



# **The Nonprofit Innovation & Optimization Summit**

**September 21-22, 2017**

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# **Apply for a NIO Award**

- Donor Acquisition**
- Social Media Fundraising**
- Recurring Donor Recruitment**
- Web Traffic Growth**
- Year-End Fundraising**



**Winners receive a free ticket to NIO Summit 2017**

**Apply at [NIOSummit.com/nio-awards](https://NIOSummit.com/nio-awards)**



# **Apply for a NIO Award**

- Donor Acquisition**
- Social Media Fundraising**

**DEADLINE TO APPLY IS JUNE 30TH**

- Year-End Fundraising**

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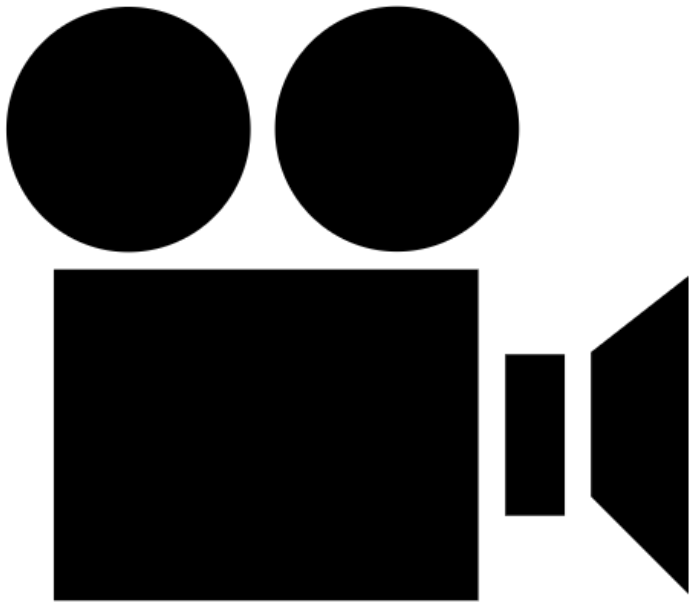




