



NAVIGATING THE WORLD OF MOBILE

In the first 9 days after the earthquake in Haiti over \$26 million was raised through mobile giving. The earthquake hit Haiti in January. By June 2010, the American Red Cross had raised \$41 million in text donations for Haiti Relief Efforts.

International Fund for Animal Welfare used text messaging to collect over 50,000 names via a petition campaign aimed to ban seal hunting in Canada.

Hill Country Ride for AIDS used an iPhone application to provide their participants with a new fundraising tool, which allowed riders to raise more on average over prior years as well as added new donors to their housefile.

United Church of Christ optimized their website for smartphones by providing daily devotionals, GPS mapping to find the closest church when travelling or look up contact information for churches – they adapted their most valuable content to be readily available to users on the fly.

With new mobile successes continuing to pop up, you need to get in on the action. But how do you know which methods will be successful for your organization? In this paper we'll walk you through the options available, how to decide what's right for your audience and how to measure success. Then, you'll be one step closer to being in the hand (or pocket) of your constituents.

GETTING STARTED – WHAT'S OUT THERE

Like so many of the other methods you're already using to connect with your constituents – direct mail, phone, online – there are many ways to use Mobile. Mobile spans a wide variety of tactics from text campaigns, mobile phone applications for the iPhone, Blackberry or Android, mobile-ready websites and email optimization.

Understanding what options are available will help you determine what will work best for your housefile and how to integrate mobile with your other programs to maximize results.

Keep in mind that texting campaigns and mobile applications can be used for a variety of campaigns such as fundraising, advocacy and/or general constituent engagement.





ROI – The New Values

Given the nature of how people use their cell phones to not only transact online, but to simply access information, it's important to look at mobile with a dynamic, multi-dimensional view of ROI. Just as important as measuring the bottom-line financial impact generated by mobile campaigns is measuring the depth of your constituents' engagement by being able to mobilize, gather information, and interact with your site on the fly.

Texting doesn't always have to be about fundraising and mobile doesn't have to be about advocacy – you can use these tools to suit your needs and offer another channel to your constituent. In doing so, you'll add value to your constituents' experiences as well as increase the lifetime value of donors and supporters to your organization.

MOBILE APPLICATIONS

Providing your constituents with a mobile application ensures that you will achieve several goals simultaneously – from mission awareness and loyalty, event and general information updates, advocacy issues, to fundraising, and other interactions that are priorities for your organization.

A great example is **The Paramount Theater** in Austin, Texas. This organization created an iPhone application with the ability for users to view a listing of shows for upcoming seasons, buy tickets, obtain a map with GPS-based directions, become a member, make a donation, and even share the application with a friend.

Users had many conveniences in the palm of their hands and The Paramount added value to the member's experience with the organization.



“ We make history every night at The Paramount, but we also understand the importance of staying up-to-date and connecting with today's tech-savvy audience, [With our iPhone application,] we're even better positioned to provide supporters with the best theatre experience possible. ”

*According to Ken Stein,
Executive Director*

MOBILE-READY WEBSITES

Another method to achieving **engagement** success is by optimizing your website for viewing on mobile phones. Your mobile website should include your top pages for key interactions – fundraising, advocacy, registration and accessing content – making it easy for your constituents to engage with you from their phones.

One case in point is **The Ride to Conquer Cancer**. Through a combination of best practices, this organization adapted their site to arrive at a mobile-optimized version where visitors can just as readily gather information and transact on the fly.

Like The Ride to Conquer Cancer, your site can be optimized for mobile and become a value-added experience for constituents and deepen the ways that mobile users can **interact** with your organization.



EMAIL OPTIMIZATION

With the growth of mobile phones, more and more Americans are accessing their email through the hand-held device. In 2010, according to Pew, 34% of all cell phone owners send or receive email messages through their phones¹. Consider how many of your constituents are reading your emails on mobile phones instead of sitting in front of their computers.



So, how do you make your emails look great on a mobile phone? First, let's identify what makes an email translate well to mobile by taking a look at an example from **RESOLVE – The National Infertility Association**.

- Clear and bold graphics that automatically re-size to fit a mobile screen
- Blocks of text broken up with formatting elements such as bulleted lists and links
- Short concisely written copy with clear headers and divided sections
- Clear calls to action in the sidebar
- Pre-header text used as a teaser

Optimizing your email communications is a low-hanging fruit and one that will reap you rewards if you take the time to integrate best practices and a few programming tricks now. Then, make sure to track your results to gain insight and make improvements over time.

TEXT-CAMPAIGNS

We've all heard how successful the **American Red Cross'** Haiti Relief text-to-give campaign was. But how many other success stories have you heard? Not many. Although ARC was able to demonstrate strong response and ROI, text messaging today is best integrated into your multi-channel communications and fundraising strategy² and is equally effective at advocacy, engagement and awareness.

