

**DEMYSTIFYING PLANNED  
GIVING MARKETING:  
Secrets For Success  
(Oriented To Universities)**



KATHRYN W. MIREE & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
PHILANTHROPIC ADVISORY SERVICES

Kathryn W. Miree  
Kathryn W. Miree & Associates, Inc.  
P. O. Box 130846  
Birmingham, Alabama 35213  
205-939-0003  
205-939-3781 (fax)  
[kwmiree@giftplanners.com](mailto:kwmiree@giftplanners.com)  
[www.giftplanners.com](http://www.giftplanners.com)

## ABOUT THE PRESENTER

**KATHRYN W. MIREE**  
**PRESIDENT**  
**KATHRYN W. MIREE & ASSOCIATES, INC.**

Kathryn W. Miree is President of Kathryn W. Miree & Associates, Inc., a consulting firm that works with boards and staff of nonprofits and foundations to develop administrative policies, structure, and planned giving programs. She received her undergraduate degree from Emory University and her law degree from The University of Alabama School of Law. She spent 15 years in various positions in the Trust Division of AmSouth Bank where she was the manager of the Personal Trust Department before joining Sterne, Agee & Leach, Inc. to start its trust company. She established Kathryn W. Miree & Associates, Inc. in 1997.

Ms. Miree is a past president of the National Committee on Planned Giving, a past president of the Alabama Planned Giving council, a past president of the Estate Planning Council of Birmingham, Inc. and a past member of the Board of the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils. She currently serves on the boards of the United Way of Central Alabama, Inc. (board vice-chair), The Altamont School (board chair), and The Capstone Foundation. She also serves as a member of the Merrill Lynch National Attorney Advisory Board and the American College Wallace Chair/Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy Advisory Board.

Ms. Miree is a frequent lecturer, co-author of *The Family Foundation Handbook* with Jerry J. McCoy (CCH Publishers 2001) and author of *The Professional Advisor's Guide to Planned Giving* (CCH Publishers, 2001) and co-author of a bi-monthly newsletter, *Family Foundation Advisor* (Civic Research Institute). She serves on the Editorial Advisory Boards of *Planned Giving Today* and *Planned Giving Design Center*. Her clients include a variety of nonprofits and foundations across the country.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	The Goals of Planned Giving Marketing.....	4
	A. Generate Revenue.....	4
	B. Increase Planned Giving Commitments.....	5
	C. Generate Additional Current Funding.....	6
	D. Increase Opportunities for Planned Gift Commitments.....	6
II.	Internal Marketing Secrets to Success.....	6
	A. Place a Priority on Gathering, Maintaining, and Using Your Data.	6
	B. Expand Your Perspective on the “Perfect” Planned Giving Donor.....	10
	C. Use Training to Involve as Many as Possible in Developing Planned Gift Donors.....	13
	D. Go the Extra Mile To Improve Internal Communication.....	15
	E. Set Goals and a Budget.....	16
III.	External Marketing Secrets to Success.....	16
	A. Brand, Segment, and Personalize Your Marketing Message.....	16
	B. Know Exactly What You Expect the Donor To Do.....	17
	C. Select the Marketing Medium That Best Fits Yours Donors, Goals, and Budget.....	17
	D. Use Your Planned Giving Goals To Shape Your Marketing Plan (Rather Than Using the Marketing Tools To Shape Your Goals).....	18
	E. Understand the Value of Professional Advisors to Planned Giving Marketing.....	18
	F. Consistency Is Critical To Success.....	23
	G. Do Not Be Afraid To Make Changes.....	23
IV.	Creating a Marketing Plan: The Eight Step Process.....	24
	A. Step One: Assess the Audience.....	24
	B. Step Two: Assess the University’s Resources.....	25
	C. Step Three: Decide What You Hope to Achieve.....	25
	D. Step Four: List the Marketing Activities That Will Be Conducted and Details of Each Activity.....	26
	E. Step Five: Establish Staff and Dollar Costs for Each Activity....	27
	F. Step Six: Establish Goals for Each Activity.....	27
	G. Step Seven: Execute the Plan.....	27
	H. Step Eight: Analyze Results at Year End.....	27
	I. Other Marketing Ideas.....	28
	Appendix A: Understanding Marketing Goals.....	29
	Appendix B: Sample Marketing Plan.....	30

## Demystifying Planned Giving Marketing: Secrets for Success

**Summary:** Universities have an endless (and expensive) array of marketing options for planned giving. In this session, you'll learn the secrets for success in creating and positioning key planned giving messages (building on current messages and communications), strategies for targeted marketing, tips for integrating professional advisors, and guidance in setting goals and measuring success. You will learn the steps in creating a marketing plan that will establish the necessary budget and make a case to support to your management team.

Developing a marketing plan is one of the most challenging aspects of managing a planned giving program. Universities with successful planned giving programs have adopted strategies that are uniquely geared to the donor audience, the staffing levels (and structure), the budget, and the culture of the university. This means that what works for one university may not work for another. This session focuses on the fundamental principles underlying a successful planned giving marketing program, key opportunities, and common stumbling blocks and is designed to prompt ideas about strengths and weaknesses in your program that can be addressed to improve results.

### I. The Goals of Planned Giving Marketing

Constructing a marketing plan begins by establishing goals for the program. Some goals are self-evident; others are not. Both financial and non-financial goals must be measured in analyzing annual marketing success.

#### A. Generate Revenue

The obvious goal of a development department is to generate revenue to support the university. Planned giving may fall low on the list of development priorities because other development functions – annual fund, major gifts, capital campaigns – produce more immediate results. Since planned giving competes for budget and funds with other development areas, the case for support (and long-term returns) must be carefully structured.

#### 1. Know Your Revenue History

You must have a solid understanding of your planned giving revenue history in order to set goals going forward. Begin by developing a chart of the ten-year planned giving revenue stream that includes the following:

- *Planned giving dollars generated on an annual basis.* Look at the gross planned gift revenue. Compute the percentage of total university gift revenue represented by that figure.
- *Types of planned gifts generated annually.* Lines of revenue should be separated by bequests, charitable remainder trusts (residuum), charitable gift annuities (executed documents), life insurance policy gifts, life insurance beneficiary payouts, retirement plan beneficiary payouts, and retained life estates. Track these dollar

amounts for each category on an annual basis. Also determine the number of gifts in each line of revenue. This will allow you to develop an average gift size for each category on an annual basis.

- *Number of donors involved annually.* Count the number of individual donors who contribute to the planned giving revenue stream each year.
- *Average planned gift size* (divide annual dollars by number of donors).

## **2. Forms of Revenue**

Your revenue analysis will likely reveal that 75% to 80% of planned giving income comes from deferred gifts such as bequests, beneficiary designations (life insurance and retirement plans), and charitable remainder trust residues. Therefore, it may take 5 to 7 years for these commitments to mature and generate steady revenue for the university.

### **B. Increase Planned Giving Commitments**

Since the majority of planned gifts are deferred, one of the primary goals of a planned giving marketing plan should be to increase the number of planned gift commitments.

#### **1. What is a Planned Giving Commitment?**

A planned giving commitment is a donor's notification that he or she has put a planned gift in place. Some of these commitments – such as charitable gift annuities or charitable remainder trusts with irrevocable beneficiaries – are irrevocable, meaning the gift is permanent and cannot be changed. Others (indeed the majority) of these commitments – such as bequests and beneficiary designations – are revocable, meaning the appointment is effective if the donor dies today, but the gift can be changed if the donor loses touch or passion for the university.

