



THE NEW COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

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REDEFINING FUNDRAISING

While preparing to write this whitepaper, I Googled the phrase “this isn’t your father’s...” to see what would surface. I expected the tagline ending “...Oldsmobile.” I did not expect to see over 60 million hits, including pages on subjects such as:

This isn’t your father’s...
...Jim Beam
...Panzer Dragoon
...Halo Combat
...New York Federal Reserve
...recession
...dormitory (what?!?)

Indeed, times have changed, including the environment in which we raise funds and conduct capital campaigns. Changes in technology, communication tools, expectations, and even the pace of life all demand that we take a fresh look at the tactics and methodologies we use to engage donors.

This is what led Pursuant Ketchum to embrace an organizational commitment to *Redefining Fundraising* with both the confidence and humility that come from serving the philanthropic vision of tens of thousands of life-changing organizations. Adopted as a corporate tagline, the statement signifies both a collective commitment to helping organizations challenge long-held assumptions and identify new “best practices,” while also acknowledging our century-long legacy of innovation in the nonprofit sector. In fact, redefining fundraising is the very legacy started in the early twentieth century by the initial visionaries preserved in the Ketchum name. Pursuant Ketchum is simply acknowledging and recommitting to a vision of innovation and optimization that was truly radical in its day and changed the face of organized philanthropy forever.

No, this isn’t your father’s capital campaign. But before we dive into some of the changes in organized philanthropy now being instituted in twenty-first century, let’s take a quick look back at what changed nearly 100 years ago when Carlton and George Ketchum participated in an extraordinary campaign for the University of Pittsburgh.

A LEGACY OF INNOVATION AND OPTIMIZATION

In January of 1914, Charles Sumner Ward, who was gaining a national reputation for his success in deploying intensive and short-term fundraising initiatives for the YMCA was summoned by Chancellor Samuel McCormick of the University of Pittsburgh to assist in raising \$3 million to develop its new campus in Pittsburgh. Though he had never conducted a campaign for an educational institution, Ward devised a strategy for a 10-day campaign, similar to those he’d conducted for the YMCA. The Chancellor appointed two assistants, brothers Carlton and George Ketchum to assist Ward in directing this ambitious effort. And at its conclusion, \$2.1 million was raised.



Nearly 100 years later, the sums raised during that ten-day initiative remain impressive. However, there was a greater lesson for the newly emerging field of organized philanthropy. The Ketchum brothers recognized that a best practice for one organization may not be applicable or transferable to other organizations within the nonprofit sector. Ward's YMCA model and Ketchum's refinement and optimization for use in large-scale national efforts resulted in a capital campaign model embraced by both fundraising counsel and nonprofit organizations throughout the last century.

Looking back at our nation's first campaigns, Carlton Ketchum noted:

One of the characteristics of the early college capital fund campaigns was that their planning customarily ignored annual alumni funds if such existed. Campaigners and colleges learned the hard way that this did not pay...The early college fund campaigns, being patterned on those for the YMCA and like institutions, were short-term. Since most of them were chiefly local, appealing to the college's community, this was possible, but as they broadened out, it took a few years experience to demonstrate that a lot more time needed to be allowed for them.

TIME-TESTED ELEMENTS OF CAMPAIGNS

The essential elements of a campaign in the early 1900s featured words such as: “concentration, organization, sacrifice, education, cumulative effect, and civic impulse.” A campaign plan would seek to ensure that:

1. The organization was in suitable condition to go before the public with a plea for support.
2. The board of directors weighed the plan carefully, understood the sacrifice involved, and committed unreservedly to it.
3. An approximate date for the campaign was set months ahead so that detailed preparations could take place prior to launch.
4. In an advance publicity campaign through the press, the public would be kept informed of the need for which funds were being raised (typically a building).
5. One large subscription equaling 10 to 30 percent of the goal would be secured contingent upon raising the entire amount in the allotted time (10 days to one month)
6. All directors would be prepared to make their subscription (gift) as soon as the campaign launched to serve as an example to others.
7. A list of prospective subscribers would be prepared and placed on cards.
8. Assignments would be distributed to volunteer solicitors.

