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THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO TEXT MESSAGE MARKETING FOR NONPROFITS

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HOW TO MAXIMIZE DONATIONS AND FURTHER YOUR CAUSE

At Tatango, we've been honing our nonprofit fundraising expertise and evolving our platform for over 14 years to make text message marketing as effective and affordable as possible. Our clients regularly receive five dollars in donations for every dollar invested in SMS fundraising, on average. We know the best methods for building subscriber lists and securing donations that will keep your organization thriving. Whether your organization is just starting the fundraising journey or pivoting from other channels, text message marketing will help you hit your goals.

As an industry leader in nonprofit fundraising, Tatango brings years of experience and the most advanced software to the table to provide the right solutions for your donation campaigns. Keep reading for an in-depth look at how to excel with SMS fundraising and see how partnering with Tatango will give your organization a significant head start and set you up for success.

Nonprofit organizations are facing more competition than ever. People are bombarded with countless stories and calls to action across social media, 24- hour news networks, and crowd-funding websites. If your organization doesn't take the right steps, it's at risk of not being heard. Nonprofits rely heavily on their supporters and donors, and fundraising must be a key element of every strategy. Successful nonprofit campaigns stand out, reach people, and inspire action. No matter the hurdles, it's possible to surpass your fundraising goals and achieve your mission with the right tools and support on your side.

GOALS FOR NONPROFIT FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS

Regardless of their mission, almost all nonprofit organizations have some goals in common. Fundraising solutions should maximize donations while reducing costs. Costly marketing budgets can quickly undercut donations received. Nonprofits need strategies with a good return on investment, or ROI. Reaching out to supporters and potential donors should be straightforward and inexpensive, keeping fundraising results in mind.

Not all nonprofit organizations can afford having dedicated communications and fundraising teams. Staffing limitations should never stand in the way of a nonprofit's fundraising results. Fundraising campaigns that require a large team can create a barrier to entry if an organization's "team" is a single person. Scalability is vital for nonprofits as they grow. The best solutions scale to fit **size, budget, and available staff and resources.**

Effective fundraising avenues also clearly communicate the organization's message and mission. Many different people may cross paths with a single billboard or pop-up ad. However, donations are unlikely to roll in if the organization isn't engaging potential supporters and connecting with them on a deeper level. A nonprofit's fundraising strategies should share the mission by telling the organization's story in a way that resonates with people. A whole new level of fundraising success is possible when a campaign stimulates genuine interest and empathy.
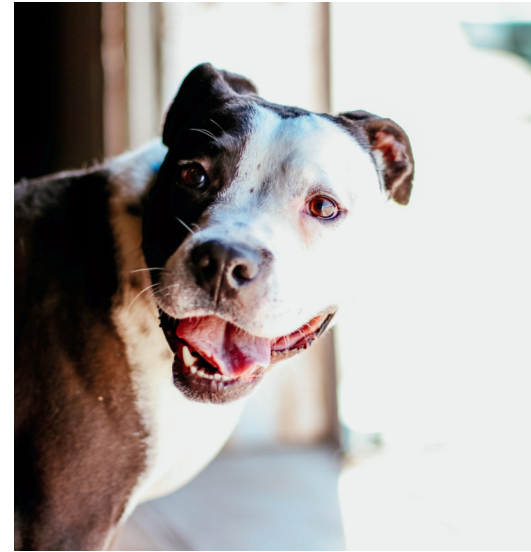
TEXT FUNDRAISING: SOLVING NONPROFIT PROBLEMS

Text messages and subscriber lists work well for many organizations and industries, and they present compelling options for nonprofits. Earlier, we spelled out the fundraising goals most nonprofits have in mind. Let's take a closer look at the top advantages of SMS fundraising.

Avoiding unnecessary costs is essential, especially when you're fundraising. As much money as possible should be going toward your organization's mission and fundraising goals. Your costs can quickly increase exponentially if your marketing efforts include email, physical mail, radio ads, social media marketing, and text messaging. An experienced partner platform like Tatango already has the robust infrastructure to handle all your SMS marketing needs affordably. In fact, most of Tatango's clients see a return of five dollars for every dollar invested in marketing. With such a good ROI, your fundraising efforts will go further and boost your donation metrics and even break fundraising records.

Streamline Communications With Tools That Work

With the decline of email open rates and ever-changing social media algorithms rarely communications should be focused on the areas where they'll have the most impact. Text messaging allows you to reach people directly through a communication channel most of us use many times a day. Text messages have a 99% open rate and for 78% of people, text messaging is the preferred method of communication. Break through the communication clutter, streamline your nonprofit's outreach with text messages, and advance your mission.

Whether your nonprofit's team is large and spread around the world, or is a small core group of volunteers, SMS marketing will work for you. Scalability is built into our system. Tatango's software handles your existing large subscriber lists or can help you grow one from scratch.