#### **2. Measuring Progress**

Most universities recognize commitments by including the donor in the school's legacy society. When this is the case, the growth of the planned giving program can be measured in part by the increase in new members as well as by additional gifts from existing members. The challenge is to get the donor to inform the university when the gift has been put in place. For this to happen, the donor must be aware the university wants to know about the gift, and must have enough trust in the institution to be willing to do so. A key message in planned giving marketing must be to ask donors to inform the university about the decision.

### **C. Generate Additional Current Funding**

One of the residual benefits of an effective planned giving program is the donor's open and renewed commitment to the university and its programs. This commitment is often reflected by an increase in annual or capital giving. Make an annual analysis of (living) planned gift donors to measure the consistency and level of their annual gifts. You should find this population gives more consistently, and increases its giving at a higher percentage, than the university's donor population as a whole.

### **D. Increase Opportunities for Planned Gift Commitments**

One of the obvious goals in planned giving marketing is to connect on a personal level with committed donors. Increasing contacts and contact potential generally occurs in one of two ways:

- Through a broad dissemination of the planned giving message (newsletters, broad special mailings, seminars) to prompt a donor to self-identify, asking for additional information about gift forms or opportunities.
- Through personal donor contact by the planned giving staff, deans, department heads, major gift officers, or others outside the planned giving office who come in contact with the donor. This requires educating non-gift planning staff about how to raise issues with potential donors, and having the ability to follow through.

## **II. Internal Marketing Secrets to Success**

A successful marketing plan requires an understanding of the key principles governing the internal and external elements of the plan. Internal activities include data management, staffing, record keeping and similar organizational actions.

### **A. Place a Priority on Gathering, Maintaining, and Using Your Data**

There is nothing more essential to marketing than accurate, extensive data on your donors. While most development professionals agree with this statement, few organizations have a culture that prioritizes data.

#### **1. Ensuring Data is a Priority**

Assess your university's data priorities by answering these questions:

- *Who's in charge of your data?* To ensure integrity, there should be a single arbiter (controller) of data and clear policies on gathering and maintaining that data. In addition, there should be open communication between the development team and the data staff.
- *Does the planned giving team have access to the data?* If you must fill out a form, cross your fingers, and wait for the results rather than keystroke the report from your desk, your

ability to target potential donors and close gifts will be compromised. Each officer should have access to the data from his or her desk, should be able to input call data, should be able to generate reports, and should segment data.

- *Are the informational fields extensive enough to support profiling?* To be most effective, you need long-term giving histories, gift commitment records, call data, marketing response information, ages, family connections, alumni information, personal and programmatic interests, volunteer records, alumni membership history, event attendance records, and anything relating to the donor's contact with the university.

## **2. Gathering Every Detail**

The university should gather as much information on its donors as possible. While much of this data is gathered outside the planned giving office (or through researchers), the planned giving team is responsible for defining the key fields. Current data fields and tables should be reviewed to ensure they are comprehensive and well-defined to facilitate data retention and analysis.

### **a. Alumni Data**

Universities have a huge advantage over other charities when it comes to data development. One of the largest pools of natural donors are alumni of the university. For each graduate, the University should have the potential donor's:

- Age
- Date of graduation
- Degree(s)
- Fraternity and sorority affiliations
- Extracurricular interests and activities (student governance, sports, arts interests, and other outside activities associated with campus life)

This information is extremely valuable in permitting a focused, segmented approach to donors.

In addition, the university should gather and maintain the following data relating to donor activities:

- Giving records, by amount, purpose, and prompt
- Scholarship recipients
- Alumni association membership and participation levels
- Attendance at homecoming/reunion events
- Attendance or participation in recruiting events (on and off campus)
- Attendance at special events (new building, new gallery, reception for new dean, etc.)
- Family relationships with the school (children and other relatives who attend)
- Participation in university-sponsored seminars (donor or professional)
- Business information and news clippings

- Contact reports from calls
- Personal information gathered during calls
- All other contacts the potential donor has with the university

#### **b. Faculty and Staff**

Do not overlook the gift potential of faculty and staff. Even though there is tension between faculty and administration on some campuses, these individuals may have long-term relationships with the university and be strongly committed to its future. These individuals may not have excessive resources to make gifts during life, but may have significant retirement plans (often TIAA-CREF and state or other plans), investments, or even intellectual property. The marketing message to this group should be tailored to reflect their relationship with the university and the most likely gift options.

#### **c. Friends Data**

Generally, one-fourth to one-third of a university's donors are comprised of non-graduates such as parents, grandparents, community members, or those connected to the university in other ways. It is more difficult to gather personal data about these individuals because they do not share the information through a formal process such as registration or graduation. Look for every opportunity to gather data through contribution forms, personal conversations, and research. Pay particular attention to college and graduate degrees and affiliations.

#### **d. Marketing Data**

Marketing through newsletters, brochures, seminars, and personal contact is expensive. The only way to measure success and to fine tune appeals and activities is to keep accurate records of the activities (number of newsletters mailed, number of year end letters on charitable gift annuities, number of blow-ins, number of staffers with gift acknowledgements), responses (calls, requests for information, requests for proposals), and completed gifts (bequest notifications, charitable gift annuities, insurance policies, etc.). These records should be recorded at the donor level and should be accessible at the global level.

#### **e. Completed Gift Data**

You may have had difficulty in assembling a ten-year detail of planned giving revenue because the information was not collected, or was not segmented by gift form. Work with the financial office to get segmented data on gifts. Ideally, the planned giving office will have completed gift data that includes:

- *Number of bequests and size of bequests* (This data should be sorted, if possible, to identify individual estates rather than counting multiple distributions from one estate as multiple gifts.)
- *Number and amount of insurance policies owned by the university that mature*

- *Number and amount of insurance beneficiary payments* (The donor owned the policy but named the university the beneficiary.)
- *Number and amount of retirement plan beneficiary payouts*
- *Number and initial market value of charitable remainder trusts, naming the university as trustee, where the university is an irrevocable beneficiary* - charitable remainder trusts should be segregated by annuity trust and unitrust (The amount should reflect only the portion attributable to the university's remainder interest.)
- *Number and amount of charitable remainder trust termination distributions* - amounts should be segregated by annuity trust and unitrust
- *Outright gifts of non-cash assets, such as closely-held securities, real estate, tangible personal property, intellectual property rights, insurance policies*
- *Amount received from lead-trusts* (including the number of discrete lead trusts making payments)
- *Retained life estate gifts*

#### **f. Pipeline Data**

Pipeline data refers to a compilation of these gift commitments.<sup>1</sup> Although most gift commitments are revocable, this data is one of the best indications of the health of the planned giving program and future revenue potential. The pipeline report should include the donor's name, age, and when available, the gift amount for the following gift forms:

- Bequest commitments
- Revocable trust expectancies
- Irrevocable trust expectancies (non-split interest)
- Insurance beneficiary designations
- Retirement plan beneficiary designations
- Charitable remainder trusts (separated by annuity/unitrust) where the university is an irrevocable beneficiary.
- Charitable remainder trusts (separated by annuity/unitrust) where the university is a revocable beneficiary

### **3. Buying Data**

Purchased data is an excellent supplement to "home grown" information, but should not serve as a substitute. Data overlays are available from mail houses, list companies, consulting firms, and prospect firms (such as WealthEngine.com). The data overlays can supplement your donor data with age, wealth, business affiliations, securities transactions (SEC filing information is also available from EDGAR, [www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml](http://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml)), securities holdings, charitable giving history, Dun & Bradstreet profiles, Federal Campaign contributions, subscriptions, real estate holdings, and other similar demographic data. If you plan to purchase data, make sure you can use it (you understand its meaning and how to interpret the information) and that you can hold it (integrate it in your data system).

