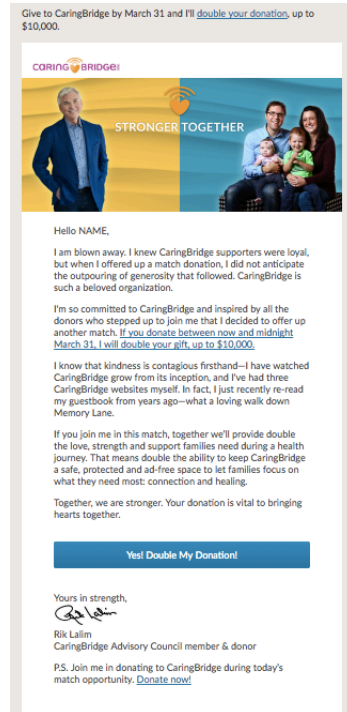
**Strategy #6: Test your
template. Is it helping or
hurting?**



How the design of a fundraising email affects clickthrough rate

Experiment #4174

How fundraising email design affects clickthrough rate

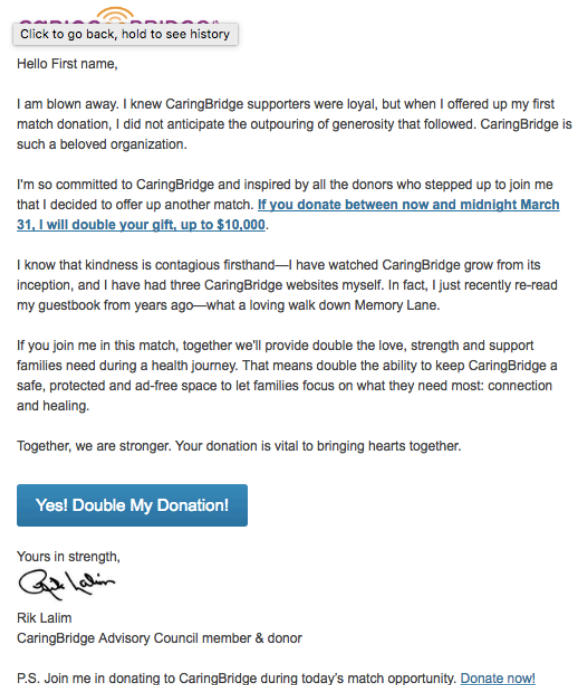


- Sender is unknown to audience
- Templated email is intended to give context to the ask and reinforce the brand
- Images give context to donation ask

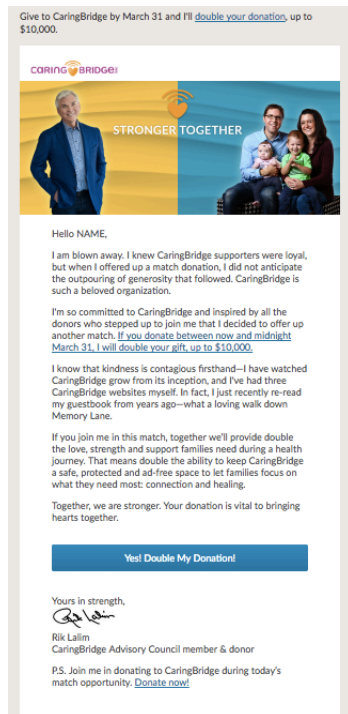
How fundraising email design affects clickthrough rate

- Branding and images are stripped out, creating a personal feel for the appeal
- Email still contains templated elements, but is responsive and not designed.

Treatment



How fundraising email design affects clickthrough rate



[Click to go back, hold to see history](#)

Hello First name,

I am blown away. I knew CaringBridge supporters were loyal, but when I offered up my first match donation, I did not anticipate the outpouring of generosity that followed. CaringBridge is such a beloved organization.

I'm so committed to CaringBridge and inspired by all the donors who stepped up to join me that I decided to offer up another match. [If you donate between now and midnight March 31, I will double your gift, up to \\$10,000.](#)

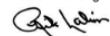
I know that kindness is contagious firsthand—I have watched CaringBridge grow from its inception and I've had three CaringBridge websites myself. In fact, I just recently re-read my guestbook from years ago—what a loving walk down Memory Lane.



80.3% increase in
clickthrough rate.