# The Anatomy of an Effective Email Appeal



# A FEW QUICK THINGS...



**A recording of this broadcast will be sent to you afterwards.**



**NextAfter**



# A FEW QUICK THINGS...



**Links to featured resources and experiments  
will be sent out with the recording.**



**NextAfter**



# A FEW QUICK THINGS...



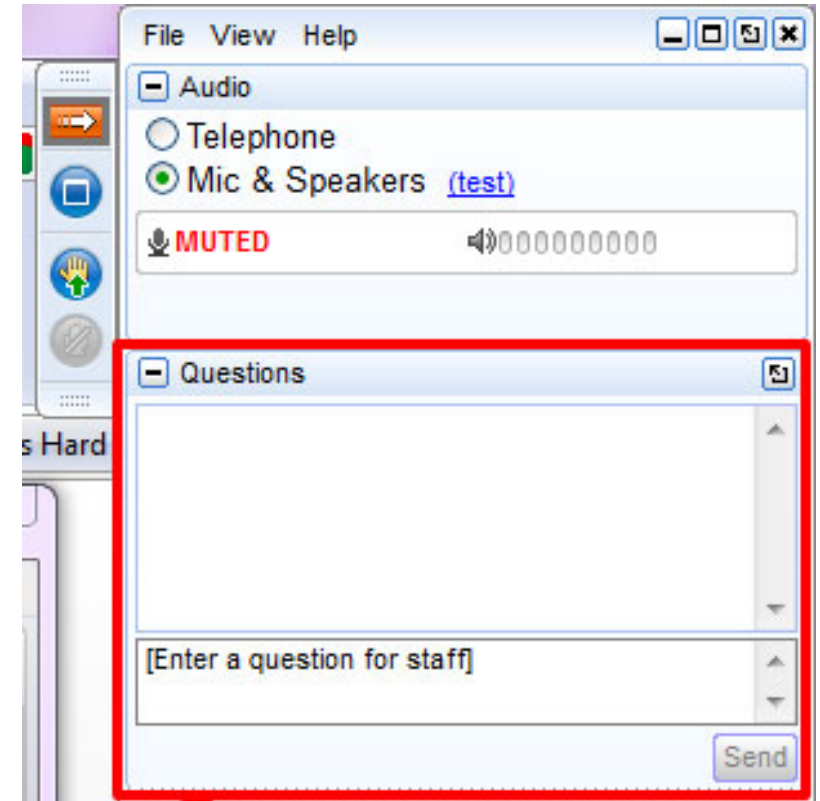
**We want your questions!**



**NextAfter**

# A FEW QUICK THINGS...

**Use the “Questions” tab in GoToWebinar to ask a question.**





# TODAY'S SPEAKERS

## Jeff Giddens

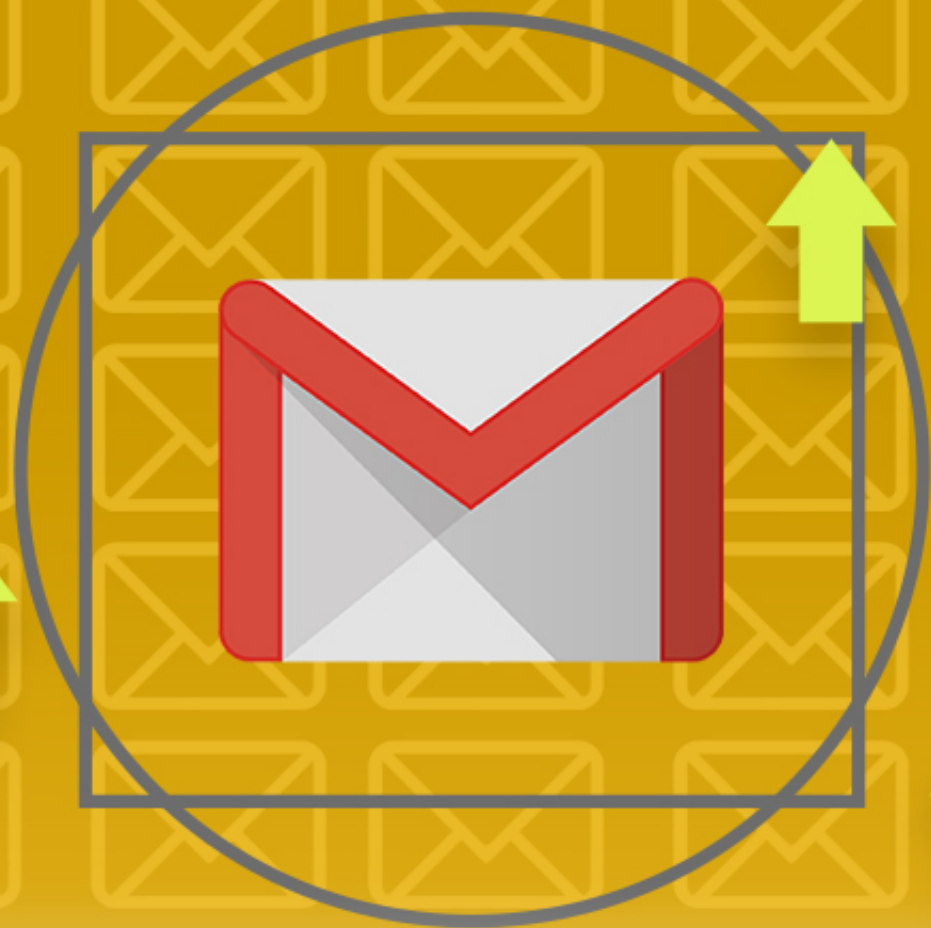