---

<sup>1</sup> For accuracy, the pipeline data should be verified periodically and updated.

#### 4. Using the Data

All the data in the world will not help unless you know how to use it. Consider these suggestions:

- Get in the habit of checking the data profile on a donor each time they call on the phone, you call them, you make a personal visit, or you solicit them for a gift.
- Develop the habit of recording data in the system after each of these occurrences.
- Analyze the current members of the legacy society in your system. What was the average age of these donors when they made a planned gift commitment? What percentage are alumni and non-alumni? What else do they have in common? (Identify the top three characteristics, such as geographic location, giving history, alumni association participation, school affiliation, alumni affiliation, participation in alumni events membership of the alumni association, and length of giving history.)
- Analyze the legacy society new members on a year by year basis. Are there patterns that relate to specific marketing activities?
- Identify donors who have made gifts in at least 7, 8, 9 or 10 of the last 10 years (at any gift level). Think about how to engage these donors in planned giving.
- Analyze the top ten cities in which alumni reside and the top ten cities where donors reside. What can you learn about these patterns? What does this tell you about future locations for special seminars or events?
- Look at patterns in schools and colleges. Is there an increase in giving levels or planned gift commitment levels in one or more of these units? If so, is there a reason for this increase, such as an active dean, active major donor staff member, or other explanation?
- Look at the patterns at the marketing activity level to determine what prompts the greatest number of responses and the greatest number of gifts. What prompted the planned gifts? (A visit, a newsletter, a special mailing?)

#### B. Expand Your Perspective on the “Perfect” Planned Giving Donor

The university’s management team, board, and development staff may believe planned gift donors are the old and wealthy, limiting their perspective of your potential for success and the need to commit resources for the program.

##### 1. The NCG Survey - *Planned Giving in the United States 2000: A Survey of Donors*

In 2000, the National Committee on Planned Giving conducted a survey of planned gift donors, focusing specifically on bequests, charitable remainder trusts and charitable gift

annuities.<sup>2</sup> The study found these donors executed their first will at age 44, and their first bequest at age 49. In addition, they reported the following information about the demographics and motivation of planned gift donors:

#### INCIDENCE OF PLANNING

	Have Made	Considering	Never Heard Of
Will	42%	57%	2%
Bequest	8%	14%	7%
Charitable Remainder Trust	1%	5%	12%

#### DONOR CHARACTERISTICS

##### ▪ Age

	Bequests	Charitable Remainder Trusts	Charitable Gift Annuities
18-34	3%	6%	1%
35-44	14%	10%	6%
45-54	26%	18%	13%
55-64	22%	20%	9%
65-75	20%	23%	24%
75+	14%	24%	44%
Mean	58	62	68

##### ▪ Sex

	Bequests	Charitable Remainder Trusts	Charitable Gift Annuities
Male	47%	56%	49%
Female	53%	44%	51%

##### ▪ Income

	Bequests	Charitable Remainder Trusts	Charitable Gift Annuities
Under \$20,000	11%	10%	11%
\$20,000 - \$34,999	12%	12%	18%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	13%	11%	21%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	22%	16%	18%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	14%	14%	6%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	12%	12%	11%
\$125,000 - \$149,999	5%	7%	6%
\$150,000 - \$174,999	4%	4%	1%

<sup>2</sup> A copy of the survey can be ordered from the National Committee on Planned Giving, 317-269-6274. An order form is available on NCPG's website at [www.ncpg.org](http://www.ncpg.org). The survey cost is \$30.

\$175,000 +	8%	15%	5%
Median (in thousands)	\$60.4	\$70.7	\$51.1
Mean (in thousands)	\$75.9	\$86.3	\$67.0

▪ **Household Size<sup>3</sup>**

	<b>Bequests</b>	<b>Charitable Remainder Trusts</b>	<b>Charitable Gift Annuities</b>
1 Member	34%	32%	36%
2 Members	44%	48%	41%
3 Members	9%	10%	11%
4 Members	8%	7%	10%
5 or More Members	5%	4%	1%

**CHARITABLE MOTIVATION**

	<b>Bequests</b>	<b>Charitable Remainder Trusts</b>	<b>Charitable Gift Annuities</b>
Desire to support charity	97%	91%	98%
Ultimate use of the gift by charity	82%	79%	84%
Desire to reduce taxes	35%	77%	56%
Long-range estate and financial planning issues	35%	76%	45%

**2. Internal Data**

Internal data provides the most compelling guidance in developing a strategic marketing plan. Use the profiles of current legacy society donors to development a profile for the university. Look at the patterns, and determine why those patterns exist. For example, if the membership is comprised largely of donors from a single city, what does that tell you about the value of personal contact with the university? If the membership is comprised primarily of older donors, is this because marketing is targeted only to those ages 65 and above, because of the demographics in the areas in which donors reside, or are there other factors that may have affected the age data?

Look at the data on a school/college/division basis. Isolate the planned gift donors tied to the school/college/division and share the list with the dean and development staff of the unit. This is a solid way to open their eyes to their best donor profiles, and it may also provide tangible proof of the value of planned giving. This is especially true if you have

<sup>3</sup> The household size figures reveal that most planned gift donors are members of one or two member households, suggesting that planned gifts are considered only after children have left home.

enough data to show a “pipeline” of future revenue that will benefit the school/college/division.

**C. Use Training to Involve As Many Individuals As Possible in Developing Planned Gift Donors**

Donors come in contact with the charity in many ways. They attend events, serve on the board, volunteer to deliver services, use the organization’s services, or give regularly. A donor who receives a newsletter or invitation to a seminar may just as easily respond to the president, dean, major gift officer, or alumni office as to the planned giving officer. Train the “team” about your marketing activities, coach them on how to respond, and make it easy to pass the donor to you for follow through.

**1. Topics**

Create a quarterly or semi-annual staff training program that involves all constituencies that touch donors. To get the best results, segment these groups and relate the training message to what they do on a daily basis, and leave the group with a follow-up exercise to put what they have learned into practice. Consider the following topics.