The American Red Cross is a great example of a large-scale successful SMS fundraising effort. The organization raised record funds for Haiti after the tragic 2010 earthquake. Over half a million people were killed or injured, and millions more faced an uncertain future after the devastating destruction of homes and infrastructure. Through a text-to-give campaign, the American Red Cross brought in more than $38 million, reaching a peak of $500,000 donated in just one hour. With the keyword HAITI and a simple request for a $10 donation, the American Red Cross proved the speed and effectiveness of SMS marketing—even on such a large scale.

> **TATANGO'S EXPERTS AND AUTOMATED TOOLS HELP GET YOUR ORGANIZATION ACROSS THE FINISH LINE.**

Tatango's experts and automated tools help get your organization across the finish line, whether you're running a large fundraising campaign or a single-person effort.

HOW TEXT MESSAGE MARKETING WORKS

Text messages are an incredibly effective way to connect directly with supporters, and many nonprofits see significant results from text fundraising. Brands, campaigns, and nonprofits can build subscriber lists and send a variety of messages to their audiences. With SMS messages, your organization can avoid falling victim to filters on social media platforms and email junk boxes, and create an immediate connection with supporters.

The following are key components of a good text marketing plan.

Short Codes and Long Codes

When you sign up for text message marketing, you can choose between short codes and long codes for your phone number. A long code is a 10-digit number (10DLC) dedicated to a fundraising campaign, similar to one that you would use to text friends and family.

Whereas, a short code is a five- or six-digit phone number dedicated to a fundraising campaign. Short codes can be assigned at random or customized based on specific dates or terms associated with your campaign. These custom numbers are known as vanity short codes.

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO TEXT YOUR NUMBER BY MAKING EACH STEP AS SIMPLE AS POSSIBLE .

With a dedicated phone number, your fundraising campaign can unify all efforts under one banner. Promote your campaign on physical signs, merchandise, videos, and social media posts. Or integrate it directly with your website using a simple line of code, so whenever someone fills out their phone number on a web form, they are automatically synced with your SMS program. Making each step as simple as possible will help increase the number of people who text your number and join your list of long-term supporters.

Types of Text Messages

Short message service (SMS) and multimedia messaging service (MMS) are the two main types of messages used in text message marketing. SMS messages are usually limited to 160 characters, while MMS messages support up to 5,000 characters. MMS messages can also include subject lines and engaging videos, images, GIFs, and other media. Both SMS and MMS texts are valuable tools for your nonprofit's campaigns. SMS keeps your messages simple.

SMS KEEPS YOUR MESSAGES SIMPLE, AND MMS HELPS YOU SEND CREATIVE UPDATES, INTEGRATED CLIPS, AND INSPIRING IMAGES.

SMS keeps your messages simple. It's the perfect format for quick reminders or opt-in messages. Use MMS to send creative updates, integrated clips, and inspiring images. Your text messaging campaigns will be more effective and engaging when you use both options. Choosing the right messaging format will make a big difference in encouraging supporters to donate, stick around, and spread the word about your organization.

How To Grow Your List

KEYWORDS

Encourage supporters to use different keywords when they contact your nonprofit via your short code. A keyword is usually a single word or a short phrase, like VOLUNTEER or GIVE BACK. When supporters send keywords to a short code, a good SMS system will respond with the appropriate opt-in or update message.

Optimize your keywords and use them to organize your subscriber list, receive feedback, and learn more about your supporters. Regional terms or words related to specific interests (such as donating, volunteering, and outreach) help you sort your list, so your nonprofit can contact specific groups within your pool of subscribers with targeted efficiency.

TIPS FOR DONATION SUCCESS

EASY WAYS TO MAXIMIZE DONATIONS

5 TIPS FOR DONATION SUCCESS

Instead of writing unbroken blocks of text or requiring your subscribers to take confusing steps, make sure your text messages are creative, eye-catching, and memorable. They should also be clear and concise so they're easy to understand.

Use MMS to feature captivating images or video clips, connecting your supporters to the real-world causes behind your fundraising campaign. For example, an animal shelter could feature images of animals who need adoption, whereas an ocean conservation organization could feature a video of plastic bottles covering a shoreline.

Alternate between shorter SMS messages with reminders or donation links and longer MMS texts with mission statements and updates with photos. Variety helps your audience feel engaged in your mission and motivates them to continue supporting it.

USE THESE TIPS TO ENGAGE SUPPORTERS & RAISE MORE

TELL A STORY

PERSONALIZE YOUR MESSAGE

USE A CLEAR CALL TO ACTION

FIND YOUR CADENCE

TRACK RESULTS AND ADJUST STRATEGIES

FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER

ELIMINATE ANXIETY WITH TATANGO

If you're using text marketing for the first time, it's common to feel anxious or uncertain. Sending mass messages, particularly with large campaigns or subscriber lists, can feel like a lot of pressure. Gathering supporters' contact and demographic information can also feel daunting and overwhelming. This data must be kept secure and used responsibly. If something happens, your nonprofit's reputation may be at risk. Some teams may not feel confident designing MMS messages or setting up text messaging schedules.

The Tatango platform addresses all these concerns. Let's look at a few key aspects of Tatango's support structure.