Senior VP of Optimization | NextAfter



@jagiddens



NextAfter

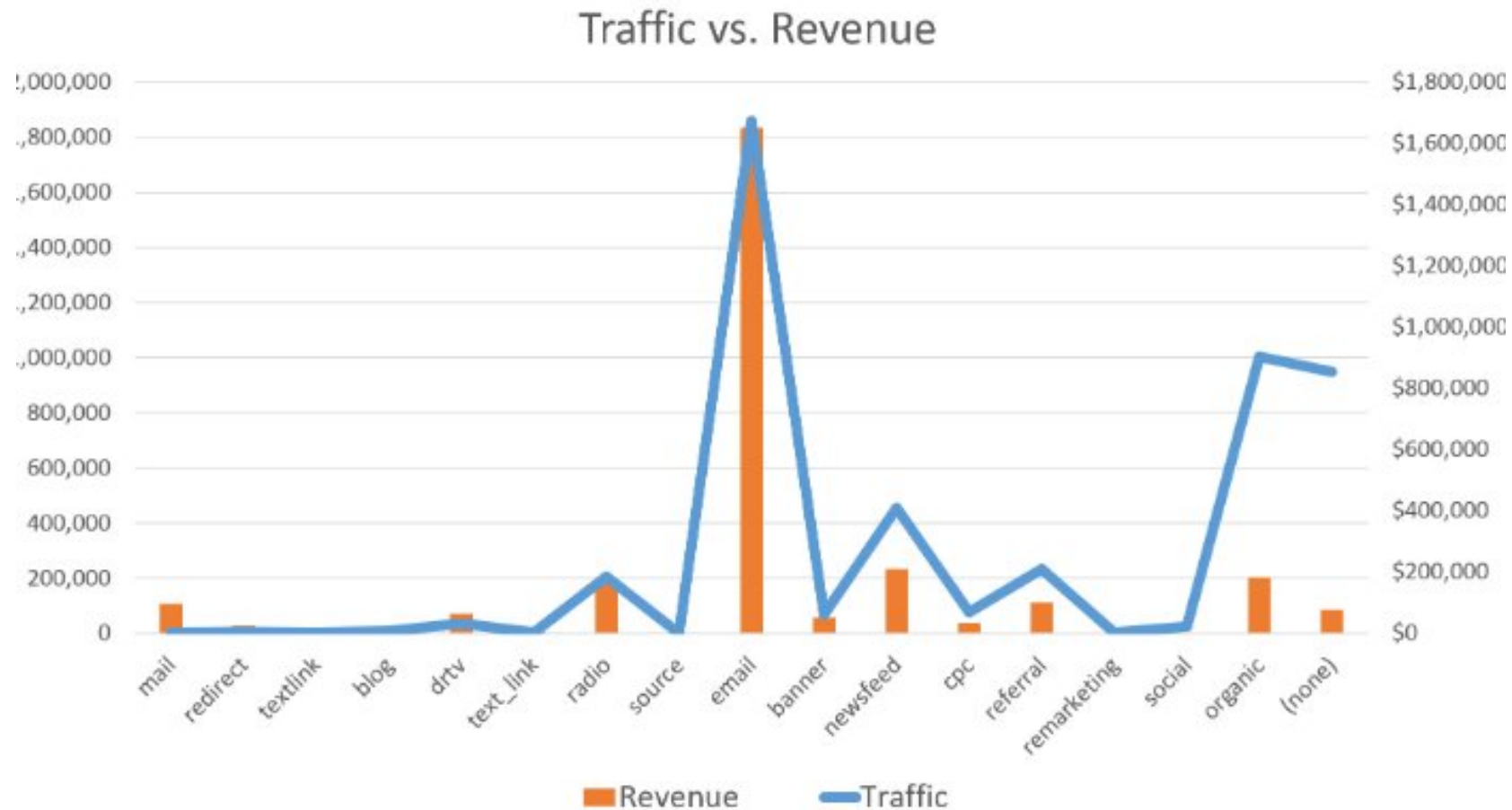


# **The Anatomy of an Effective Email Appeal**



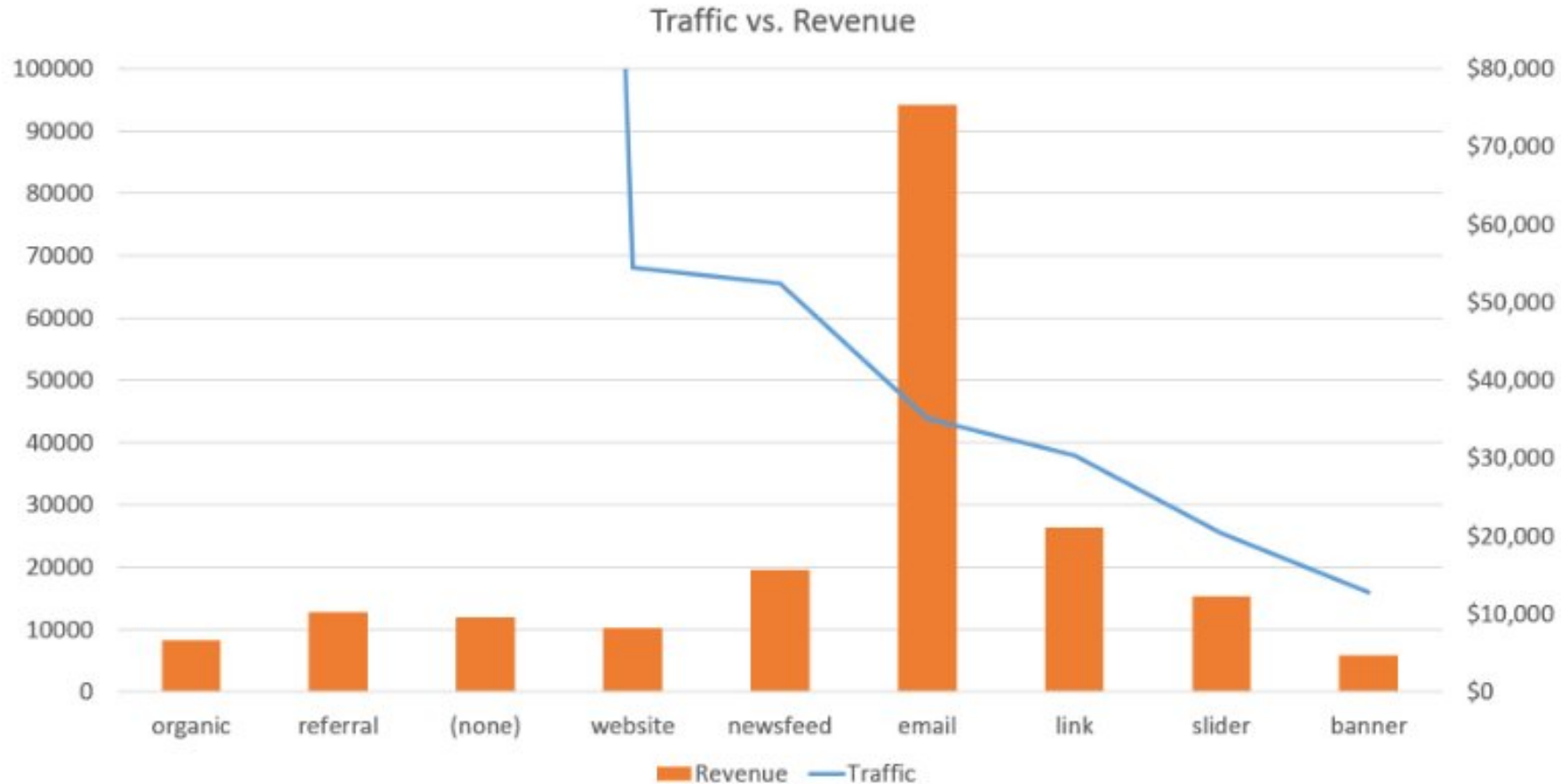


# Web Traffic Sources – Email Ecommerce

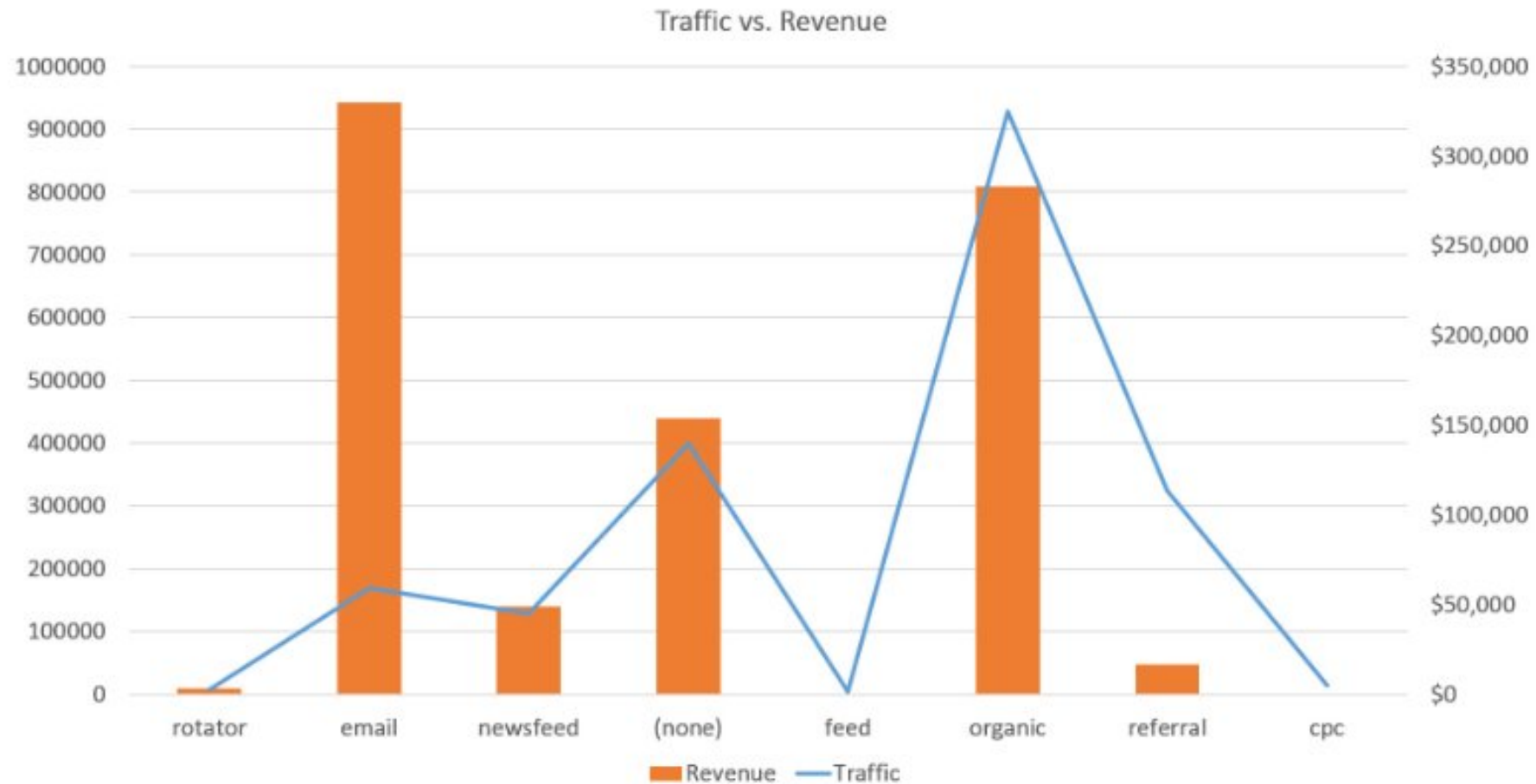




# Web Traffic Sources – Email Ecommerce



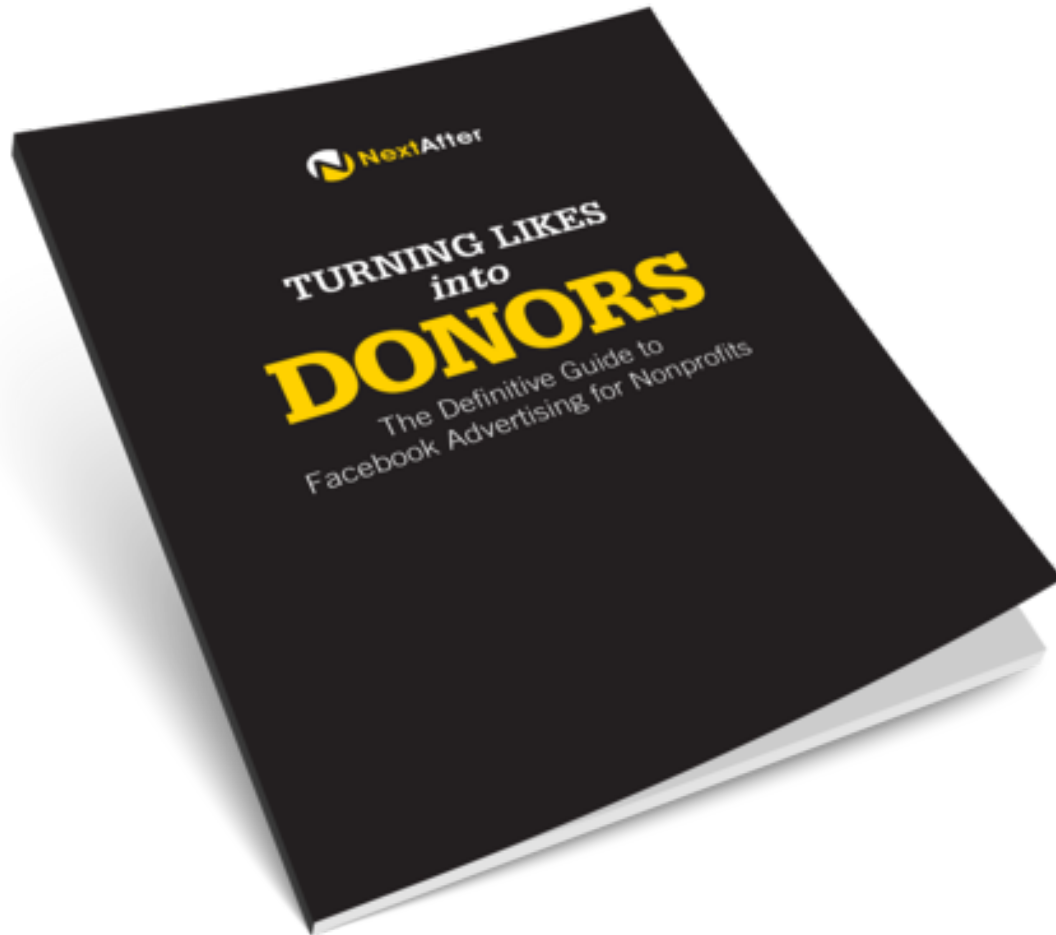
# Web Traffic Sources – Email Ecommerce



*The greatest indicator of your online*  
**FUNDRAISING POWER**  
*is the size and quality of your*  
**EMAIL LIST**