**TABLE 1  
STAFF AND ADVISORY BOARD TRAINING TOPICS**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Follow up Exercise</b>
Identifying the Top Planned Gift Prospects	To teach staff to identify those donors – at every giving level – who are potential planned gift donors.	Develop a list of the top 100 donors in the school or program.
The Planned Giving Call: The Start, The Follow Through, and the Finish	To give staff members a comfort level in having personal conversations with donors to identify personal interests, and goals for the university.	To have the planned giving conversation with at least 5 donors, using the structure recommended in the training; to record the information gained from the call on the data system.
The Top Ten Best Development Practices at the university	This session should focus on a “top ten” list focused on best practices in cultivating donors, providing stewardship for donors, and moving them along the donor continuum.	Implement the top ten practices in their programs.
Understanding the Basic Planned Gift Options	This is the most academic of the sessions, but is designed to remained focus on the big picture.	Identify 10 potential donors that, based on conversations with those donors, might benefit from a current gift of non-cash assets, a gift that generates income, or a deferred gift.
Ten Things Deans Can Do to Promote Planned Gifts	A session directed at Deans (and Department Chairs) that goes straight to the activities that cultivate planned gift donors and	Provide deans with a list of the 10 to do items.

	generate more gifts.	
The Role of the Advisory Board in Building Endowment	Show advisory board members how they can support the development of major and planned gifts to build endowment.	The exercise here may be to develop a one-year plan for the Advisory Board's involvement in cultivating and soliciting endowment gifts.
Expanding Options for Major Gifts With Non-cash Assets	Learning more about non-cash gifts, and the issues associated with acceptance. Since this really expands a donor's ability to make a current gift, this has immediate currency for the staff.	The training would include a checklist of questions to raise with non-cash gifts. The exercise would involve incorporating this checklist in the staff member's current calling materials.
Giving Strategies for Every Age	A practical look at the changes in a donor's perspectives and expectations at 40, 50, 60, and 70+.	Divide the top 100 donor list by decade. Review top donors considering the principles taught in the session.
Planned Gifts for Donors with Limited Assets	This focuses strictly on gifts for donors without substantive assets – insurance, bequests, charitable gift annuities.	Identify 20 donors that fit this profile.
Planned Gifts for Donors with Moderate Assets	This focuses on gifts for donors with average assets.	Identify 20 donors that fit this profile.
Planned Gifts for Donors with Wealth	This focuses on gifts for the very wealthy.	Identify 20 donors that fit this profile.
The Magic of Stewardship	This session concentrates on the value of the personal call, telephone call, letter with information on a program of specific interest to the donor to connect with the donor between solicitations.	Create a one-year stewardship plan that will generate at least 5 non-soliciting contacts per year with the staff member's best donors.

## 2. Who to Include

### a. Planned Giving Staff

Planned giving staff should engage in regular internal training on practical topics. These may include instruction on donor calls, use of the university's data system, successful strategies for working with deans, how to leverage contacts with planned giving staff, and technical information on cutting edge gift forms.

### b. Development Staff

The university's development staff – especially the major gift staff – come in contact with thousands (do the math) of its best donors each year. Think of the impact of introducing one simple planned giving concept (and leaving behind basic information) on each call. If nothing else, the major gift officer can ask that the donor consider membership

in the legacy society. The chance of a donor follow-up in response to a personal solicitation is substantially higher than follow up in response to a newsletter or other broadcast invitation.

Major gift officers must have training and easy to use tools to plant these ideas. They will not be willing to introduce gift planning ideas they cannot explain, or in any way endanger a current major gift to benefit planned giving. Training helps them understand that a planned gift commitment anchors major gift donors so long as the request is on a “both/and” basis. Easy marketing tools make it simple to plant ideas, and leave the follow up to the professionals on the gift planning team.

### **c. Deans, Department Heads, and Program Directors**

Some deans understand development while others do not. (I suspect some of this is genetic.) Most deans, department heads and program directors can be trained in the basics to add valuable leverage to limited planned giving staff. It is usually best to have a session geared specifically to the deans and department or program heads (although you would want the development staff associated with the deans to be present) and to have the class taught in part by a dean with success in this area. The most successful dean training focuses on easy “to do” items. These may include making 5 phone calls every Monday morning to donors who have made a gift in the prior week, thanking that donor for his or her support, acknowledging the donor’s giving history (3 years, 5 years, etc.), taking a donor to lunch each week, or similar activities. These are small steps that do a great deal to connect the deans to committed donors and help them call on their universally-held ability to talk about the accomplishments of the school and goals for the future.

### **d. Advisory Boards and Other Volunteers**

Finally, do not overlook an annual training event with the advisory boards and other organized volunteers. While these sessions may be billed as educational events to help them talk to the university’s donors, the first goal is always to get the volunteer to translate the information personally and consider a gift.

## **D. Go the Extra Mile To Improve Internal Communication**

The planned giving staff will get greater cooperation from the Deans, Department Heads, Program Directors and development staff associated with the university’s divisions if those individuals know and are comfortable with staff and have trust in staff’s interaction with key donors. Try these ideas:

- Assign planned giving officers to schools/colleges/programs to develop ongoing contact and build relationships. This will allow the planned giving officer to learn the important facts about the school/college/program, its culture, and the key players.
- Meet with assigned areas at least quarterly. Share information about current legacy society commitments at that school/college/program, and new commitments entering the pipeline since the last meeting.

- Attend staff meetings when possible.
- Take development staff on a call when calling on one of their donors.
- Coach the area's staff on data gathering.
- Profile the area's donors to identify trends, consistency in giving, and other indicators of potential.
- Work with the area's staff to develop a top 50 (or 100) planned giving prospect list.

#### **E. Set Goals and a Budget**

Most planned giving departments start the year with a finite amount of money allocated to marketing. Use the funds carefully by making a list of possible activities, developing a rough budget for each, and then identifying goals for the activity.<sup>4</sup> Goals may include number of responses, number of completed gifts, or number of gift commitments. Then sort the activities by effort/cost/expected return, selecting those activities that should generate the most positive results. This process not only serves to develop a budget, but establishes clear goals and expectations for each activity.

The budget should be monitored through the year, and each activity analyzed at year end. Compare goals to results. Think about why the activity was particularly successful or failed. Use this data to guide the following years' activities.

### **III. External Marketing Secrets to Success**

External activities describe efforts directed outwardly to donors such as newsletters, letters, recognition events, professional advisor outreach, and personal calls.

#### **A. Brand, Segment, and Personalize Your Marketing Messages**

Brand your marketing materials to reflect your charity and its gift planning department rather than using materials generic to the industry. Feature donors and families who support your program and resonate with and reflect your top donor segments. Include stories about individuals impacted by your nonprofit. Help donors see the future impact of their gift.

Segment your appeals using your data. Send one message to younger donors interested in protecting family members, preparing for retirement, selling a business, or receiving an inheritance. Send a different message to older donors focused on their legacy or generating income in retirement. Distinguish appeals to alumni from appeals to parents or friends. Segmenting allows you to appeal to specific donor needs and interests.

Personalize your marketing messages using a cover letter with the donor's name and a personal note encouraging him to give you a call. The response rate will increase dramatically.

---

<sup>4</sup> See the section following on drafting a planned giving marketing plan.

## **B. Know Exactly What You Expect the Donor To Do**

Put yourself in the donor's shoes and anticipate their response when they receive your newsletter, letter, or event invitation. For example, assume that the ACGA rates are declining and you want to solicit donors to create charitable gift annuities before the rates go up. You have a number of choices. You can mail a flyer to your donors age 60 and older to notify them gift annuity rates are declining, show them the rate comparison and charitable gift annuity benefits, provide a "hotline" to get quick personal illustrations, and emphasize the date on which the rates will change. Then, your staff must be able to respond to the calls. Or, you may insert an article or boxed item in your newsletter, mentioning ACGA rates are decreasing effective on a certain date. Or, you can mention the changing rates to your development staff, encouraging them to pass the information to their older donor prospects when making calls. Which is likely to produce the best result? The first option will be most likely to produce gifts because it clearly states the message and describes the expected result. Using the combination of options will be even more effective, but the use of the second or third choice alone will accomplish little. You cannot afford to be subtle or oblique if you plan to generate results.