Tatango Design Studio

Many nonprofits don't have the time or resources to build their fundraising campaigns and messaging from the ground up. Every step requires decisions—formatting, layout, file size, color themes, screen layouts, and more. This is where the Tatango Design Studio comes in. Our experts can help you design your campaign and handle the trickier tasks in the background to simplify your experience.

When you partner with Tatango, our team of designers provides these services at no extra cost. Our experts know what makes text messages effective and engaging, and our clients and partners never have to guess what strategies will work best for their campaigns. You can rely on our team to help plan your texts and achieve your goals.

Data Security and Protection

With Tatango, subscriber data is safe and protected. Some supporters may hesitate to sign up for recurring donations or mailing lists if they don't feel confident that their information will remain secure. The Tatango platform helps you take every step necessary to protect your subscribers' data with three layers of security.

Two-factor Authentication

Your nonprofit data isn't at risk with two-factor authentication. Two-factor authentication requires an extra login confirmation. When someone on your team logs into the system, they receive a text message on their phone with a unique, time-sensitive code which they must enter to complete the login process. This extra step takes virtually no time and creates a significant hurdle for hackers.

Secure Sending

Secure sending requires a user to re-enter their Tatango account password before sending a message to the subscriber list. This step helps prevent messages from going out (accidentally or intentionally) to your subscriber list. For example, should someone gain access to your computer while you've stepped away for a moment, they wouldn't be able to send a text message to your list without entering your password.

Automated Logout

Automated logout is another way Tatango prevents unauthorized users or someone with ulterior motives from gaining access to your SMS data and system. If you're away from your computer or using other programs for a while, the system will automatically log you out. With automated logouts, you won't stay logged in if you're not actively using our system. This security feature adds an extra level of protection, especially while traveling or working in public or unfamiliar spaces. Most other SMS platforms don't apply these safeguards, but because Tatango focuses on high-stakes nonprofit and political campaigns, security and reliability are at the forefront of our technology.

Regulations and Compliance

As your SMS fundraising campaign gets off the ground, text messages must comply with regulations. If your SMS messages break the law, fines can quickly add up and hurt the success of your campaign.

The primary laws regulating SMS marketing are part of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA). These laws made unsolicited text messages illegal and require campaigns, brands, and nonprofits to obtain consent from their intended recipients before contacting them. Organizations must also provide intended recipients with clear easy-to-follow steps for opting out of receiving messages. Fines range from $500 to $1,500 dollars for each text that violates these rules. Those fines can swiftly skyrocket for a large-scale campaign that breaks the law.

The TCPA is interpreted and enforced by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The exact legal boundaries can shift based on FCC rulings, so it's crucial to stay informed and up to date. Tatango partners with legal experts focusing solely on the TCPA and keeps track of any changes or risks for your fundraising campaign. With years of legal expertise and support at our fingertips, Tatango can help navigate these shifting legal waters and make sure every text you send is in the clear.

SUCCEED WITH TEXTING, EASILY

tatango

HOW TO SUCCEED WITH TEXT FUNDRAISING

Now that we've covered how to connect with supporters and raise funds, let's review the specific steps for getting started. A clear roadmap for success is key, whether your organization is just starting out with SMS messaging or shifting gears with your existing text message marketing strategy.

1. Choose The Right Partner

Trying to handle mass text messages manually will drain your time and resources, and potentially put you at risk of legal complications. Without a robust text marketing platform, you'll miss out on powerful automation, security, analytics, and fundraising expertise. When you partner with Tatango, your nonprofit can build grassroots support through subscriber lists and repeat donors with support every step of the way.

2. Promote Your Short Code

Make sure your short code and keywords are clear and easy to find. Add them to your website and print them on signage or merchandise. Your SMS number can also integrate with your website, automatically adding a supporter to your subscriber list when they enter their phone number on your site. Promoting and growing your subscriber list will increase your pool of potential donors and repeat donors.

3. Create Compelling Landing Pages

When people tap a donation link in your text messages, they'll arrive on a landing page. Make sure this process is transparent and engaging at every step. If someone feels confused or uncomfortable, they may not stick around or make a donation. Custom landing pages that use language and imagery consistent with your SMS and MMS messages inspire confidence, and supporters will be more likely to follow through on your call to action.

4. Offer Incentives

Incentives are a valuable tool for nonprofits on their journey to success. Don't be afraid to offer rewards and incentives for donations. Physical merchandise or gifts work well, but so do faster updates or opportunities for naming rights or access to meetings. All of these types of incentives drive engagement and encourage people to stay connected.

5. Integrate Communication Channels

A great way to diversify your nonprofit's reach is to integrate your communication channels. Ask for a supporter's email address in your text messages. Bring together different communication methods to build a stronger base for your organization's future. SMS messages function well as a central hub for your team's marketing efforts.

6. Send Engaging Messages

With a great partner, a solid plan, and a secure subscriber list, you're good to go. You're ready to start sending reminders, donation requests, captivating stories, and clear calls to action that resonate with your supporters.

CONTACT US

Connect with your supporters with a direct and engaging communication tool. Achieve your fundraising goals and advance your mission with text marketing.

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