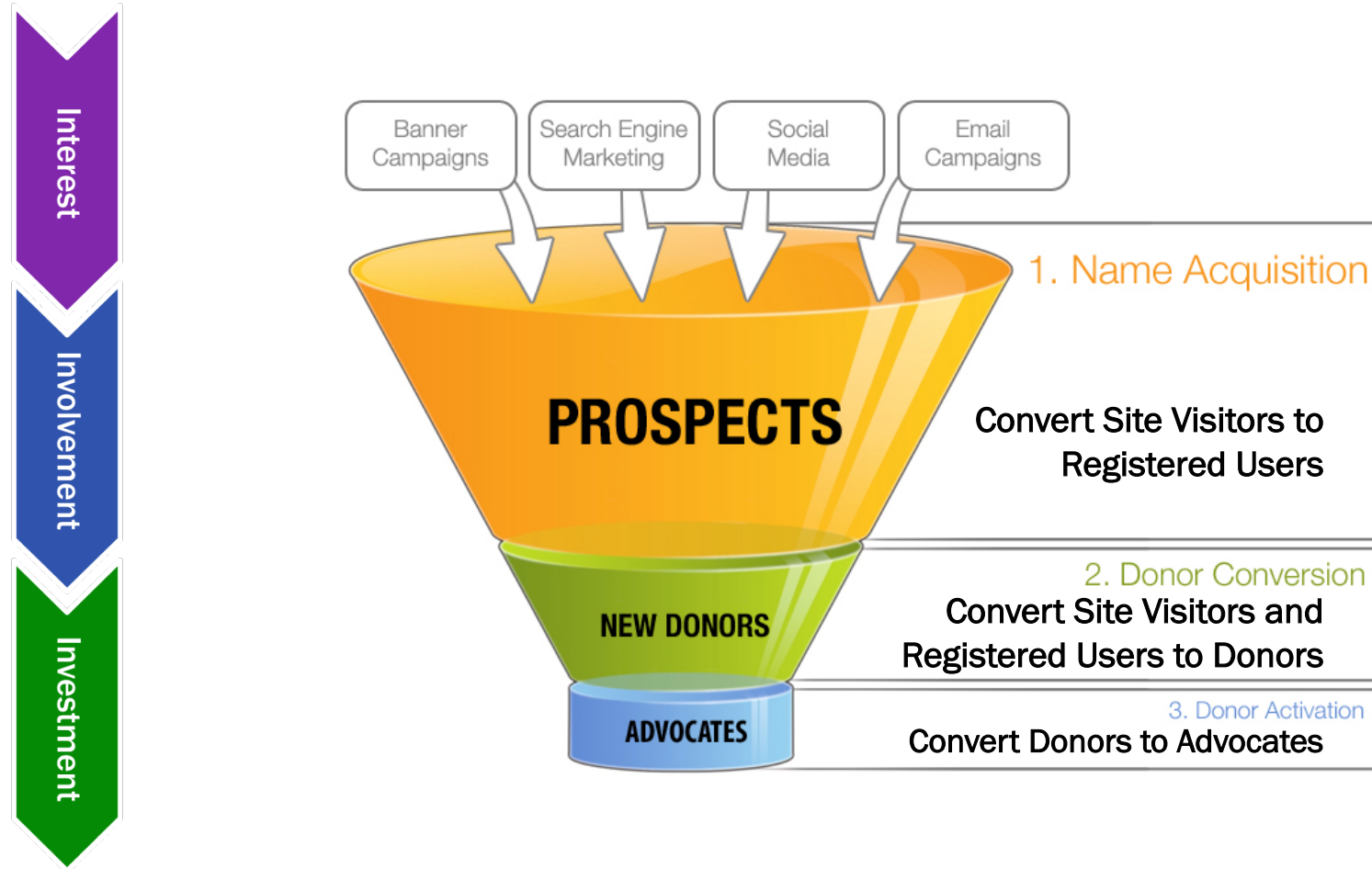


# How to grow your email list



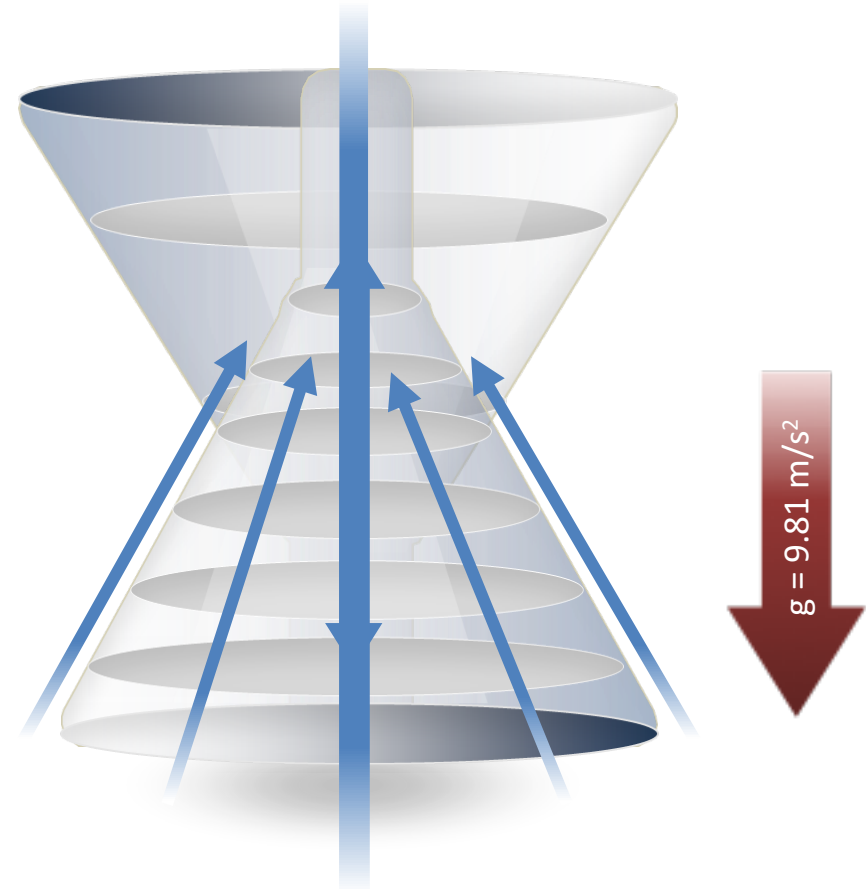
*Understanding the concept of*  
**THE MARKETING FUNNEL**

# Traditional Online Donor Funnel



# A New Perspective of the Funnel

1. The funnel is often presented as one potentially useful analogy for marketing. It is in fact, **the primary analogy**. All marketing should influence a decision.
2. The funnel analogy distorts reality. People are not falling into your funnel, they are falling out. The funnel **must be inverted**.
3. People don't travel down the center of the funnel. People are **climbing up the sides**.





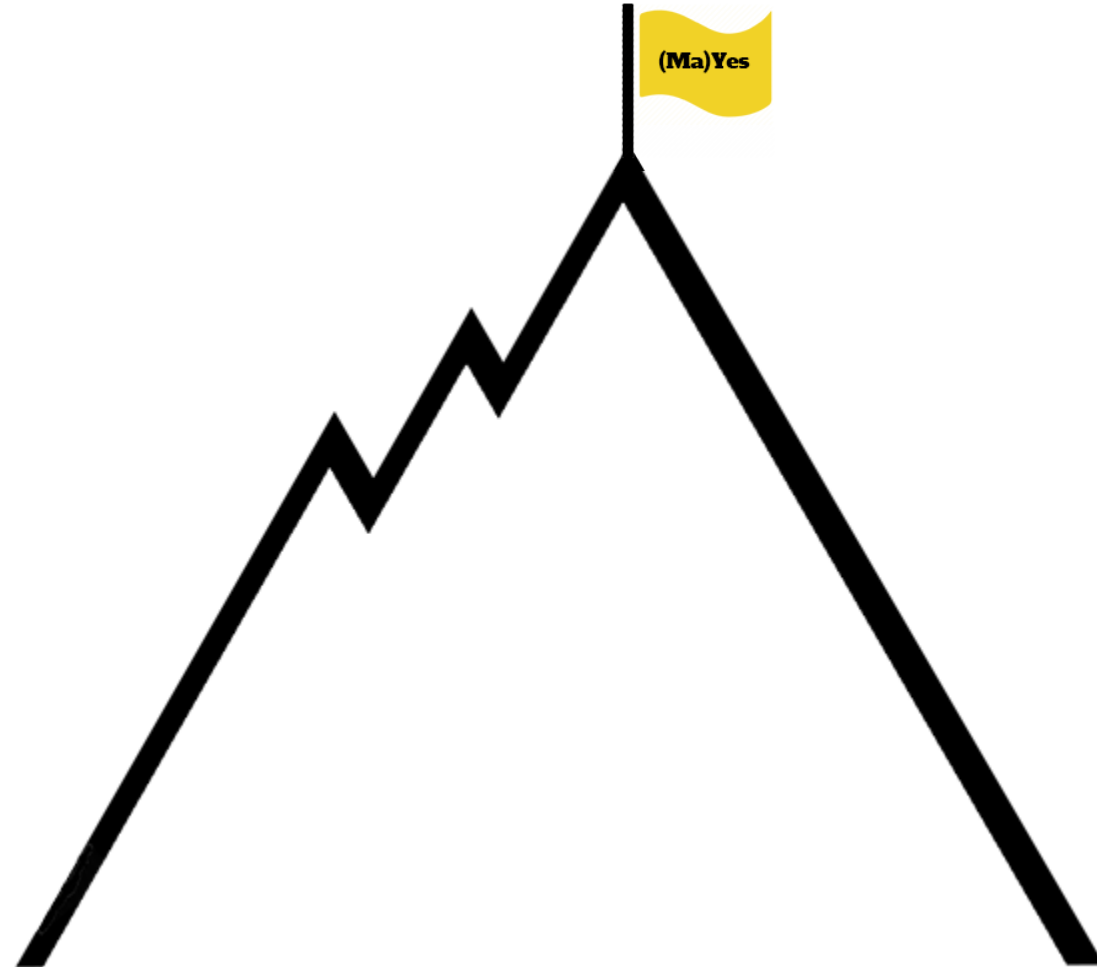


It's not a donor *funnel*,  
it's a donor *mountain*.

