FUNDRAISING AND GIVING DURING THE PANDEMIC AND BEYOND

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Impact of COVID on fundraising and giving in 3 generalisations...

Caveats include...

- Lumping all ‘charities’ together (causes, size, etc)

- UK-wide observation, not specific to Northern Ireland giving

- All in the same storm, but not in the same boat. Some are on rafts, others on superyachts!
1. At a time of emergency, people still gave, and wanted to give, to charity

- The volume of regular givers recruited online more than doubled and for the first time ever surpassed the total of offline regular givers recruited (Open)

- The response of the public to emergency appeals (both to warm bases and cold) was astounding, responding 61% above forecast. (Woods Valldata)

We talk a lot about trust in charities, but we should learn to trust supporters and have confidence that when we ask well, they will give
2. When we build it, they will come...

Digital and virtual events work!

- A 70% increase in online responses in raffle and cash campaigns (Woods Valldata)

- 2.6 challenge – raised over £10m

- Captain Tom – raised over £30m with donations from 162 different countries and 99% of donations were given within 25 days of the Fundraising Page going live

- Auctions, quiz nights, virtual walks, concerts, talks….innovation was everywhere (and didn’t have to be perfect!)

*Although they can’t replace like for like in-person, they engaged and inspired people, raised money, and are a big part of the future. But.....we have to be mindful of digital deficit - 62% of charities surveyed by CAF at the end of 2020 said that they conducted no online fundraising whatsoever.*
3. Don’t underestimate the continued value of traditional methods

- In telephone fundraising, after an initial drop at the beginning of the pandemic, regular monthly gifts in telephone fundraising outperformed pre-COVID levels by as much as 14%. (Purity)

- The response of the public to emergency appeals (both to warm bases and cold) from DM was astounding, responding 61% above forecast (Bluefrog)

- And when it comes to cold appeals, recruitment ROIs have jumped from between 50% to over 130% with acquisition costs tumbling by more than half. This has come from both improved response rates and, in many cases, higher average gifts (Bluefrog)

Key to success was the confidence to keep fundraising, telling a story of your charity in COVID, and recognising the context and sensitive to the situation people may be in
Giving during the pandemic – and what next

- £11.3bn given over 2020 (up from £10.6bn in 2019)

- But fewer people gave (62% vs 65% in 2019)

- And a smaller group of predominantly older supporters are giving more – supporters are more loyal than ever (because of great fundraising!)

- Not just a COVID ‘blip’ it seems like a continuation of a pre-pandemic trend

- Worryingly, the proportion of people giving and average donations continued to decline during 2021.

The most common ways of getting involved, by age cohort (2020 average).

Which, if any, of the following have you in the last 12 months?

16-24 Years

1. Signed a petition (64%)
2. Donated money to charity (49%)
3. Bought an ethical product (38%)

25-44 Years

1. Signed a petition (55%)
2. Donated money to charity (53%)
3. Given goods to charity (47%)

45-64 Years

1. Given goods to charity (60%)
2. Donated money to charity (59%)
3. Signed a petition (54%)

65+ Years

1. Given goods to charity (68%)
2. Donated money to charity (65%)
3. Signed a petition (49%)

Base: all adults 16+ c. 1,000 per month (total 37,873).

Some thoughts...

If ‘giving’ is the problem, then more and better fundraising is the answer. In a time of emergency, it was still appropriate and right to fundraise and ask for support.

Need the right people, with the right skills, and appropriate investment through a whole-organizational strategy. Success didn’t happen by chance.

Traditional methods continue to work – but so does digital! Not just a ‘nice to have’. Will be evermore important.

Trust and visibility of charities has increased – how to ensure that involvement in giving continues – engagement, relevance, connection, action.
Some resources to help

Chartered Institute of Fundraising - New and popular guidance and resources (ciof.org.uk)

https://ciof.org.uk/events-and-training/resources/fundraising-essentials