Sometimes the marketing goal is simply to educate donors and plant seeds for future gifts. These messages – especially important when building visibility for new programs – have a different focus. While the ultimate objective is to generate a gift, the interim goal is to get the donor to think about his personal goals, introduce the idea of including the charity in his personal planning, and encourage him to envision the impact his gift will have on the charity's future. Most veteran gift planners have stories of donors arriving to discuss a charitable remainder trust or gift annuity bearing a dog-eared, three-year old copy of a newsletter that planted the idea. See Appendix A for a brief reviewing of marketing expectations.

## **C. Select the Marketing Medium That Best Fits Your Donors, Goals, and Budget**

Every university has access to the same set of marketing tools – brochures, newsletters, direct mail pieces, seminars, websites, and personal visits. Your university's success hinges on selecting the tools that best fit the ages, educational level, and interactive patterns of your donors. This is where all the data kicks in. Good data will tell you where the donors are located, the type of businesses they are involved in, their ages, and where they are they in the financial cycle. You must also factor in your budget, available staff (for donor calls and follow up), and professional resources. Resist the temptation to copy other programs that may have very different donor mixes and resources than your own.

Always consider resources unique to your university. When the majority of your alumni are located within easy driving distance, place greater emphasis on personal contact, events, and calls. If your alumni are active on the website (using it for sports schedules, class directory searches, or other posted information), make it easy to request information on funding these events or supporting the university. If the university's publications are well received, look for ways to consistently integrate planning giving information (available planning resources, event information, or donor recognition) in the publication.

**D. Use Your Planned Giving Goals To Shape Your Marketing Plan  
(Rather Than Using the Marketing Tools To Shape Your Goals)**

The most effective planned giving plan begins with clear goals and objectives. If your primary planned giving goal is to generate 30 new bequest commitments, employ marketing messages that are likely to create that result. Do more than urge potential donors to include your charity under their will. Employ articles making the case for engaging in personal planning, coach the donor through the steps in creating a will, provide advice about selecting a qualified professional advisor, provide tools to use in setting goals, and encourage them to become a members of the Legacy Society. The combination of messages is more likely to get the donor to execute on your message (and inform you of their actions) than a scattered set of messages about various gift forms.

**E. Understand the Value of Professional Advisors to Planned Giving  
Marketing**

Professional advisors are the gift gatekeepers for your donors. When larger gifts are involved – especially deferred gifts – donors are likely to seek advice and counsel from advisors on the appropriateness and structure of the gift. Gift planning will be far more productive if the university builds relationships with this group. Consider these strategies for building solid relationships with professional advisors.

**1. The Small Professional Advisory Board**

There are two ways to construct a professional advisory board: a small, working group or a large advisory council. The most common format is the small professional advisory board is designed to support a planned giving program, and a limited or inexperienced staff.

**a. Selecting Members of the Advisory Board**

Professional advisory boards are popular and the most recognized professionals will receive many requests to participate. The nonprofit should focus on those professionals that are most likely to participate. Begin by preparing a list of 5 to 10 professionals in each of the professional advisory member categories. Then, rate each potential member using the following criteria:

- History of donor support
- History of family support
- Community influence (politically, socially, economically, professionally)
- History of use of services provided
- Other experience that makes the professional useful to your organization
- Amount of time available to spend with your organization
- Previous commitments to other organizations (negative scoring)
- Leadership skills

Select those professionals that have the highest ratings and make personal calls to each member to solicit participation. Make your expectations and the demands of the job clear by providing:

- A statement of the purpose and the goals of the professional advisory board
- A description of the types of members, how they are selected, and how long they serve
- A schedule of the anticipated meetings (generally, i.e., quarterly, monthly, etc.)
- A description of the committees that are a part of the professional advisory board, and the membership requirements for participation
- A detailed list of possible activities
- A statement on the adoption of conflict of interest policies
- A description of the board's relationship to the nonprofit board, if any
- The name or job description of the staff member responsible for the professional advisory board
- Any other details that will foster a clear understanding of the role of the professional advisory board and the duties of its members.<sup>5</sup>

#### **b. The Role Of The Professional Advisory Board**

The key to creating a successful professional advisory board is to set clear, attainable goals for the group. The following tasks are easily handled by group of professionals:

- *Adopt gift acceptance policies.* Use the professional advisory board to review and set limits on gift acceptance policies. Draw on their experience with their clients to anticipate problems and draft answers for those anticipated events. This process is an excellent way to educate professionals on the many issues that exist in planned giving.
- *Create a seminar series.* Use the professionals to help profile the donor base and select seminar topics for each segment of that base. Get the board to contribute ideas on speakers and times for events. Get their input on the keys to successful seminars. Then, ask the advisors to make those calls on their professional friends to line up the speakers.
- *Add a planned giving message to the nonprofit's newsletters and publications.* Ask the advisors to provide input on the most effective way of communicating planned gift concepts to donors. The professional group will have some experience in producing firm newsletters and will help design a publication that grabs the attention of potential donors.
- *Ask the advisory board member to "profile" potential planned gift donors to the organization.* Ask the members to think in generic terms first and to create a list of donor characteristics for various gift forms. The group should then be able to identify

---

<sup>5</sup> Axelrod, Nancy R., *Creating and Renewing An Advisory Board: Strategies for Success* (1996, National Center for Nonprofit Boards publication), p.6

individuals in the community that fit that profile. Do not expect these professionals to give you confidential information related to their own client base.

- *Ask the advisory board members to identify potential attendees for seminars.* Make sure that they understand the profile of the donor who would most benefit from the seminar. Then, ask them to draw on their personal experience to identify potential attendees.
- *Ask the advisory board members to contact potential seminar attendees and ask them to attend.* This contact can be in the form of a personal phone call or a note attached to the seminar invitation.
- *Ask the advisory board to review brochures and marketing materials for planned giving.* There is a lot of material available in the market, some of which is better than other materials. Use your board to help keep your material current. You will find that you also educate advisory board members in this process.
- *Ask board members to advocate planned giving in their practices by eliciting charitable goals during the planning process.* Encouraging professional to advocate philanthropy in their practices will have a significant long-term impact on the community and will ultimately benefit every charitable organization in the area. The simplest way to do this is to add the following questions to the intake questionnaire:
  1. *Are there charitable organizations that you support on an annual basis?*
  2. *Would you like to include any of these organizations in your estate plan?*
  3. *If there were a way to shift dollars from taxes to charity, would you be interested in exploring this option?*

## **2. The Larger Advisory Council**

When a nonprofit does not need ongoing support but wants to develop relationships with a number of professionals, the larger advisory council form may be more appropriate.

### **a. Goals and Objectives**

The goals of the larger advisory council include:

- Creating visibility for the nonprofit within the professional community (such as when the organization is conducting a capital campaign, endowment campaign, or launching a new planned giving program)
- Encouraging philanthropy, through ongoing contact to reminder planners of charitable gift options
- Educating the professional community, thereby creating more gifts
- Forming personal contacts with members of the professional community through increased contact and personal calls

## **b. Constructing the Group**

Since the purpose of the advisory council is to make contact with as many professionals as possible, the nonprofit should take an inclusive, rather than exclusive, approach to membership. Identify the broad professional community that works in estate planning. Include attorneys, accountants, trust officers, life insurance agents, financial planners, stock brokers, and real estate brokers (if appropriate).

