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SPECIALIZING IN
4 Horsemen
(Position, Differentiation, USP/Benefit, Brand)
Building Large Housefiles
Quickly
Digital Fundraising
Direct Mail Fundraising
Grassroots Lobbying
High Dollar Fundraising
Internet Marketing
Lifetime Value of a Donor
Sweepstakes
Video (DVD) Marketing

My purpose in writing these marketing memos is to encourage you and other conservative leaders to take advantage of today's political environment to 1) greatly increase the size of your nonprofit organization; 2) significantly grow the number of your supporters; 3) raise much more money; 4) encourage conservatives to launch thousands of new single-issue organizations to compete with the tens of thousands of liberal nonprofits; and 5) raise your team's professional level.

The Left is out-marketing and out-organizing conservatives. The Left's nonprofits yearly raise about \$15 billion+ from over 15 million donors—all from direct marketing. Conservatives raise about \$3 billion from 3 million donors.

Conservatives dominated grassroots marketing from the 1960s through most of the 1980s. But today the Left dominates through bold, professional marketing and aggressive entrepreneurship.

CONSERVATIVES HAVE A MAJOR SHORTAGE OF BOLD, RISK-TAKING, EXECUTIVE, ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Key Conservative Leaders
FROM: Richard A. Viguerie
DATE: September 17, 2021
RE: 28th Marketing Memo for Conservative Leaders
SUBJECT: Some ideas/comments/thoughts about marketing mistakes conservatives are making and how to quickly grow right-of-center organizations

Even though I've written you as to how and why liberals are winning the grassroots ground game, I thought it might be helpful if I briefly summarize some of the most important points.

1. Invest, Invest, Invest. Between now and 2024 will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to grow conservative/right-of-center organizations.

100% of the money spent to acquire new donors will be returned within 6-12 months just from more direct marketing (postal and digital) to your new donors. So, donors for the development team can be acquired at no cost, and hundreds of thousands of grassroots activists (and for a few organizations—millions) will also be identified, as well as legislative battles fought and one hundred million+ voters educated.

2. Think big. I believe it's entirely possible to grow most all conservative donor files by 200-300% within the next 18-24 months and some by 1,000% by 2024. But in order for this to happen, you will have to change many marketing practices you now use.

I estimate that the Left raises about 500% more money for their ideological organizations than conservatives from about 500% more donors (3,000,000 unique conservative donors—15,000,000 unique liberal donors).

By November 2020, ActBlue had 13.4 million liberals who had given them their credit card information for quick and easy donations.

The liberals are running circles around conservatives in grassroots marketing, and the main reasons are that they're more aggressive/professional/entrepreneurial.

It's even worse when you consider that 75%+ of the hot button issues that Americans are concerned about are OUR issues—taxes, over-regulation, open borders, school choice, religious liberty, honest elections, defund the police, security, CRT, cancel culture, etc., etc.

3. We're in a Spiritual Civil War, and as Morton Blackwell says, "donors want to hear the sound of the cannons and smell the gunpowder." Donors want to hear how their donation will make a difference now, not in 20+ years.
4. The over-emphasis of most conservative organizations on acquiring high-dollar, high-net worth donors is killing the conservative movement, and condemning the cause of liberty to failure.

Heritage's longtime Vice President of Development, John Von Kannon, said that two-thirds of all money Heritage raised came from donors whose first contact with Heritage was a donation of \$100 or less from a postal mailing.

5. In a marketing meeting with one of our college clients about 3 years ago, someone from the college asked the former, longtime Heritage direct marketing executive, Christie Fogarty, what she would do differently if she could relive her time at Heritage. She quickly said—mail more.
6. Mail out of market.

Most conservatives acquisition mail is to the same pool of about 3,000,000 conservative donors, and of course 100-200 other conservative organizations are also asking these same 3,000,000 for donations each month and for Major Gifts and Legacy Gifts.

Since very few conservative nonprofits go out of market (business publications, religious, sports, veterans, charitable, health and welfare lists, etc.) for donations, the competition to acquire donors from the pool of 3,000,000 conservative donors is severe.

It will cost more to acquire these new donors, but the Lifetime Value will almost certainly be much greater than from your present donors. Plus, if conservatives don't go out of market and expand massively, our 3,000,000 donor base will not be competitive with the Left's 15,000,000+ donors.

7. As I've said many times, but it is so important it bears repeating—95%+ of the fundraising value postal acquired donors bring to organizations is the money that a development team raises from these donors.
8. Very few conservative organizations have enough people in their development department.
9. Strong projects are necessary for maximizing income with direct marketing. Most conservative fundraising appeals are what I call "cuss" appeals, e.g., Democrats are doing bad things—send us money, Democrats want to raise taxes, kill babies, open our southern border, etc., etc.—send money.

The more specific projects (that appeal to donors) leadership gives the marketing people, the more money they can raise.

10. In my opinion, about 90% of national conservative leaders have low energy. Not so with the Left. It seems liberals have so much energy you can almost cut it with a knife.

In a meeting of about 18 national conservative leaders, 2 years ago, I was making this point, and one of our very best conservative leaders said the same thing. He said he could only come up with a list of about 12 national conservative leaders with high energy. I did my own list, and I could only get to 9 or 10.

Conservatives are desperate for leadership. There is no shortage of money, but there is a major shortage of entrepreneurial, risk-taking leadership.

In the last few years, I've never seen the grassroots as responsive to direct marketing appeals as they are now. I told ATA's strong marketing team that mailed 139,000,000 postal letters last year that "you thought you were fishing but actually the fish were jumping in the boat." There's every expectation that this will continue at least through 2024.

11. Here's a hard one. Do you have the right person/people leading your fundraising/marketing/development, departments?
12. Here's an even harder one. Do you have the right person leading the organization? And for most conservatives' organizations the answer is clearly **NO**.

If you think you have strong leadership, why does your organization only have 5,000, 10,000, 25,000 last 12-month donors, members, subscribers, while your liberal counterparts have 75,000, 100,000, 300,000+ and budgets that are 500% - 1000%+ larger than yours?

13. Most conservative organizations do not have a **BRAND**. In fact, very few conservative leaders/marketers even know the correct definition of a **BRAND**. If your organization doesn't have a strong **BRAND**, you'll have a small organization with a small number of supporters.

Those few conservative organizations that have a large base of grassroots supporters are those that "own" a category, e.g., NRA (2nd Amendment), Heritage Foundation (national conservative think tank), Hillsdale College (America's #1 teacher/educator of America's founding documents/principles), Media Research Center (America's mainstream media watchdog), and Judicial Watch (conservatives #1 public interest law firm).

14. There are four main categories of new and alternative media—postal mail, digital, TV, and phones. About (90%) of all money raised from these four categories comes from postal mail. That's slowly changing, but the workhorse of ideological fundraising is still direct mail. It's okay to chase new, shiny things, but remember 90% of your new grassroots support should come from postal mail.

A lack of entrepreneurial, risk-taking leadership has put the cause of liberty/freedom in a deep hole. However, there is time to turn things around, but only if radical changes are made quickly to the way conservatives leaders run nonprofits.

What we've done is not only not working, but we're rapidly losing ground and the socialists/Marxists are close to a complete victory. When the vast majority of people support our issues, how is this possible?

So much to be done, so little time.

As always, your advice, counsel, and thoughts are welcome.