# The Donor Mountain



# The Donor Mountain

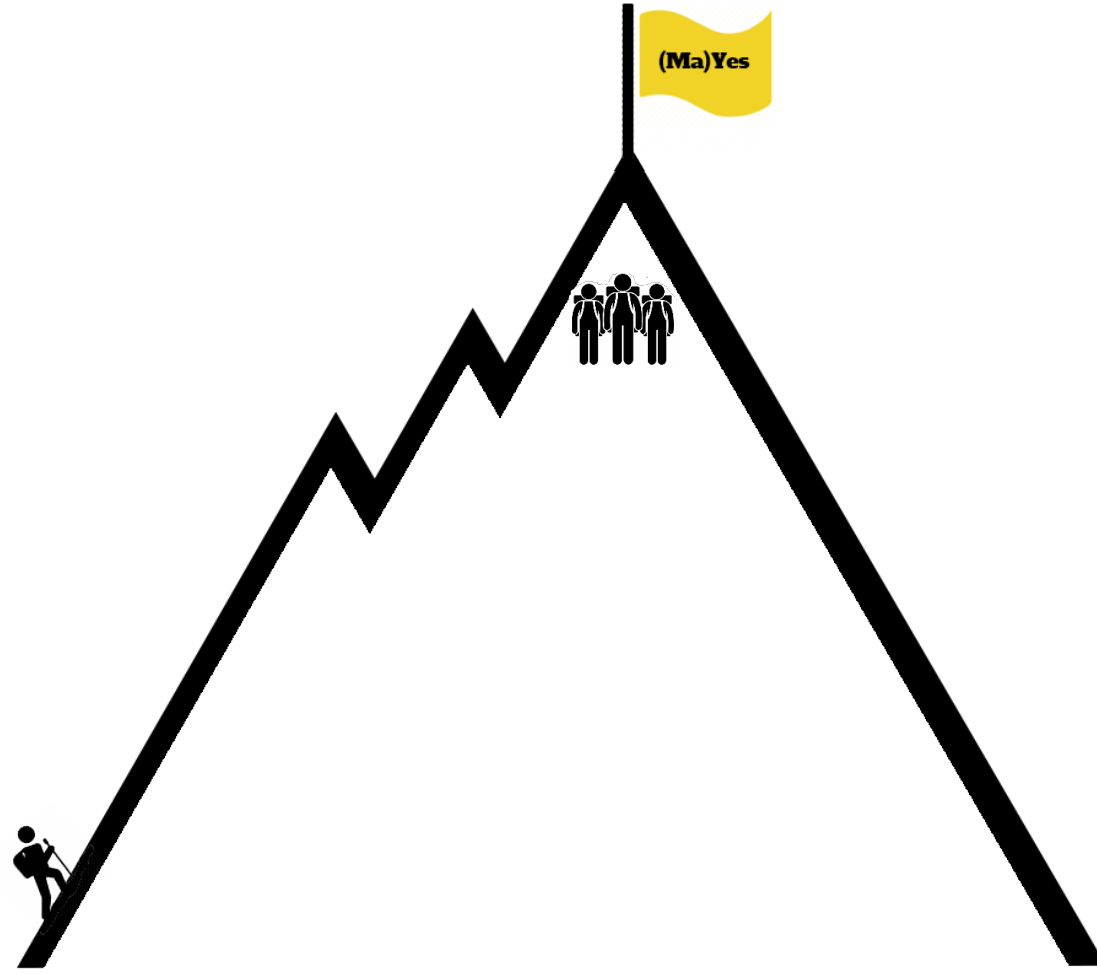


# The Donor Mountain

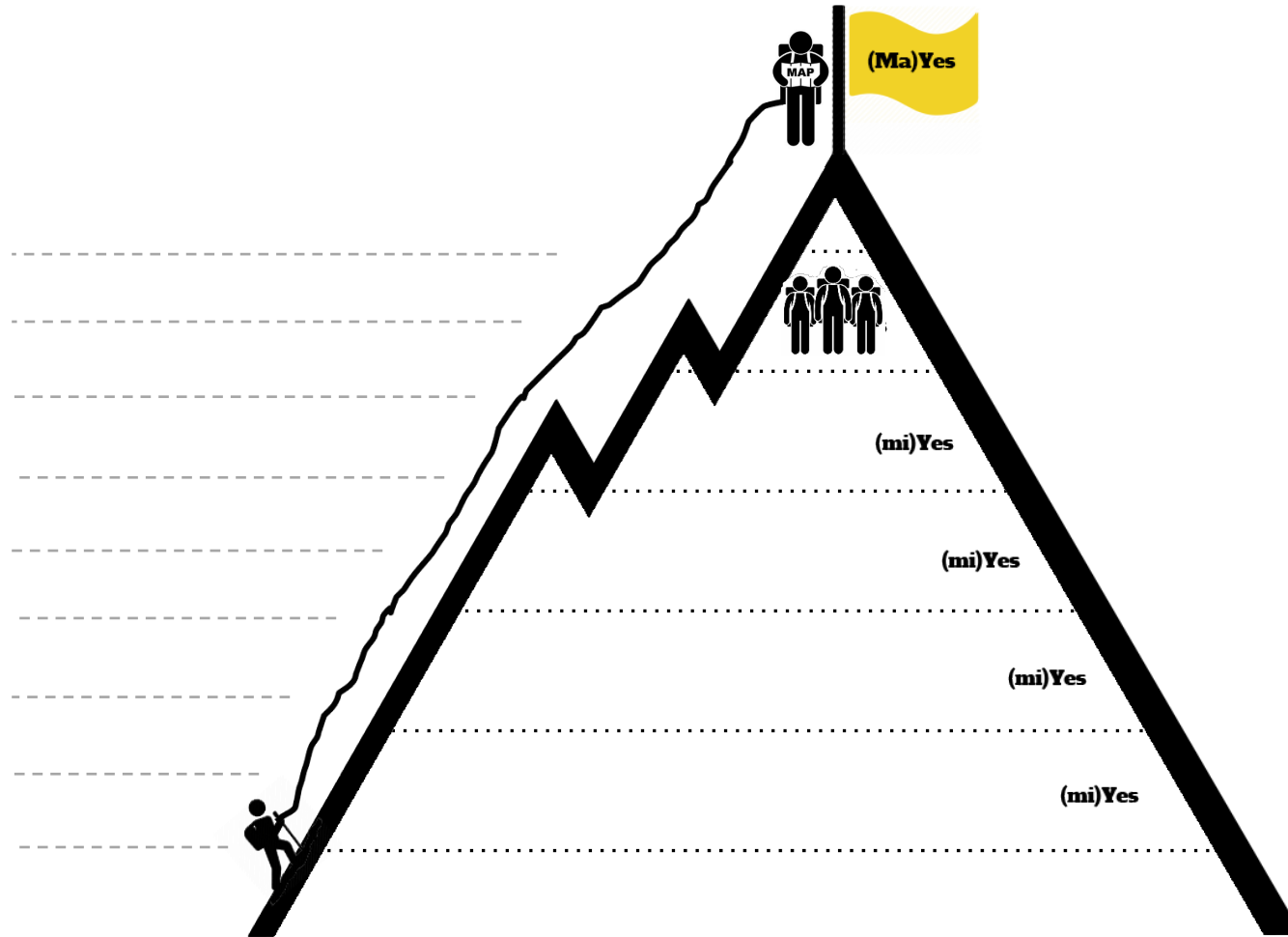




# The Donor Mountain



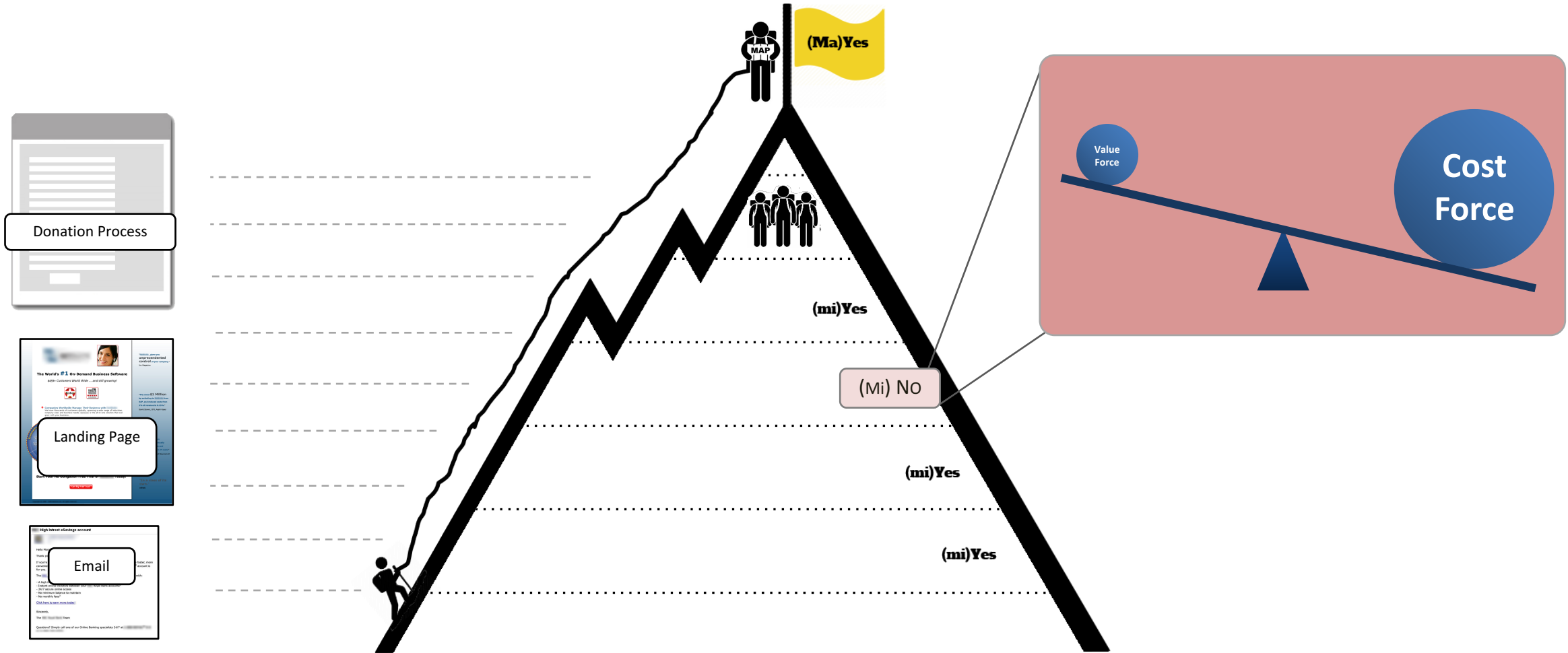
# Optimizing Each Micro-Yes



# The Value Proposition

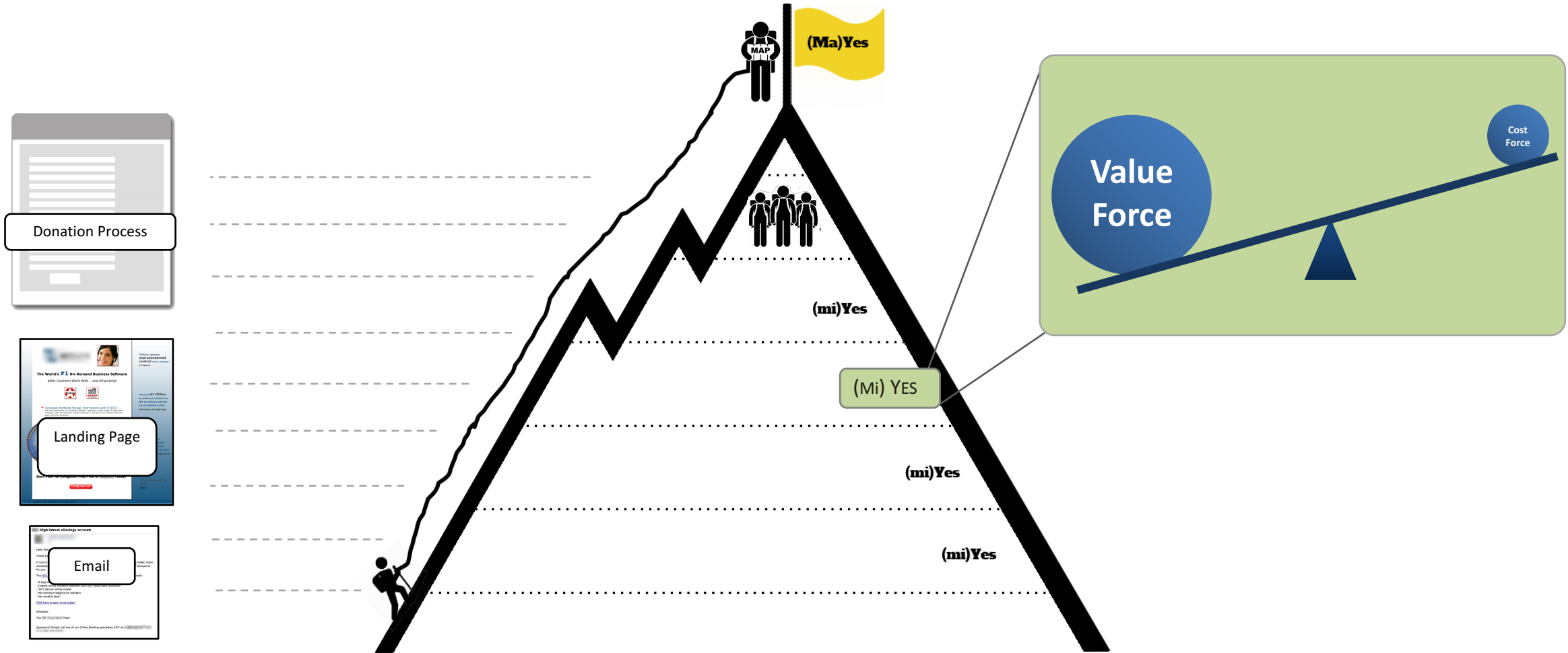