Estate planning attorneys are easily identified from several resources. The most common resources for this information are the rosters of the local Estate Planning Council<sup>6</sup>, the National Committee on Planned Giving (or the local Planned Giving Council),<sup>7</sup> the membership list of American College of Trust and Estate Counsel,<sup>8</sup> those serving as speakers for public or private seminars, or recommendations of board members and donors. Other professionals can be identified through an analysis of the membership list of the local planned giving council, or by identifying those serving as seminar speakers. The nonprofit can also get a list of local firms, call a contact in each firm, and ask for a list of names of all those engaged in estate planning. Finally, the charity can add a line to the planned giving donor membership form requesting the name of the donor's attorney, accountant, insurance agent, broker, trust officer or other professional. These names can then be added to the donor base.

Constructing a list of these professionals is recommended whether or not an advisory council is created. The list serves as a reference list for donors who need recommendations for an advisor, a list of resources for professional help for the charity, and a calling list for the planned gift officer.

## **3. Educational Efforts**

One of the most productive ways to develop the professional community is through education. Regular educational efforts serve to raise the visibility of the charity, spread its mission, and provide planning ideas that foster charitable giving. Options include any or all of the following.

---

<sup>6</sup> The National Association of Estate Planners & Councils awards the Accredited Estate Planner (AEP) designation; the public can access the membership list at <[www.naepc.org](http://www.naepc.org)>.

<sup>7</sup> The National Committee on Planned Giving (NCPG) provides an excellent forum for an attorney and planned giving staff to learn more about planned giving. The mission of NCPG is to facilitate, coordinate, and encourage the education and training of the planned giving community and to facilitate effective communication among the many professionals in this community.<sup>7</sup> Founded in 1988, it is the leading association for gift planning professionals, with more than 11,000 members nationwide who belong to more than 100 local councils. Members include development officers for nonprofit organizations and consultants and donor advisors who work in a variety of for-profit settings. The National Committee on Planned Giving maintains a searchable online membership directory at <[www.ncpg.org](http://www.ncpg.org)>; most charities maintain membership in this organization.

<sup>8</sup> The American College of Trust and Estate Counsel is an exclusive membership group of experienced estate planners. Its membership list is posted at <[www.actec.org](http://www.actec.org)> and accessible to the public.

### **a. Newsletters**

Donor newsletters focus on issues that motivate donors to make engage in estate planning and consider a charitable gift. Professional newsletters should focus on issues that help the professional build his practice. Donor stories are important elements of a professional newsletter, but the story should focus on the donor's motivation in making the gift and the role of the donor's advisor in completing the gift. Current legislation and tax news, planning tips, and case studies are also appropriate content. If the charity has solid internal resources, the newsletter can be written in-house. Most charities use outside vendors and tailor the content to other messages delivered through seminars or other communication.

### **b. Resource Manuals**

Provide the professional community with easy-to-use information on charitable giving. This includes not only technical information on gift forms, substantiation, and valuation, but also information about the nonprofit's gift acceptance policy, endowment minimums, and contact information.

### **c. Roundtable Meetings**

Conduct one or two meetings a year for professionals that allow them to network, get exposure to your organization, and feature their expertise. These need not be expensive. Select four or five current charitable planning topics, and ask a team of two to lead each discussion. Invite professionals to a breakfast meeting, and ask them to sign up for a topic when they accept the invitation. Leave time for networking at the outset of the meeting. As the meal finishes, introduce them to your charity's key staff and board members, and then divide them into groups by topic and let them discuss the issues.

### **d. Seminars**

Professional seminars allow the charity to educate the advisor community, and advisors to gain continuing education credits for their attendance. The audience will have a number of opportunities to attend seminars, so the event should have something to distinguish it. Here are some suggestions:

- *Use an excellent speaker.* Attracting someone from outside the area has the advantage of bring in the "expert." Poll the professionals on the advisory board, the executive committee of the advisory council, or simply the individuals providing services to the charity to develop a list of potential names.
- *Focus the materials on information that can be used in the professional's practice.* There's a big difference between a lecture on gift forms and instruction on how to identify opportunities for charitable gifts.
- *Qualify the session for continuing education credit with the bar, and the CPA society, the insurance commission and advertise this approval (and the number of hours or credits involved)*

*on the seminar invitation.* Provide signed, certification of attendance sheets for trust officers, brokers, or other professionals. This requires that the seminar is planned well in advance, and that materials are submitted in time to advertise approved credits on the invitation.

**e. Recognition Events**

Invite professional advisors to the charity's annual donor recognition event for the legacy (planned giving) society. Provide separate recognition for those professionals that have assisted or been a part of a gift during the year. Create an award for the professional that has made the largest contribution to the charitable community during the year.

**f. Personal Contact**

By far, the most successful marketing effort is to make personal contact with the advisor community. Personal contact creates a vivid reminder of the charity, allows the development officer to develop more information about the advisor and her philosophy in estate planning. Since personal contact is the most effective marketing tool to use with professionals, the development officer should schedule calls on advisors, just as she schedules calls on donors. Include one or two professional visits each month. Select advisors that are known to be experts in estate or charitable planning (not known to the charity's officer) and call to ask for an appointment.

The development officer should the advisor information on the charity, contact information for the advisor, and the legacy society brochure (asking that the professional provide it to any client who makes a planned gift). Develop information on the professional's background (education, work experience), other practice specialties, size of firm, and perspective on charitable planning. Record this information on the charity's database after the meeting.

**F. Consistency Is Critical To Success**

Encouraging planned gifts is a long-term process requiring patience, persistence, and consistency. Make sure the program's key messages are consistent and remain visible year round. Take advantage of current publications to include reminders about the importance of bequests, the availability of gift annuities, and the Legacy Society. Integrate these efforts with regular events (such as reunion weekends, special events, and annual appeals) and in the publications of various fundraising areas.

**G. Do Not Be Afraid To Make Changes**

Analyze the success of your marketing efforts by comparing the results to the goals set for the activity. When an effort is successful, determine why it worked and build on that principle in the coming year. When an activity fails, examine the message, the realism of the goals set for the activity, and other factors that may have impacted the result. It may be necessary to deliver a different message, deliver the same message differently, or use another medium. This critical analysis will allow you to make changes to work more effectively.

#### IV. Creating a Marketing Plan: The Eight Step Process

A university's planned giving department has many ways to market its message. In creating a marketing plan, select one or more methods that allow the most effective and efficient delivery of your message. A plan developed after careful study of the available options allows the nonprofit to take a disciplined, budgeted approach to marketing.

##### A. Step One: Assess the Audience

The marketing plan must be tailored to meet the goals of the university; this means that each university's marketing plan will be different. It also means that while you can get ideas for successful activities from other organizations, it rarely works to simply copy seminars, mailings, or formats successful elsewhere. You have to understand the elements of the marketing option that are applicable to your university.