[Yes! Double My Donation!](#)

Yours in strength,



Rik Lalim
CaringBridge Advisory Council member & donor

P.S. Join me in donating to CaringBridge during today's match opportunity. [Donate now!](#)

How fundraising email design affects clickthrough rate



80.3% increase in clickthrough rate

Version	CTR	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.17 %		
Treatment	.30%	80.3%	100.0%

Key Learning:

- ✓ Email templates may reinforce the brand and increase the authority of an email, but they also tip our hand to the recipient that our email is “marketing”. Thus, fewer people to take the intended action and click.

Personal tone in emails

92%

of the email appeals
we received this
morning lacked a
personal tone.



**BONUS Strategy: Test a
more personal tone
with your emails**



How personal tone in a fundraising appeal affects donor conversion

Experiment #4171

How personal tone in appeal affects donor conversion

Control



Hello First name,

When your world has been turned upside down, every connection counts. Every bit of strength. Every heart brought together.

Erica, whose 6-month-old son Graham was diagnosed with a serious cancer, says she couldn't imagine taking this long, sometimes scary journey without CaringBridge to share news and receive strength.

[You can make sure CaringBridge is here for them](#), and for everyone who needs calm seas in times of turbulence, with your donation today—a **donation that will go twice as far on March 16 with a \$15,000 matching gift opportunity** from our generous friend and donor, Rik Lalim.

Your compassion ensures that Erica's family can continue to rely on us for a safe, protected, ad-free space to share their successes and frustrations, hopes and fears—their journey. And family and friends can be there every step of the way.

Yes! Match My Gift Now!

Yours in hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Espy".

Kelly Espy
CaringBridge Senior Development Specialist

P.S. There's no time like the present to bring hearts together. Together, we can be stronger. [Donate now and double your impact!](#)

- Traditional appeals had branded template and large CTA buttons
- Email is centered around another family, unknown to the reader

How personal tone in appeal affects donor conversion

- New appeal made a simple, clear ask.
- Initial copy gave relevance to the ask: “I know you’ve been using CaringBridge recently”.
- Branding moved to signature block

Treatment

Hello First name,

I know you’ve been using CaringBridge recently to stay connected to your loved ones, and I hope it’s been a source of strength for you.

Right now, we’re in a short campaign to raise money to keep CaringBridge there for you, and those like you who need a safe, protected place to connect during life’s most challenging times.

As a nonprofit, CaringBridge is supported by donations from the people who use and appreciate the site.

If you’d like to support this campaign right now, your gift will be doubled by a generous donor, up to \$15,000, if you use this link to make your gift by midnight, March 16.

[Click here to have your gift matched today >>](#)

It’s the safest, most secure way to make sure CaringBridge will always be here when your loved ones need it most.

We appreciate your support – thank you!



Kelly Espy
CaringBridge Senior Development Specialist

CARING  BRIDGE

How personal tone in appeal affects donor conversion

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I know you've been using CaringBridge recently to stay connected to your loved ones, and I hope it's been a source of strength for you.

Right now, we're in a short campaign to raise money to keep CaringBridge there for you, and those like you who need a safe, protected place to connect during life's most challenging times.



145.5% increase in
conversion rate.

It's the safest, most secure way to make sure CaringBridge will always be here when your loved ones need it most.

We appreciate your support – thank you!

Kelly Espy
CaringBridge Senior Development Specialist



How personal tone in appeal affects donor conversion



145.5% increase in conversion rate

Version	Conv. Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.01%		
Treatment	.02%	145.5%	99.5%

Key Learning:

- ✓ It's easy to revert to an omniscient marketing voice when writing on behalf of a brand. But people give to people, and they respond more when they believe that a person is on the other side of the conversation.



How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

Experiment #3423

How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

Control

Dear << Test First Name >>,

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need Jesus.



Here at Jews for Jesus, we weep and pound the table about the Jewish people who don't know Christ. In fact, we feel *very specifically* called by God to reach the Jewish community with the saving message of Jesus Christ.

- Email starts with strong statement that doesn't address the reader.
- Image pasted into email seems to denote a template.

How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

Control

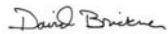
neip.

Would you be willing to support Jews for Jesus — **especially now in this holy season as we celebrate Christ's resurrection?** If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?

[You can help reach unbelieving Jewish people by giving a gift to Jews for Jesus.](#)

Give a gift to Jews for Jesus today!

Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,


David Brickner,
Executive Director,
Jews for Jesus

- Link and button copy may present decision friction.
- Signature is non-native to personal emails.

How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

- **Copy starts with a personal greeting.**
- **Intro paragraph gives context and qualification.**
- **Statement is presented as information, rather than position.**

Treatment

Dear << Test First Name >>,

I hope you and your family are well.