# Optimizing Each Micro-Yes





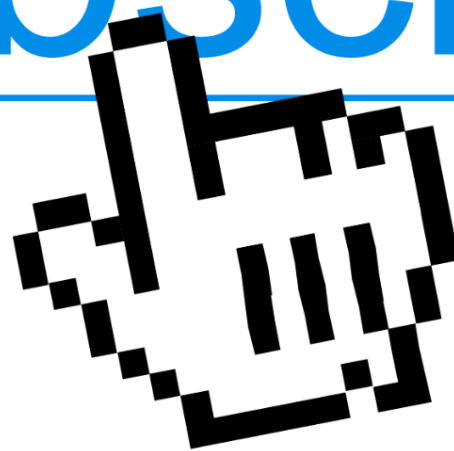
# Optimizing Each Micro-Yes



*Email marketing demands trust because the*  
**RECIPIENT**  
*has a rare power over the*  
**MARKETER**

# The recipient holds all the power

Unsubscribe



# Permission Marketing

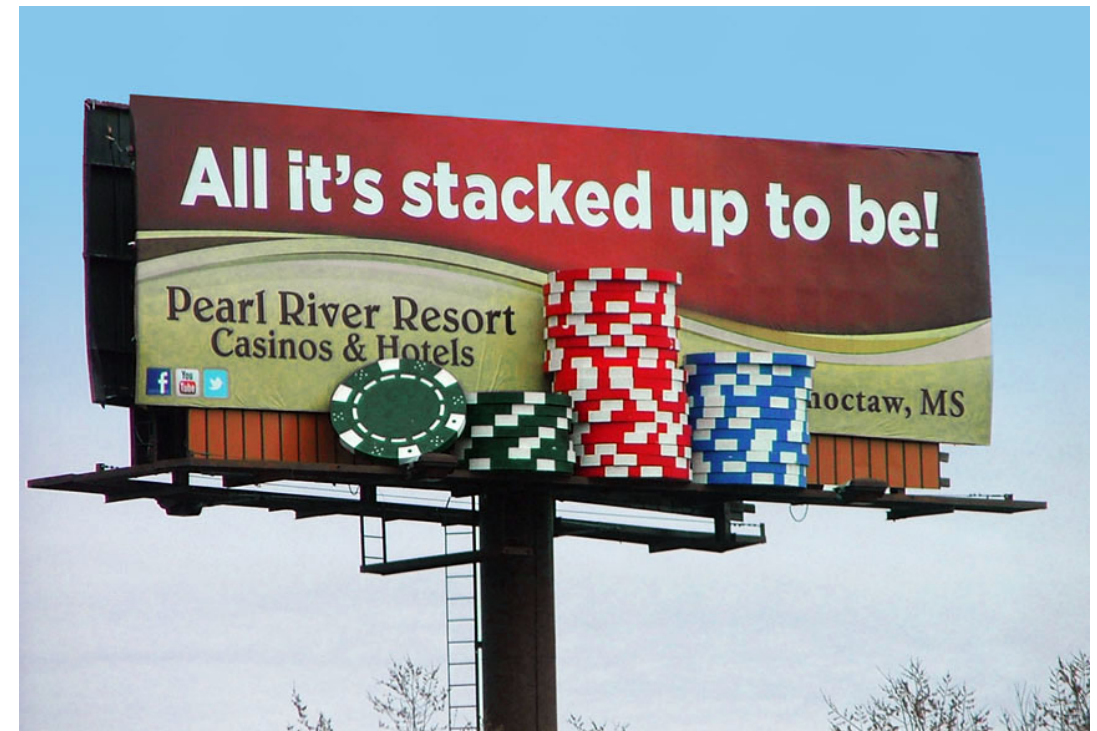
(click on my head)



