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# OUTREACH COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



# INTRODUCTION

You don't need to be a communications expert to share your organization's mission effectively, but knowing where to begin is key.

The **Outreach Communications Plan Checklist** is designed to not only help get you started, but also to guide you along the way, as you connect your organization with your community.

**This checklist walks you through 5 steps for communications success:**

- 1. Identify Your Audience**
- 2. Craft Clear and Compelling Messages**
- 3. Use Strong Visuals With Your Messages**
- 4. Deploy Your Messages**
- 5. Monitor and Adjust Messaging**

Within each step, you'll find specific instructions that help you navigate communicating with your target audience across digital channels, such as Meta (Facebook), as well as traditional channels, such as printed materials.

**PLUS** – You'll also find numerous free and low-cost resources for your nonprofit throughout this checklist, including software, platforms, and tools.

- ✓ As an added **BONUS**, the links to free or low-cost resources are also included in the **Free or Low-Cost Nonprofit Software/Platform Tools** table at the end of this checklist, which you can keep as a handy resource.

The **Outreach Communications Plan Checklist** is a companion tool to the **Outreach Communications Plan Video** of the Nonprofit Toolkit.

# 5 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



## STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR AUDIENCE

- Make a list of your organization's audiences.** Include donors, volunteers, community members, local media, and the people you serve.
- Define specific information** that each type of audience needs to know (impact, updates, opportunities to get involved).
- Research communication channels** that your audience uses the most. Then, communicate with them on those channels.

### Communication examples include:

- ✓ **Donors** – Email campaigns, newsletters
- ✓ **Community members** – Social media, local news outlets
- ✓ **Volunteers** – Meta (Facebook) groups, events, text message updates

### **Suggested Software/Platforms:**

You can use one or more of the following software platforms to identify and connect with your audience:

- ✓ **Mailchimp**
- ✓ **Constant Contact**
- ✓ **Meta – Facebook Insights**

- At least once in your message, include a strong *call to action*,** which is the next step you want your audience to take (“Donate,” “Volunteer,” “Join us,” etc.).

### **TIP:**

Collaboration with others in your organization is especially helpful when creating communications for diverse audiences. What feels clear and positive to one person may land differently with another group.

- ✓ Working together to ensure multiple perspectives are considered helps your messaging to stay accurate, inclusive, and aligned with your mission.

### **Suggested Software/Platforms:**

Use software platforms, such as those listed next, to create communications for your audience, and collaborate with your team:

- ✓ **Google Docs**
- ✓ **Google Slides**
- ✓ **Google Nonprofit Resource Center**

## STEP 2: CRAFT CLEAR AND COMPELLING MESSAGES

- Within your messages, focus on the problem** your organization solves and why solving the problem should matter to your audience.
- Tailor your message to each audience** – **Remember:** One size doesn't fit all.
- Communicate genuinely** – Keep your messages sincere, heartfelt, and concise.

## STEP 3: USE STRONG VISUALS TO ENHANCE YOUR MESSAGES

- Include real photos, videos, or infographics** that reflect your mission in action.
- Avoid overused stock images** – Choose **copyright-free resources** instead, such as:
  - ✓ **Unsplash**
  - ✓ **Pixabay**
  - ✓ **Pexels**

- ❑ **Choose and create visuals** that reflect your community's diversity and values.
- ❑ **Use Canva for Nonprofits to create a brand kit** containing your brand's text colors, fonts, and logos, to ensure consistency across every piece of content that you create and share.

#### ***Suggested Software/Platforms:***

These design platforms help you to create and simplify both graphic and video designs:

- ✓ *Canva for Nonprofits*
- ✓ *Adobe Express*
- ✓ *Biteable (for video clips)*

## **STEP 4: DEPLOY YOUR MESSAGES ACROSS CHANNELS**

- ❑ **Use multiple channels** that your audience also uses — social media, email, community events, partnerships.
- ❑ **Collaborate with like-minded organizations** to expand your reach by partnering with them to send messages to a larger group of audiences.
- ❑ **Schedule social media posts** and messages consistently.

#### ***Suggested Software/Platforms:***

The following software platforms help you to create and send email messages, social media posts, and event announcements, manage donors, and more:

- ✓ *Meta Business Suite*
- ✓ *Zoho Campaigns - Marketing Automation*
- ✓ *Zoho Social*
- ✓ *Buffer*
- ✓ *Eventbrite*

## **STEP 5: MONITOR AND ADJUST YOUR MESSAGING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE**

- ❑ **Track engagement** — Monitor social media likes and shares, email open rates, event attendance, or donations.
- ❑ **Evaluate messages** — Determine which messages perform best and refine messages, if necessary, to improve performance.
- ❑ **Stay “pleasantly persistent”** — Communicate regularly with your audiences to stay top of mind so they remember your organization and its impact.

#### ***Suggested Software/Platforms:***

The following software platforms help you to monitor, track, and evaluate how well your messages resonate with your target audience:

- ✓ *Google Analytics - Website Traffic*
- ✓ *Meta - Facebook Insights*
- ✓ *Hootsuite*
- ✓ *SurveyMonkey*

#### ***TIP:***

**Effective outreach isn't about volume; it's about consistency and connection.**

- ✓ Use this checklist to stay intentional, creative, and mission-focused in every message you share.
- ✓ As your organization grows, revisit these steps often. Communication is an ongoing process of learning, refining, and connecting and takes practice.

## Free or Low-Cost Nonprofit Software/Platform Tools

| Category                        | Software/Platform   | Notes                                |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Audience Connections            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mailchimp</li> <li>• Constant Contact</li> <li>• Meta (Facebook) Insights</li> </ul>   | Free or discounted for nonprofits    |
| Message Creation                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google Docs</li> <li>• Google Slides</li> </ul>  | Free or discounted for nonprofits    |
| Email Marketing                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mailchimp</li> <li>• Constant Contact</li> <li>• Zoho Campaigns</li> </ul>   | Free or discounted for nonprofits    |
| Designs & Visuals               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canva for Nonprofits</li> <li>• Adobe Express</li> <li>• Bitable</li> <li>• Unsplash</li> <li>• Pixabay</li> <li>• Pexels</li> </ul> | Free Pro plans and image access      |
| Social Media & Event Scheduling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffer</li> <li>• Meta Business Suite</li> <li>• Zoho Social</li> <li>• Eventbrite</li> </ul>  | Free for small teams                 |
| Performance Analytics           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google Analytics</li> <li>• Meta (Facebook) Insights</li> <li>• Hootsuite</li> <li>• SurveyMonkey</li> </ul>                         | Free tracking tools                  |
| Audience Surveys                | <p>SurveyMonkey<br/>Google Forms</p>  | Free/basic tiers for survey feedback |



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***If you have questions, need assistance,  
or want to share your feedback, please  
let us know. We'd love to hear from you!***

***Thank you for entrusting us to walk with you  
along your nonprofit investing journey.***

*Sincerely,*

**The Eder Financial Team**

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