Messaging

Now that you understand your DonorExperience Map and what's important to your congregants, it really all comes down to messaging. How you communicate your vision with others will either engage or disengage your audience, and what people *really* want to hear from your messaging is this:

Why should they give to your church?

The easy answer is pretty obvious: *because the Bible says so.* Unfortunately, that's not quite enough these days. You need to focus on what's most important to your donors and then build a clear and simple message around that element. Once you've done this, all that's left is to repeat this message - and repeat it *often*.

More than 50 years ago, *Christianity Today* predicted that a communication crisis was coming in the church. Fortunately, we need only focus on our donors fully to combat this issue and make people love giving to the church again. DonorWERX Communications Plans provide an out-of-the-box solution for doing this, but it's also important that you understand how to build your own.

Building Your Message

The first step in this process is finding two or three ideas that you want to communicate to your donors and figuring out the appropriate way to accomplish this. Methods for communication could be email, social media, blogs and more. The messages sent through these platforms should revolve around donor values and improving the Donor Experience - which we'll delve deeper into in a few moments.

One thing you should never overlook when building your message is simplicity. Create your messages in such a way that an 8-year-old child could understand them. This has nothing to do with the intelligence of your congregation - it's really just about conveying your message in as simple a way as possible.
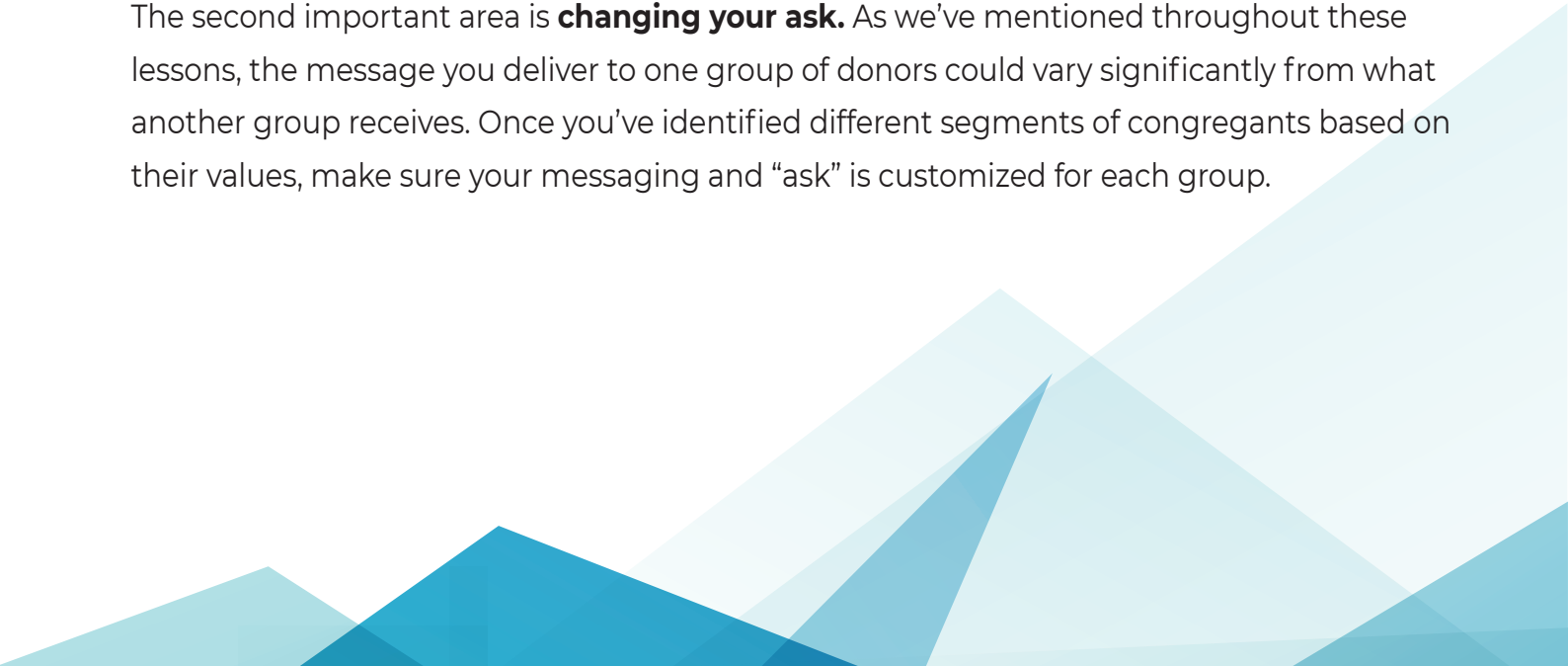
You also need to identify the individuals within your organization who should be able to share this unified message at the drop of a hat. Depending on your campaign, this could include your pastoral board, volunteers, small groups and other individuals holding important roles. A unified message going forward is essential.