Begin with your data to establish a profile of the university's donors (segmented to the degree possible, the location of those donors, and the location of alumni. Analyze characteristics of your most frequent donors to determine what they have in common. Think about follow through when donors respond to marketing. This, obviously, will largely depend on the geographic dispersion of potential planned giving donors and how accessible they are to staff. Knowing the profile of potential donors, what you'd like them to do, and how your staff will respond will shape the messages and gift options in the marketing message. The marketing plan should focus on the pools of individuals most likely to participate as planned gift donors. Obviously, characteristics such as high contact, solid understanding of mission, ease of identification, and wealth potential increase the level of priority. For example, if you identify a list of 100 long-term donors, many of whom have served as board members, your first priority may be to make personal calls to solicit membership in your planned giving recognition society. With a wealth of known donors, it would be foolish to prioritize a series of seminars designed to identify potential donors for contact. The bottom line is that the university must know its donor base and its available options, then match them to its target donor audience to generate results that achieve its goals.

##### B. Step Two: Assess the University's Resources

- *The university's visibility.* Universities are generally visible and well known allowing them to capitalize on name recognition. The case statement for long-term support may not be as well known, however, requiring direct mail, or a concerted effort to raise the visibility of that case support within the donor group. In addition, you will need to account for regional differences. A campaign in the university's home town where it is highly visible will have a different flavor than activities addressed to donors many states removed.
- *The maturity of the university.* Longevity has many advantages. A mature nonprofit will have contacts, name recognition, and a track record. Older organizations will also be able to build a compelling case statement for longevity and the critical role of the university to the community, the state, and even the region.

Younger universities may need to devote more energy to making the case for long-term viability and the urgency of their mission. For example, it is more challenging (although still successful) for the University of Alabama at Birmingham – a university with only a 20+ year history – to solicit planned gifts than for the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa – a campus established in 1831. Both institutions will be successful. However, the planned giving marketing programs will look very different.

The maturity of the university's development program also affects the tone of planned giving marketing. If the university has only recently initiated personal calls and an emphasis on major gifts, it will not be able to deliver as sophisticated a planned giving message, or expect as strong a response to marketing messages, as those universities with established capital campaign and major gift structures.

- *The depth of volunteers and availability of those volunteers to assist with marketing.* Universities with large groups of volunteers (such as advisory boards or councils associated with schools, colleges, departments, or programs) may be able to include a more personal calling or activity-driven marketing component, while those that have few volunteers may not. Universities without volunteers must look for ways to communicate that do not involve lots of labor. If a mailing generates 75 responses, the team must be able to respond to those potential donors on a timely basis.
- *The depth of the nonprofit staff available to support the marketing effort.* The goal of most marketing efforts is to generate responses for follow-up calls. The university must ensure that it has the resources to handle the responses received in a cost effective manner. Often, planned giving departments are centralized and may be comprised of no more than 3 or 4 gift planners.

## **C. Step Three: Decide What You Hope to Achieve**

### **1. Big Picture**

One of the biggest battles fought between the planned giving team and the Vice President for Advancement (or even the President) is how to measure success. Since most planned gifts are deferred, measuring revenue alone – especially for a relatively young planned giving program – is not the most accurate indicator of the success of a marketing plan.

Decide the most important goals in advance. The marketing plan should then be geared to achieve these goals. This sounds simple but is often overlooked.

Consider these common measures and goals:

- Generate \$\$ in bequest, bequest substitute, and beneficiary designation revenue.
- Generate \$\$ in charitable remainder trust terminations.
- Generate \$\$ in new charitable gift annuities (face value).

- Generate xxx new bequest commitments.
- Generate \$\$ in known bequest commitments.
- Generate xxx in new Legacy Society members.
- Make xxx personal calls on potential donors during the year.
- Make xxx planned gift proposals during the year.
- Have xxx contacts with the schools/colleges/division/program staff during the year.
- Conduct xxx training sessions for staff/faculty/deans during the year.

These goals must be quantified and prioritized.

## 2. Planned Giving Messages

Set a staging sequence for planned gifts that allows the organization to begin with basic ideas and move to more complex options. For example, in its first year the university may decide to emphasize bequests, outright non-cash gifts, and insurance and retirement plan designations. As the program matures, the university may expand its message to encourage non-cash gifts (closely held corporation securities, real estate, tangible personal property, intellectual property) and more sophisticated estate planning issues. Use marketing activities that support gifts emphasized in the implementation plan, and focus on the priority donor groups.

### D. Step Four: List the Marketing Activities That Will be Conducted and Details of Each Activity

Consider the marketing activities that may be used to reach each of these goals. Common options include:

- Personal calls
- Newsletters
- Brochures
- Special mailings
- Response pieces
- Website outreach
- Seminars
- Internal training
- Articles in the university's magazine or alumni publications
- Postcards

These options represent tools that will address established goals. For example, if the primary planned giving goal is to generate new commitments, the most efficient and effective way to achieve that goal may be to make personal calls on targeted donors. This may drive you to build stronger relationships with the major gift officers in place to generate leads for calls on qualified donors.

If you are trying to educate the donor population, raise awareness of planned giving options, and prompt inquiries, you may choose a combination of a regular newsletter and seminars in cities with concentrated numbers of donors/alumni.

If you are trying to generate new charitable gift annuities, you may choose to devote an entire issue of the newsletter to this gift option, and follow the newsletter with personalized letter invitations to request an illustration targeted at donors age 65 and higher.

#### **E. Step Five: Establish Staff and Dollar Costs for Each Activity**

Each activity must have its own dollar budget. In addition, each activity must account for the staff time required to conduct and respond to activities. Accounting for these costs at the outset ensures that the marketing plan is realistic, and that needs are addressed at the outset. Many wonderful marketing plans have failed because organizations did not have the resources to accomplish the steps set out in the plan.

#### **F. Step Six: Establish Goals for Each Activity**

Although this planning exercise began with broad goals, attach specific goals to each marketing activity. Experience is a great teacher. If a direct mailing is planned, establish an anticipated response rate and measure the results. Does the university expect to develop 25 new gift annuities? Does the university expect to add 50 new members to the recognition society? Review the results at the end of the year to determine which type of marketing activity is the most effective and efficient.

The final marketing plan document is also a great resource for the budgeting process. A finance/executive committee is far more likely to approve a marketing budget that provides detail on the donor base, and the cost and the expected results of each activity than a budget that has a vague lump sum figure for “marketing activities.” See Appendix B for a sample marketing plan.

#### **G. Step Seven: Execute the Plan**

Plans must be executed in a timely manner if they are to be successful.

#### **H. Step Eight: Analyze Results at Year End**

Always take the time to analyze results at year end, reaching conclusions about activities that were successful (and why they succeeded), those that failed (and why), and those that did not meet expectations but should be successful if reworked. Include a budget analysis. Report the results to the planned giving team and the development management team.

## **I. Other Marketing Ideas**

Some of the marketing conducted by a planned giving officer relates to more indirect activities. A few of the best ideas from successful marketing-oriented development officers include:

- Prepare planned giving notebooks as resource material for local attorneys and accountants. Include draft language for bequests, tutorials on various gift forms, and lots of information about the nonprofit.
- Create a membership society for professionals that makes them part of the nonprofit's support group. Require no meetings or membership fees, but award them a certificate or plaque indicating that they are part of the group. Hold special invitation-only educational sessions for these professionals on an annual basis. Qualify those educational sessions for continuing education credits to get even higher attendance.
- Include recognition society membership solicitation brochures in every annual, capital campaign, or major gift acknowledgement.
- Make personal visits to thank donors who have made consistent gifts. Focus on the constancy rather than the size of the gift. Few institutions take the time to visit those \$100 annual donors, and yet many of those donors will make a planned gift if asked.
- Make calls on professional advisors to ask for their help in reaching your donors. Offer to run gift calculations, provide technical citations, or provide advice. Getting to know the professional will make the next communication easier. The visit may also produce a planned gift down the road, simply because the attorney can respond to a client's questions about the nonprofit.
- Clip articles during the year and send them to donors to follow up on conversations or interests. This activity sends the message that the planned giving officer is focused on the donor's interests and objectives.