Over the last nine decades, these campaign elements, refined by Ketchum and the legacy team of what has today become Pursuant Ketchum, were adopted and used as guides to ensure success by fundraising counsel, organizational staff, and volunteers alike. And as technology has advanced, the number of nonprofit organizations has



grown, and the competition for charitable dollars has increased exponentially, the need for Pursuant Ketchum's leadership in designing, implementing, and evaluating fundraising strategies has never been greater.

THE MODERN PURSUANT KETCHUM CAMPAIGN

Though many of the campaign essentials previously mentioned have become hallmarks of Pursuant Ketchum's approach to capital campaign design and implementation, failure to acknowledge the new realities of fundraising in the twenty-first century will most certainly impede efforts and prevent success. Building upon these proven principles vetted through nine decades of successful campaign execution, Pursuant Ketchum has evolved the most comprehensive and robust approach available to nonprofits today, responding to essential shifts in donor behavior, available technology and the market realities of the twenty-first century.

BEGIN WITH THE FIVE CAMPAIGN ESSENTIALS

Pursuant Ketchum's extensive experience in campaigns has helped us to identify "Five Campaign Essentials" that we include in every evaluation of campaign readiness. These essentials have been found to be critical to the success of a campaign:

Leadership—The success of any capital campaign is dependent upon strong volunteer leadership. We recognize the role of leadership involves strategic planning, cultivating engaged and committed followers, and driving action. Thus, we evaluate the presence of influential and respected leaders as active champions in the campaign.

Case for Support—The case for support must be an emotionally compelling and persuasive demonstration that the campaign is absolutely necessary, one which highlights the unique qualities of the organization. Constituents take a fundraising effort seriously when they're convinced the need is valid, urgent, and compelling.

Sufficient Contributable Dollars—Pursuant Ketchum assesses the number of prospects needed to raise the required funds, and that the proper proportion of prospects relative to fundraising capacity is available. Interviews with prospective donors are conducted to ensure that campaign goals are targeted to donor interests and are realistic.

Adequate Resources—Verifying adequate internal resources is a prerequisite for conducting a successful campaign. Allocating sufficient resources to a key strategic initiative such as a campaign is vital to success. Resources include staff and skills, structure, systems and processes, and even volunteer support.



Well-Organized Campaign Cabinet—Beyond recruiting strong volunteer leadership, the manner in which leadership members are identified, enlisted, expanded, and managed is vital to success. Pursuant Ketchum gives significant attention to creating a well-organized and well-managed campaign cabinet that will lead by example.

NEW REALITIES OF CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

In addition to our time-tested Campaign Essentials, Pursuant Ketchum has recognized new realities confronting institutions, their leaders, and those who support them. Among them include the need for:

Creating personal conversations with donors through communication to the masses—Campaigns have grown in size and sophistication over the last century. Ten-day efforts to raise hundreds of thousands to several million dollars have evolved into five-, seven-, and ten-year efforts designed to raise hundreds of millions to billions of dollars. As a result, the number of donors required to meet such efforts have grown exponentially as well. Communicating campaign case elements through the media prior to a kickoff has become outdated and ineffective. Growth in the nonprofit sector and competition for charitable dollars requires personalized one-to-one multichannel communication to thousands. Moreover, developing “behavioral interest profiles” based on how donors interact with you helps an organization develop the right ask for the right donor at the right time.

Utilizing and leveraging all communication channels in an integrated strategy—Early campaigns primarily utilized face-to-face solicitations and special events to achieve success. As campaigns have grown over the last 50 years, so have technological advancements and opportunities to communicate with donors. Despite these advancements, organizations are realizing that little thought has been given to how best to leverage all communication channels for donor cultivation, solicitation, and recognition; how to test the effectiveness of each channel; and how to measure return on investment to ensure good stewardship of organizational resources.

