

Welcoming Sponsors:
A Success Story
A Blue North Whitepaper



CMA's Direct Marketing Council is pleased to showcase a case study and success story presented by World Vision. To increase donor engagement and satisfaction, World Vision launched a multi-channel Welcome Series in partnership with Bassett Direct and Blue North. Discover how their strategic approach and close collaboration with partners created a personalized experience for donors and a greater impact in the field of child sponsorship.

WHAT

World Vision Canada is the largest child-sponsorship organization in the country. In order to ensure sustainable ongoing support for in-field programming, World Vision has focused on increasing not only supporter retention, but overall loyalty in a bid to increase satisfaction and the average time on file for each Canadian sponsor.

With its focus on supporter loyalty and satisfaction, World Vision developed a comprehensive multi-channel strategy which moved away from generic mass marketing communications to one which focused on customization and personalization to enhance the overall experience for existing and new supporters. In short: World Vision was committed to deliver the gold standard in personalized sponsor engagement to increase loyalty and satisfaction.

A key factor in World Vision's strategy was to personalize its onboarding process to help set the appropriate tone and expectations in those first months of the relationship, laying the critical groundwork to begin a long-term relationship with new supporters – one in which the supporter can recognize their interests are being served versus being subjected to generic marketing communications.

Historically, World Vision maintained a warehouse that held the various components of the Child Sponsorship Welcome Series. When a child was sponsored, it would trigger a “pick and pack” process to assemble the appropriate pre-printed pieces for each sponsor.

Pieces would vary based on a number of factors, such as:

- > Correspondence-language preference (English or French)
- > Sponsored child's country
- > Sponsored child's community

This process was limited to a single channel (print), and was unable to feature customizations as the collateral had to be pre-printed months in advance of distribution.

If new or relevant information was made available after the initial print run, such as information about a humanitarian emergency in the child's country or new examples of impact World Vision's programs were having in the area, it could not be reflected on the static inventory. Obviously, with new print-on-demand technology and data-driven content management systems, there was opportunity for enhancements.

WHY

The mission of World Vision is to help vulnerable children throughout the world through its child sponsorship model. Its robust acquisition program is excellent at engaging in Canadians to reach help more children than ever before.

Over the past decade, however, technology advanced, supporter expectations rose, and the demand for more personalized and real-time content was apparent. It became clear to World Vision that the traditional onboarding process was not meeting the expectations of their new supporters or supporting the organization's continued focus on donor-centric communications. Without a strategic shift,

satisfaction would decline as a result of unmet expectations; consequently, World Vision's ability to change the lives of children and their communities would be impacted.

A new strategic approach to sponsor engagement, starting with the Welcome Series, was designed by the World Vision team. In reviewing the onboarding process and collateral, World Vision designed a strategy that focused on:

- > Ensuring the sponsored child was the primary focus of the communications
- > Utilizing the power of digital technology to bring sponsors closer to their sponsored children, and closer to World Vision through multi-channel engagement opportunities
- > Flexibility and cost-effectiveness to test different approaches and quickly update different messages depending on what was going on in the world as it applied to the sponsored child's community
- > Personalization and the ability to speak to the specific interests of individual sponsors
- > As a secondary benefit, this new strategic plan was able to eliminate internal overhead costs and collateral waste of preprinting large volumes of generic "inserts."

A tall order? Absolutely!

WHO

Perhaps the biggest challenge in making all of this happening was coordinating all of the various departments and partners behind one common goal. World Vision knew that in order to execute their strategic plan, they had to work with the right partners, ones who would bring the right skill sets to the table.

Bringing the strategy to market involved:

World Vision

Multiple departments were working together to implement the strategic plan and enrich the Welcome package for sponsors, including Sponsorship Experience, Sponsorship Operations, Fulfillment, Digital Services, and IT.

Blue North

Blue North was the solutions architect and consultant for the Welcome Kit initiative. By supporting World Vision's segmentation strategy, they leveraged their proprietary WhitePage Live data platforms to allow for data-driven variable creative output. Blue North designed the creative on the Welcome Kit package, integrating World Vision strategy and the variable data requirements. They also worked in concert with Bassett Direct to ensure the final deliverable could be fulfilled and mailed at the lowest possible postage rate for the client.

Bassett Direct

From the early stages of the planning process, Bassett Direct was deeply involved as a fulfillment partner, utilizing their depth of experience in meeting the engagement objectives of World Vision's new Welcome Series strategy and the creative solution proposed by Blue North. Strategy and creative worked hand-in-hand to provide an innovative approach to the printing process. They invested time and resources to engineer the mail package, including modifications to allow for producing efficiencies; placement of components for letter shop; and recommending a combination of static and variable printed components to enhance sponsor experience. Utilizing postal knowledge and managing the relationship with Canada Post, Bassett Direct also successfully negotiated a reclassification of the mailing type with Canada Post on World Vision's behalf. They were able to modify package dimensions and stock weight to bring the package within an acceptable window to qualify for the reclassified rate.

The partnership between World Vision, Blue North, and Bassett Direct was truly collaborative: each partner needed the other two to bring the strategy to market. This partnership became the optimal alignment of strategic thought; creative and (proprietary) technical execution; and best-in-class fulfillment innovation.

Together, this partnership built a highly donor-centric, full colour variable package for new sponsors that has become the gold standard in sponsor engagement. Since 2013, when the launch of the pilot was revolutionary for the time, the strategy has revolutionized the way sponsors expect to engage with non-profits across Canada.

HOW?

This new process involved a few major efforts:

1. Internal Refocussing.

World Vision needed to reorient themselves around their sponsors and prospects. This meant organizational changes, adoption of new marketing approaches, and a new way of thinking about sponsor relations, including unique supportive segmentation and predictive modelling.

2. Creative Partnership and Technology Architect.

To develop the importance of a 1:1 relationship between a family/sponsor and their child, Blue North strived to create a meaningful and personalized experience for every donor. They used insights and research into loyalty and satisfaction metrics to determine what audiences cared about most - before diving into the creative process.

3. Print Partnership for Variable Welcome Series.

There were a number of challenges in fulfillment and deliverable execution: postage rates were unfavourable, print production could quickly become inefficient, and too many elements in the package would create donor confusion. With their unique expertise and partnership with World Vision for over 20 years, Bassett Direct was able to navigate these risks to not only create the optimal production environment for the variable kit but also renegotiate postal rates to keep costs for the client low.

4. Making the Donor Experience Truly Multi-Channel: Building the My World Vision Digital Experience.

The #1 objective for the my.worldvision.ca digital experience was to engage with supporters where they felt most comfortable and expected World Vision to be present. Through a sponsor's account at my.worldvision.ca, sponsors could not only engage directly with their sponsor child, but could engage with World Vision to receive up-to-date information about their sponsor child's community and their sponsorship account.

RESULTS!

World Vision's loyalty measurement approach tracks leading and lagging indicators of sponsorship engagement. Since the launch of the multichannel Welcome Series in 2013, measurement statistics show that donor engagement and satisfaction is at its highest levels in decades.

Today, the donor-centric approach of the new strategic focus has yielded growth in two valuable Key Performance Indicators: 40% of sponsors created an online my.worldvision.ca account within the onboarding period, and sponsorship engagement increased from 0% to 60%! Moreover, sponsor satisfaction scores saw a significant boost in the first 3 months of sign-up.

All of the partners and teams engaged with the project have experienced the lasting results of the Welcome Series initiative. By collecting insights through Key Performance Indicators and satisfaction scores, World Vision has felt the impactful legacy these changes have had on the organization and on the lives of children around the world.