Refining Your Impact Reporting Process | 05.17.2017
Sarah Sims

Leftover Questions

Q: Can you share a sample of your survey for the endowment reports?
Ans: Yes, now in the supplemental resource materials for the webcast

Q: Can you share industry standards for email open/read/click thru rates to help us set targets?
Ans: That depends on if you are talking about solicitations or pure stewardship emails (no ask). Stewardship emails tend to have higher open rates. We typically will see 30-40% open rates for stewardship emails. Click through rates are usually a fraction of that – 3-5% at the most. There are many studies out there regarding open rates and fundraising, but very few resources that speak to donor relations specifically. The overall non-profit open rate hovers around 25% (universal email open rate is below 10%).

Q: How do you recommend increasing donor response rates?
Ans:

- Offer a variety of ways for them to answer your survey – mail, on-line, over the phone, etc.
- Include language on WHY you need the feedback and what you will do with it
- Ask for something they want to give you (not a financial gift) – we ask our donors if they want to share their personal giving story (why did they give, what does the fund they established mean to them, etc.) and we found this helped increase engagement and response rate – donors love to be asked to share their stories

Q: You mentioned that financial reports for endowments should not be combined with impact reports. Is this primarily because you would want multiple touchpoints to this group? We are smaller institution with smaller endowments, and would like to limit our resources to the most impactful opportunities. What would you recommend?
Ans: When we mail endowment reports, we include beneficiary information (student profiles, etc.) and also impact information from the specific college or unit, so they do receive some impact information in the piece. But we also want to spread those types of communications out so it doesn't get diluted and the donor is receiving multiple impact/gratitude touches per year. So for example, a donor may receive student bios in the endowment report, but the hand written thank you notes at another time of the year. But there are many other groups that may need impact reporting that aren't caught in the endowment reporting pool – non-endowed funds, planned gifts, etc. These constituencies should have their own specialized communications as well. When determining how to structure your reporting, I would recommend getting the endowment reporting firmly in hand with a robust and efficient program, and then identify your biggest/most important constituencies that aren't caught in that process and focus on 1-2 of those groups.

4601 DTC Blvd., Suite 800, Denver, CO 80237
T: +1 720.488.6800 | F: +1 303.221.2259
www.academicimpressions.com