Since I know you have a heart for the Jewish people, I wanted to send you a quick note about a burden that has been on my heart.

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need Jesus.

How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

- **Personalization is repeated.**
- **Link is given context, and personalization is repeated in thank-you.**
- **Email signature is plain-text.**

Treatment

<< Test First Name >>, would you be willing to make a donation to Jews for Jesus — especially now in this holy season as we celebrate Christ's resurrection? If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?

If the call to reach unbelieving Jewish people resonates with you, here's a link to make a special donation today towards this effort:

JewsforJesus.org/SupportEvangelism

Thank you so much, << Test First Name >>.

Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

David Brickner

Executive Director

Jews for Jesus

How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

Dear << Test First Name >>,

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need Jesus.



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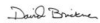
We know that there are many thoughtful Christians who believe this as well. That's why we're asking you for your help.

Would you be willing to support Jews for Jesus — **especially now in this holy season as we celebrate Christ's resurrection?** If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?

[You can help reach unbelieving Jewish people by giving a gift to Jews for Jesus.](#)

[Give a gift to Jews for Jesus today!](#)

Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,


David Brickner,
Executive Director,
Jews for Jesus

Dear << Test First Name >>,

I hope you and your family are well.

Since I know you have a heart for the Jewish people, I wanted to send you a quick note about a burden that has been on my heart.

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

~~They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need~~



**109.2% increase in
clickthrough rate.**

~~celebrate Christ's resurrection? If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?~~

If the call to reach unbelieving Jewish people resonates with you, here's a link to make a special donation today towards this effort:
JewsforJesus.org/SupportEvangelism

Thank you so much, << Test First Name >>.
Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

David Brickner
Executive Director
Jews for Jesus

How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

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[You can help reach unbelieving Jewish people by giving a gift to Jews for Jesus.](#)

Give a gift to Jews for Jesus today!

Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

David Brickner,
Executive Director,
Jews for Jesus

Dear << Test First Name >>,

I hope you and your family are well.

Since I know you have a heart for the Jewish people, I wanted to



**109.2% increase in
clickthrough rate.**

Jewish people who don't know Christ. In fact, we feel *very* specifically called by God to reach the Jewish community with the saving message of Jesus Christ.



**304.8% increase in
donor conversion.**

[Click here to learn more about how you can help reach unbelieving Jewish people by giving a gift to Jews for Jesus.](#)

Thank you so much, << Test First Name >>.
Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

David Brickner
Executive Director
Jews for Jesus

How personal tone affects clickthrough rate



109.2% increase in clickthrough rate

Version	Clickthrough Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.21%		
Treatment	.44%	109.2%	100.0%

Key Learning:

- ☒ When email copy addresses the recipient personally and gives context for both the communication and the ask, clickthrough rate may increase.

How personal tone affects clickthrough rate



304.8% increase in donor conversion

Version	Conversion Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.03%		
Treatment	.12%	304.8%	100.0%

Key Learning:

- ☒ When email copy addresses the recipient personally and gives context for both the communication and the ask, clickthrough rate may increase.

6 Strategies to Optimize Email Appeals

1. Test a different sender.
2. Measure every metric, even when just testing subject lines.
3. Test personalization of your emails.
4. Test *copy length* and its effect on conversion.

6 Strategies to Optimize Email Appeals

5. Test images in your email. Do they really help?

6. Test your email template designs. Do they really help?

BONUS: Test the tone of your email. It's not what you say, but how you say it.

How we *often* approach digital fundraising



How we should approach digital fundraising



How we should approach digital fundraising



How we should approach digital fundraising



The Fundraiser's Creed

ARTICLE
1

We Believe **people give to people,**
that people don't give to organizations,
or from Websites; people give to people.
Fundraising is not about programs;
it is about relationships.

The Fundraiser's Creed

ARTICLE 2

We Believe brand is just reputation;
fundraising is just conversation,
and giving is an act of trust.

Trust is earned with two elements:

- 1) **integrity** and
- 2) **effectiveness.**

Both demand that you put the
interest of the donor first.

The Fundraiser's Creed

ARTICLE 3

We Believe testing trumps speculation and that clarity trumps persuasion. Fundraisers need to base their decisions on **honest data**, and donors need to base their decisions on **honest claims**.

Thank You! Send Me Your Questions!



Jeff Giddens

jeff@nextafter.com

@jagiddens

[Website: www.NextAfter.com](http://www.NextAfter.com)