**“Permission marketing is the privilege (not the right) of delivering anticipated, personal and relevant messages to people who actually want to get them.”**

**- Seth Godin**

# Can you unsubscribe from these?





*Email marketing demands trust because the*  
**CONTEXT**  
*can be quite revealing for*  
**BAD MARKETERS**

# Context is everything

## ▼ Unread

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	<b>Bryan Stone</b>	<b>Introduction</b> - Jeff, I wanted to introduce you to Michelle Gamradt. Michelle is a social media and client success
--------------------------	---	--------------------	--

## ▼ Everything else

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	<b>Christie Myers</b>	Emails - rick.callahan@dallascityhall.com, mark.clayton@dallascityhall.com, jennifer.gates@dallascityhall.com, s
--------------------------	---	-----------------------	--

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	<b>Larry P. Arn</b>	Your Imprimis subscription - Dear Mr. Giddens, I hope you've received your latest issue of Imprimis, featuring an
--------------------------	---	---------------------	---

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	<b>Sonos</b>	New to Sonos: Help & Tips on the app. - Get our new app update. Get our new app update. Simple how-tos for g
--------------------------	---	--------------	--

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	<b>Luke, me (5)</b>	LuckAtLuke Re-Launch - Thanks so much, Jeff! I don't know about this 'Go Dawgs' though (unless we're talking
--------------------------	---	---------------------	--

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	<b>me, David (2)</b>	Serving with our kids - I like it! Great idea. I haven't gone through all the material from this weekend, but I'm sure
--------------------------	---	----------------------	--

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	<b>Allianz Global Assistance</b>	Your Allianz Global Assistance Claim Number 0004314742-001 - May 23, 2017 Dear Jeffrey Giddens, Thank yo
--------------------------	---	----------------------------------	--

# Context is everything

## ▼ Unread

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	<b>Bryan Stone</b>	<b>Introduction</b> - Jeff, I wanted to introduce you to Michelle Gamradt. Michelle is a social media and client success
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--------------------------	---	----------------	--

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	Larry P. Arnn	Your Imprimis subscription - Dear Mr. Giddens, I hope you've received your latest issue of Imprimis, featuring an
--------------------------	---	---------------	---

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	☆	Sonos	New to Sonos: Help & Tips on the app. - Get our new app update. Get our new app update. Simple how-tos for
-------------------------------------	---	-------	--

<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	Luke, me (5)	LuckAtLuke Re-Launch - Thanks so much, Jeff! I don't know about this 'Go Dawgs' though (unless we're talking
--------------------------	---	--------------	--

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<input type="checkbox"/>	☆	Allianz Global Assistance	Your Allianz Global Assistance Claim Number 0004314742-001 - May 23, 2017 Dear Jeffrey Giddens, Thank yo
--------------------------	---	---------------------------	--

# Do they trust their guide?

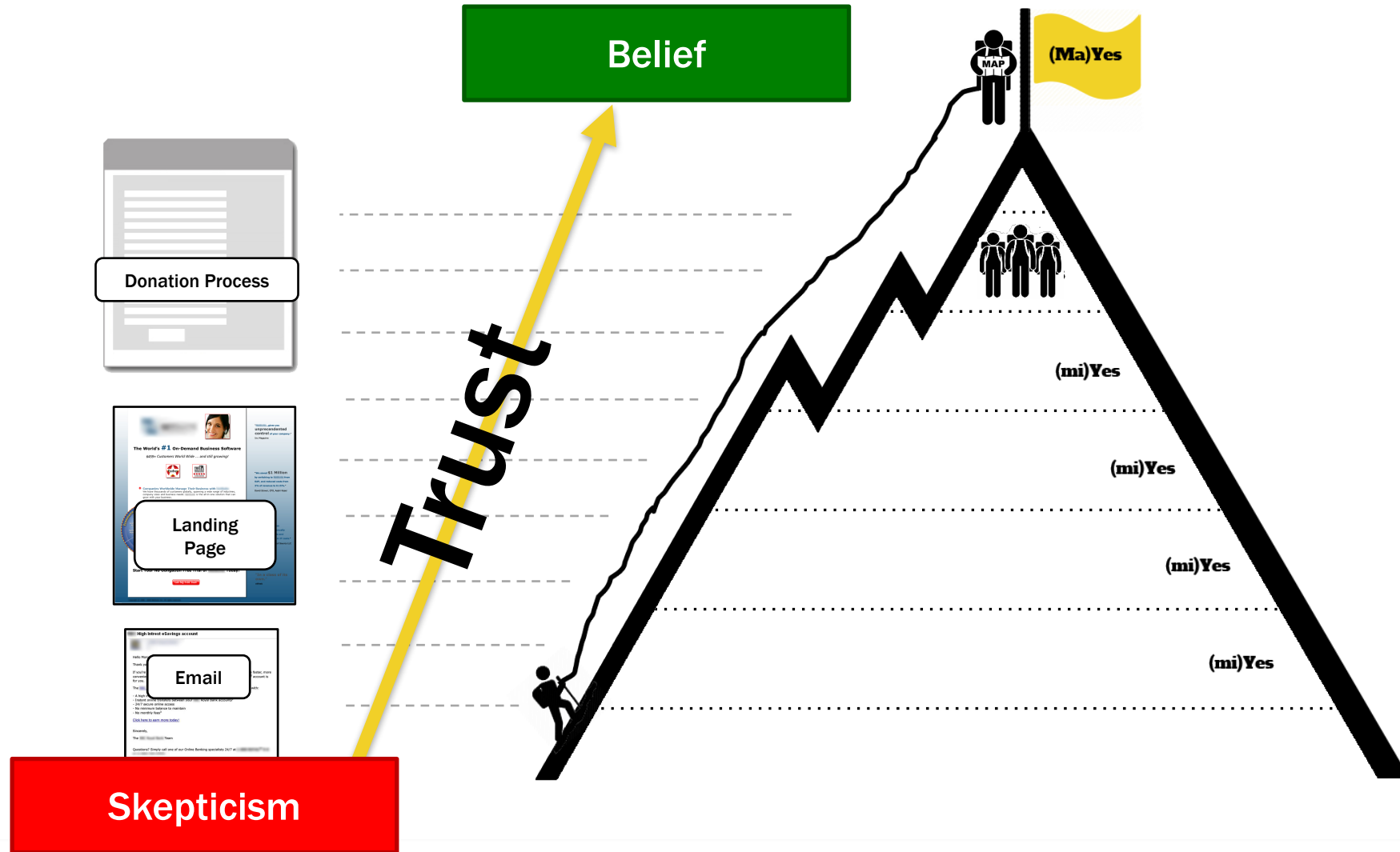


# Do they trust their guide?





# Building trust through email



Forwarded message

Date: Thu, Feb 23, 2017 at 7:51 AM  
Subject: Unfortunate we didn't meet.  
To: Jeff Giddens <[jeff@nextafter.com](mailto:jeff@nextafter.com)>

Hi Jeff

My name is T [REDACTED] We've had a great time at INBOUND in November and got to meet a lot of awesome folks and Hubspot Partners. Unfortunately I didn't get to meet you.

I wanted to introduce myself and see if Globalia handles Influencer Marketing and Blogger Outreach for clients. We work with thousands of agencies like Globalia, helping them scale outreach and making their teams more productive. If there is an interest, I'm happy to [schedule a private walkthrough](#) to demonstrate how Pitchbox will save your team countless hours on prospecting, outreach and focus on meaningful connections.