Deepening relationships with existing donors during the campaign—Modern campaigns have become more than once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for charitable support. They represent episodic events in the life of an organization requiring continued philanthropic investments over time versus simple one-time charitable contributions. They require emphasis on the transformational relationship between a donor and a cause, as opposed to the transactional exchange between a supporter and a charity. Significant philanthropic investments require deepened engagements and relationships with donors. As today’s campaigns grow in size and scope, ignoring this reality can be detrimental to success.

Identifying and acquiring new donors and future leaders—Ongoing needs necessitate a plan for identifying ongoing leadership and support. As capital



campaigns grow in size and scope, so too does the need for future supporters and organizational leadership. Ignoring donor acquisition and leadership development as significant components of any campaign strategy suggests an unbalanced focus on institutional needs versus societal impact. Today, feasibility studies should include an assessment of both the availability and interest of those capable of making pacesetting leadership gifts, and the availability of mid-level donors. Such a comprehensive approach requires more than the qualitative assessments of the past; quantitative empirical review of the entire donor base becomes critical. In an atmosphere where preparation for the next campaign often begins shortly after the last campaign's completion, every campaign becomes an opportunity to cultivate mid-level donors who could be the next campaign's leaders.

Prioritizing and segmenting donors for effective cultivation and solicitation based on data—Those with the greatest philanthropic capacity, relationship with the organization, and inclination to support the needs identified in the case for support will typically receive the highest cultivation and solicitation priority at the launch of any campaign. But as campaign goals increase and needs move from modular projects (such as building a new facility) to comprehensive efforts, understanding how to prioritize and segment donors based on organizational objectives and donor interest in a donor-focused, mission-driven approach becomes even more critical. Understanding how to accomplish such a feat when the need is for the prospect pool to grow from the top 100 donors to thousands demands the ability to prioritize and segment for effective use of staff and volunteer time. This means that traditional manual prospect research inevitably falls short. Using advanced data analytics and predictive modeling allows reliable ranking and penetration of the donor base at every level, ensuring efficiency in outreach and exponentially improving the efficacy of traditional capacity and RFM (Recency, Frequency, and Monetary) scoring.

Positioning the organization for its next campaign—Early campaigns in the United States, from the turn of the century to the last few decades, were positioned as periodic activities separate and apart from ongoing resource-building efforts. As such, these events typically had distinct preplanning, launch, and celebration periods. Such strategies resulted in organizations ramping up communication efforts prior to a campaign in order to best prepare donors for the ask when the campaign was launched. Inadvertently, this caused organizations to focus on the event (the ask) rather than the relationship with the donor. Contemporary thinking and reflection on these practices have enlightened us to the shortsightedness and inward focus of such behavior. Organizations failing to adopt donor-centric strategies and look beyond the current short-term needs will be less successful in deepening long-term relationships with donors.



Questions to Consider

- 1. Have you developed donor-focused, personalized communications to reach your constituents?**
- 2. Are you learning more about your donors' interests by how they interact with you through communications?**
- 3. Do you have a multichannel communications strategy that effectively leverages online and offline channels, as well as data-driven behavioral interest profiling throughout your campaign?**
- 4. Have you incorporated a strategy for mid-level donors that will provide a pipeline of future major-gift donors and help identify future volunteer leadership?**
- 5. Does your assessment of a campaign goal include a data-driven strategy for taking your campaign public and ensuring broad participation throughout the donor pyramid?**
- 6. Is prioritization and segmentation of all donors a part of your initial campaign strategy, or are you continuing to assess only the availability of donors to get you to 50 to 60 percent of your goal?**
- 7. What cultivation/prospecting strategies have you identified to prepare donors for a public phase of solicitation while your time and energy are focused on the initial pacesetting gifts?**

About Pursuant

Passionate. Powerful. Proven. Pursuant proudly serves nonprofit organizations. Using proprietary technology, our team of professionals uses donor intelligence to develop and deliver relevant, effective communication. The result: more revenue through the unparalleled engagement of your donors. From initial attraction and support, to mid-level donor commitments, to major gift strategies and campaigns, Pursuant covers the entire donor spectrum. We invite you to learn more about Pursuant—and our brands Pursuant Ketchum, KMA, Pursuant Sports, and RSI—at www.pursuant.com.