Messaging Campaigns

Of course, consistent presentation of your messaging means nothing if it's not a great message. This is why the ideas behind your campaigns should focus on four areas.

The first area is **communicating your mission.** Your messaging should reflect how donations are contributing to the church's overall mission. And when you focus on the values of your targeted group, you should make clear how this mission fits in with what's important to them.

The second important area is **changing your ask.** As we've mentioned throughout these lessons, the message you deliver to one group of donors could vary significantly from what another group receives. Once you've identified different segments of congregants based on their values, make sure your messaging and "ask" is customized for each group.

The third important area of your campaign for increased giving is **marketing assets and technology.** Utilizing every marketing resource at your disposal - ranging from email lists to social media pages - is integral to the success of your overall campaign. DonorWERX will provide social media posts, emails, sermon messages and more in our Communications Plans.

The technology you utilize is also important for moving forward. For instance, accepting digital donations via SecureGive as part of the DonorWERX Giving Software will help ensure that parishioners have more ways to donate. Combine this with the email templates and other marketing assets provided by DonorWerx, and you've got this area covered.

Lastly, you need to focus on perfecting your **communication cadence.** This describes how, when and what we communicate to others. When it comes to donors, the two types of cadence to concern yourself with are broadcasting and nurturing.

Broadcast messaging occurs when you send out a single **message** to a group of donors. This message is meant to elicit a response from anyone in this group. Nurture messaging occurs on an individual level based on donor behavior. For instance, if a member makes their first contribution, they'll receive a "thank you" email based on this.

Time to Rally the Team

The marketing assets and other tools provided in the D.O.N.O.R. Framework will help you create this precise messaging that increases giving by paying special attention to donor engagement. Once you have the perfect messaging campaign in place, though, the focus returns to rallying your own team.

Even if they were on board with trying a new strategy for increased giving, you still need to get their support in spreading the message. Most of them won't be writing emails that are sent out to donor groups, but they can get the word out about the giving campaign and what its success means to the ministry.

To be effective in this endeavor, you must start with the leaders closest to you. Picture yourself lighting these individuals' candles, and they in turn light the candles of those around them. If the church is staff-driven, begin there. If the focus is more on the ministry elders or board, they're the ones you should start with.

This isn't about "making an announcement." It's more about offering inspiration to the people around you and then giving them the opportunity to do the same. The higher a certain person is in your church's hierarchy, the more personal these conversations should be. By getting their support on spreading the word, you'll ensure that the message reverberates until the entire congregation knows.

One Secret Ingredient

If you're having trouble getting started, get the ball rolling with staff members and ministry leaders who have teams under them. By sitting down with one of your student pastors, for instance, you can show them how important it is to discuss digital giving with their small group. The same can be done with a children's pastor who has volunteers under them.

In the end, these personal connections will create a ripple effect that spreads throughout the ministry. And as a result, your leadership team and congregation will be inspired to do more.