Text-to-Give

Text-to-Give allows cell phone users to send a message to a dedicated phone number indicating they would like to donate. The gift of \$5 or \$10 is collected by the phone companies who will send you a check in 30 – 90 days. Getting set up is easy and your organization may have some great campaigns to run promoting these gift amounts. To ensure success, you need a clear message and the ability to appeal to a large audience given the small donation amounts. But on the flip side, you won't get a donor's information to be able to build a relationship and solicit them later.

¹Pew Internet & American Life Project, "Mobile Access 2010" July 7, 2010; Aaron Smith

²"2010 Nonprofit Text Messaging Benchmarks"; M+R / MobileActive

The Defenders of Wildlife ran a recent fundraising campaign across their many channels of communication including email and text-to-give. The end result was a cohesive, strong and clear campaign with opportunities to raise awareness about the cause as well as donate no matter where their constituents received the message.



Text-to-Call

Also effective at advocacy, text messaging can be delivered as Text-to-Call campaigns where your constituents are asked to call a congressman or key decision maker by dialing a given number that tracks all calls³ or responding to a text message with the word “Call.” Perhaps even more impactful than an email since your recipient has the mobile device right in-hand to make the call and a timely response can make – or break – the outcome.

NARAL used a text message to send the following message to its mobile list: “Obama just reversed the global gag rule! Tell him we’ll stand by him when he does the right thing - reply “call” or dial 202-684-8507 to say “Thanks!”. Callers would hear a recorded message from NARAL president Nancy Keenan and then be connected to the White House switch board.

Now we’ve found a way to use a text campaign that uses a phone for its original purpose – a call – that engages your supporters and makes an impact.

Providing Services with Text Messaging

As a new way to engage constituents, you’re able to deliver text messages that simply contain information or to offer a service for the

recipient. With this in mind, during the presidential campaign, **NARAL** asked subscribers to text “ISSUE Palin” to receive information about Sarah Palin’s anti-choice decisions. NARAL was able to provide a service and inform their constituents who could, in turn, spread the word about the candidate’s record.

The key approach to text messaging campaigns is understanding the varied capabilities and consider it in the larger context of your organization’s communications. Not only is text messaging for fundraising, but it’s also a way to change a vote, get your voice heard on time-critical matters, and provide your constituents with information and a new way of engaging with your mission.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR AUDIENCE

With the many options for mobile, finding what works best for your organization is your first objective. Will your audience respond better to a mobile application built just for them or a text campaign asking them to donate? Will they use your mobile-ready website?

One of the best ways to gauge where to invest your time and money is to ask your constituents directly. Through surveys, user polls and focus groups, as well as data insights you might already have, you can get a strong sense of how your audience wants to engage via mobile.

³“2010 Nonprofit Text Messaging Benchmarks”; M+R / MobileActive

THE BRASS TACKS: MEASURING SUCCESS

With the rundown of mobile solutions out there, it's essential to have a plan in place to determine potential impact when choosing a mobile solution as well as evaluating success once you do launch your mobile initiative. Using some – or a combination of – the following metrics (in addition to a traditional ROI review) will set you on the right path to determine what's working and how to optimize your campaigns.

To measure your text messaging campaigns, make sure to employ standard benchmarks statistics of evaluating the revenue generated and the number of advocacy actions taken, conversion rates on advocacy and fundraising campaigns, list growth, list churn and the most common sources of constituents⁴.

For mobile initiatives such as mobile-ready websites, optimized email campaigns and mobile applications, make sure to dive deep into the results of your campaigns by evaluating the revenue generated and advocacy actions taken, usage statistics (if an application or mobile-ready site), Google Analytics, interactions such as registrations, surveys taken, event attendance, etc., and unsubscribe rates.

With the data to support your program, you'll be able to measure and refine your mobile programs and better understand your constituents who are using these new platforms.

CLOSE

In the wild world of mobile, it's now or never to integrate this newer technology with your current campaigns and to capitalize on the growing demographics of mobile phone users as well as the evolving platforms. By starting now you'll begin to identify your mobile audiences, determine your use cases, and develop analytics to measure what's working / what's not and establish your organization's own benchmarks.

Two of the best immediate tactics are to optimize your email campaigns and your top landing/conversion pages on your website. Then, prepare yourself for full integration by collecting data and behavior information from your constituents through adding fields into your forms as well as conducting surveys and evaluating your web traffic.

With that insight, you will be better positioned to move forward with the bigger investments in time and money – custom applications and Text Campaigns.

Mobile may be the new frontier but know that you don't have to navigate it alone.

Charity Dynamics will help you determine the right mobile tools for your organization; for more information visit www.charitydynamics.com or call 512-241-0561.

⁴“2010 Nonprofit Text Messaging Benchmarks”; M+R / MobileActive