

Phone Flim-Flam Confuses Research With Fund Raising



By Dirk Rinker

SINCE THE ADVENT of the “Do Not Call” list, telemarketers have adopted new and disturbing tactics to keep prospects on the phone: “Sugging” (selling under the guise of research) and “Frugging” (fundraising under the guise of research).

Both tactics threaten to deceive the public, while decreasing the ability of research firms to carry out true research. In response, the Federal Trade Commission has recently amended the rules of telemarketing, making it a violation to “misrepresent, either directly or by implication” any material information such as the “nature, purpose or mission of any entity on behalf of which a charitable contribution is being requested.”

Sugging and frugging may get the attention of prospects, but it subverts the essential purpose of the call by delivering a message to donors and prospects that the organization can’t be trusted.

Our own research for nonprofits has found that the issue of trust between donors and the organization they give to is a critical element in strong donor relationships. Fundraising under the guise of research therefore undermines the very goals development officers seek to reach.

Both market research firms and nonprofits rely on the public trust for their continued well-being. Higher levels of trust foster stronger giving to nonprofits and better cooperation rates for survey research. These deceptive practices erode the public trust for everyone.

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[Book Preview]

Marketing Intangibles

By Larry Yonker

PRODUCTS ARE TANGIBLE, and people who market them can easily point to their many easy-to-use features. But services are *intangible*, making it more difficult to market them.

Most Christian organizations are in the business of marketing intangible services. Therefore, most of our development solutions focus on creative ways to generate funds for very general and often vague programs. Broad programs like evangelism and discipleship seem like they should be easily understood, but it’s very difficult to get your arms around them. Donors don’t understand how they can really make any personal impact beyond their personal witness.

Recently, I revisited a book by Harry Beckwith titled *Selling the Invisible: A Field Guide to Modern Marketing*. Beckwith is a master at marketing services, and one of his fundamental principles is solid gold.

“The core of service marketing is the service itself,” he writes. When organizational leaders shout, “We need better marketing,” Beckwith says the first principle is: “Get better reality.” A better reality, he says, will help make marketing these services easier, cheaper and more effective.

When many people think of ministry programs, they often have no way of experiencing the ministry. What kind of experiences do your supporters have with the program services you offer? Don’t you think we should find ways to engage the donor, helping them experience how God works through our ministries?



Transformational Giving

By Todd Harper

THIS IS PERHAPS the most exciting period of church growth in history! The opportunities for Kingdom investment are abundant. Yet, Americans today give proportionally less of their income than during the Great Depression! What are the solutions to this disturbing fact?

In this article I explore three keys to building transformational relationships with givers in your church or ministry: perspective, heart and tools. (For the complete article, go to www.CMAonline.org/mrc.)

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Larry Yonker

Fund Development Section Resource Commission

For more resources on fund development, go to CMA’s Management Resource Center (www.CMAonline.org/mrc). Email or call the volunteer members of this Section Resource Commission, or contact:

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Fund Development

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