A marketing plan focuses the nonprofit's efforts and dollars on the most productive activities. Have patience and understand that marketing may take some time to produce results. Construct the program well, be consistent in delivery, and the message will produce results.

**APPENDIX A**  
**UNDERSTANDING MARKETING GOALS**

*The activities that make up the marketing plan must have clear goals. The nonprofit should develop activities that cover each basic goal.*

<i>GOALS</i> →	Contact New Donors	<i>Develop New Leads</i>	<i>Maintain Contact and Visibility With Donor</i>	<i>Recognize And Thank Donor For Gift</i>	<i>Close Gifts</i>
<i>ACTIVITIES</i> ↓					
<i>Mass Direct Mail</i>	X	X			
<i>Mailing Targeted Brochures</i>	X	X	X		
<i>Mailing Year End/ Special Help Brochures</i>	X		X		
<i>Newsletters</i>	X	X	X	X	
<i>Web Site</i>	X	X			
<i>Donor Visits</i>			X	X	X
<i>Recognition Societies</i>			X	X	
<i>Recognition Events</i>			X	X	

**APPENDIX B  
SAMPLE MARKETING PLAN1`**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Profile of Prospective Audience</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Expected Cost Number</b>	<b>Goals</b>
<b>January</b>	1. Initiate Recognition Society solicitation		Select name; get board approval; draft	\$1,800	
	2. Draft Brochure for society		text and typeset; select names to receive		
	3. Conduct board training	Board members	Conduct Workshop to set goals	\$500	Get commitments from board to RS; build excitement
	4. Select or draft basic brochure on bequests/need to plan & ways to give	Used to respond to inquiries as result of mailings	Importance to have follow up mailing to continue conversations	250	\$500
<b>February</b>	1. Send Letter to request participation in RS and to ask for notice if already qualified	Long term donors; advisory board; volunteers; past board;	Focus on obvious donors of organization	1,300	\$550
	2. Make personal calls on board members	Current board and some selected advisory board	Make personal calls to ask for participation and raise interest	35	Strengthen contact with board; make 12 calls; recruit at least 50%
	3. Develop list of potential members of professional advisory board.	Leaders in professional community with ties to ABC Charity	Use internal committee and board to develop names; assign contacts	15	
<b>March</b>	1. Continue to make calls on board members	Current board and some selected board	Make personal calls to ask for participation		Strengthen contact with board; make 12 calls; recruit at least 50%
	2. Make calls to recruit members of professional	Leaders in professional community with ties to	Make personal calls to ask for participation		Make 15 calls; seek active involvement

	advisory board; set first meeting for April	ABC Charity				
	3. Mail professional planned giving newsletter	Professional community of estate planning professionals; some sole practitioners	Focus on importance of asking clients to consider bequests; basic estate planning	250	\$425	Keep name in front of professionals; generate 12-15 inquiries and at least one gift.
	4. Mail donor oriented planned giving newsletter	Current list of potential recognition society	Focus on importance of planning; emphasize	1300	\$1,000	Keep name in front of potential donors;
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Profile of Prospective Audience</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Expected Number</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Goals</b>
		members	the need for a will; basic estate planning			generate 65 inquiries in next year
	5. Continue to make calls on board members		Make personal calls			Make 11 calls
<b>April</b>	1. Use professional advisory committee to plan seminar for professionals for Sept.	Professional community that receives newsletter	Make calls to key players; get Estate Planning Council to announce/support			Design seminar of interest; discuss ways to attract audience and send message
	2. Begin to plan recognition society event for November	Involves staff, professional advisory group; development committee				Plan event that is special to generate excitement about role
<b>May</b>	1. Develop profiles for long term donors; prioritize top 100 names	Long term donors in giving base	Get staff involved in prioritizing; develop history before calls	750		Develop 25 new gifts from overlooked donor pool
<b>June</b>	1. Begin to call on potential donors from prioritized list		Use board, development committee to identify contacts to set up meetings; request membership in RS			Make 12-20 Calls Get 40 new members for year
	2. Mail professional news-		Build on estate planning	250	\$425	Keep name in front of

	letter		Focus on basic charitable solutions under will		professionals; generate 12-15 inquiries and at least one gift.
	3. Mail donor newsletter		Build on estate planning Focus on basic charitable solutions under will	1300	\$1,000 Keep name in front of potential donors; generate 65 inquiries in next year
<b>July</b>	1. Continue to call on potential donors on prioritized list		Use board, development committee to identify contacts to set up meetings; request membership in RS		Develop 25 new gifts from overlooked donor pool
<b>August</b>	1. Continue to call on potential donors on prioritized list		Use board, development committee to identify contacts to set up meetings; request membership in RS		Develop 25 new gifts from overlooked donor pool
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Profile of Prospective Audience</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Expected Cost Number</b>	<b>Goals</b>
	prioritized list		contacts to set up meetings; request membership in RS		pool
	2. Use professional committee to call others to insure strong attendance at seminar	Professional community	Need to make calls, send notes to get participation in seminar	250	Increase attendance at event; increase exposure to professional community
<b>Sept.</b>	1. Conduct professional seminar	Key professional advisors in community		75	Increase exposure to ABC Charity
	2. Mail professional newsletter		Article on gift annuities; announce launch of new program; focus on profile of gift annuity donor	250	\$425

	3. Mail donor newsletter		Article on gift annuities; announce launch of new program; focus on gift annuity solutions/ advantages	1300	\$1,000	
	4. Make plans for end of year special focus mailing	All professionals; all potential donors	Mailing to emphasize benefits of gifts of appreciated assets	2000	\$500	Encourage end of year gifts; encourage planning by using appreciated property; increase giving by 25%
<b>October</b>	1. Make follow up calls, send letters to professionals that attended seminar		Ask board for help in contacts and follow through			Answer questions; develop personal relationship
	2. Review and update lists for end of year mailing; special letters for some donors		Ask board for help in developing additional contacts			Identify new donors for potential donor pool
<b>November</b>	1. Mail end of year mailing first week in November.	All professionals; all potential donors				Encourage end of year gifts; encourage planning by using appreciated property; increase giving by 25%
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Profile of Prospective Audience</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Expected Number</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Goals</b>
	2. Donor recognition event	All recognition society members; good donors who are potential RS	May need to make some phone calls to encourage	100	\$2,500	
		members; good donors	Need mementos attendance	50	\$1,000	
	3. Mail professional newsletter	All professionals	Emphasize end of year giving; tax benefits;	250	\$425	

		benefits of appreciated securities; role of gift annuities		
	4. Mail donor newsletter	All potential donors	Emphasize end of year giving; tax benefits; benefits of appreciated securities; role of gift annuities	1300 \$1,000
<b>December</b>	1. Follow up on inquiries and gifts!			Make donors feel great