Watch a quick video to see what Pitchbox is all about:



Let me know if you are interested or simply book your private demo here: <https://calendly.com/pitchbox-demo/>

RANKED **#1 BOOK** ON FLIPPING APARTMENTS

HOW TO FIND, FINANCE, FIX & FLIP  
**APARTMENTS**  
FROM DUPLEXES TO 100+ UNIT COMPLEXES

Dear Friend, I am SUPER excited to release my book! I've worked on it for the last 6 months and have taught this information to over 1,000 in the last 12 months.

I wrote this book to help others understand the process of flipping apartments. Since 2008, I've personally flipped over \$52 million in apartments and even made \$223,000 in profit on my first deal.

**Get the Book ~~\$29.95~~ \$19.95 + Free Shipping [Order NOW!](#)**

I cover every area from why flip apartments to how to execute due diligence to understanding how to price apartments by calculating the cap rate. I also

This is a No Fluff Book! Learn from my Successes and Failures!

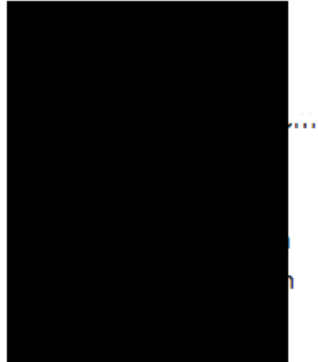
All the best,



## Year-end Dedicated HTML Blast Special!

Finish 2016 strong with these amazing year-end HTML blast discounts.

Reach [REDACTED] through these highly engaged channels:



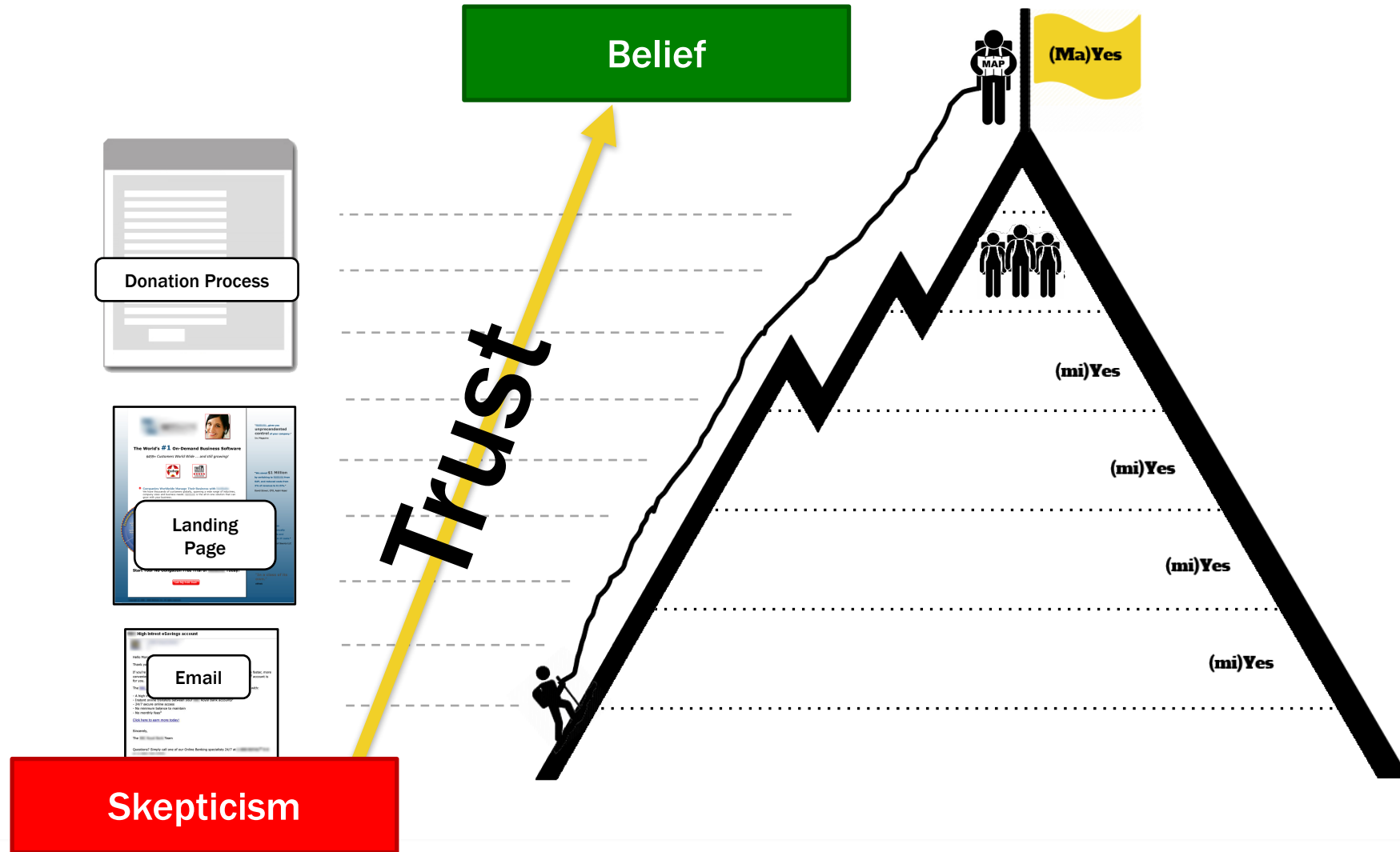
Reach **faith-based consumers** through:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

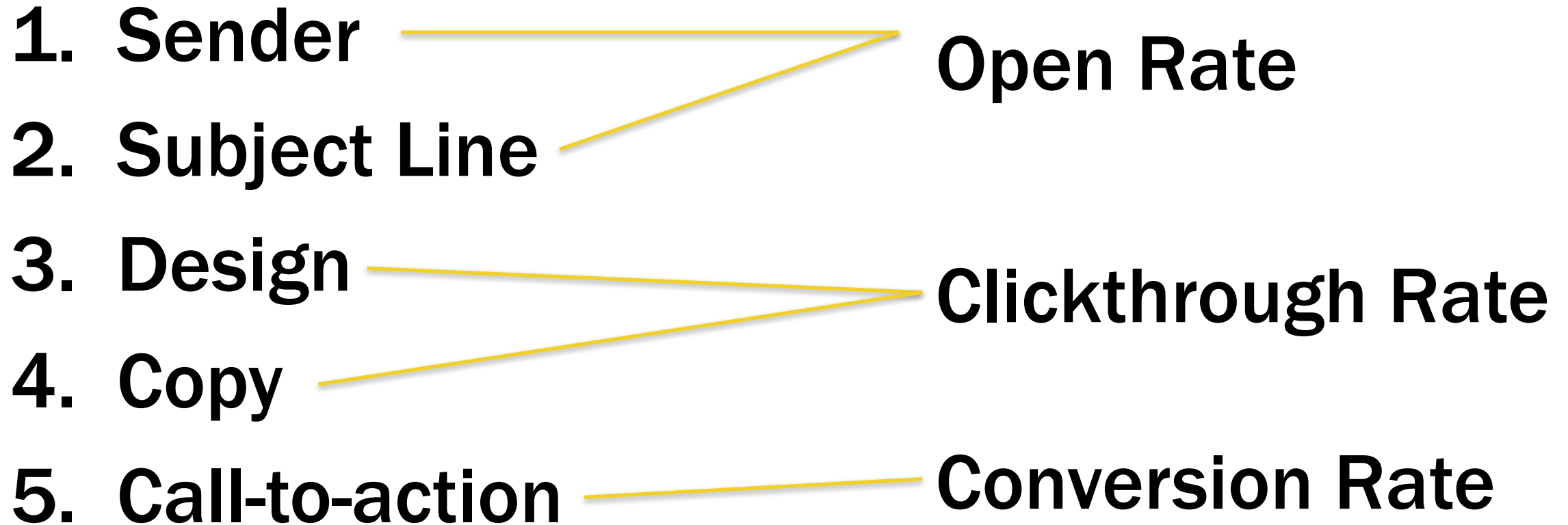
Limited supply. Grab yours before they disappear!

**Dedicated Email Blast Special**

# Building trust through email

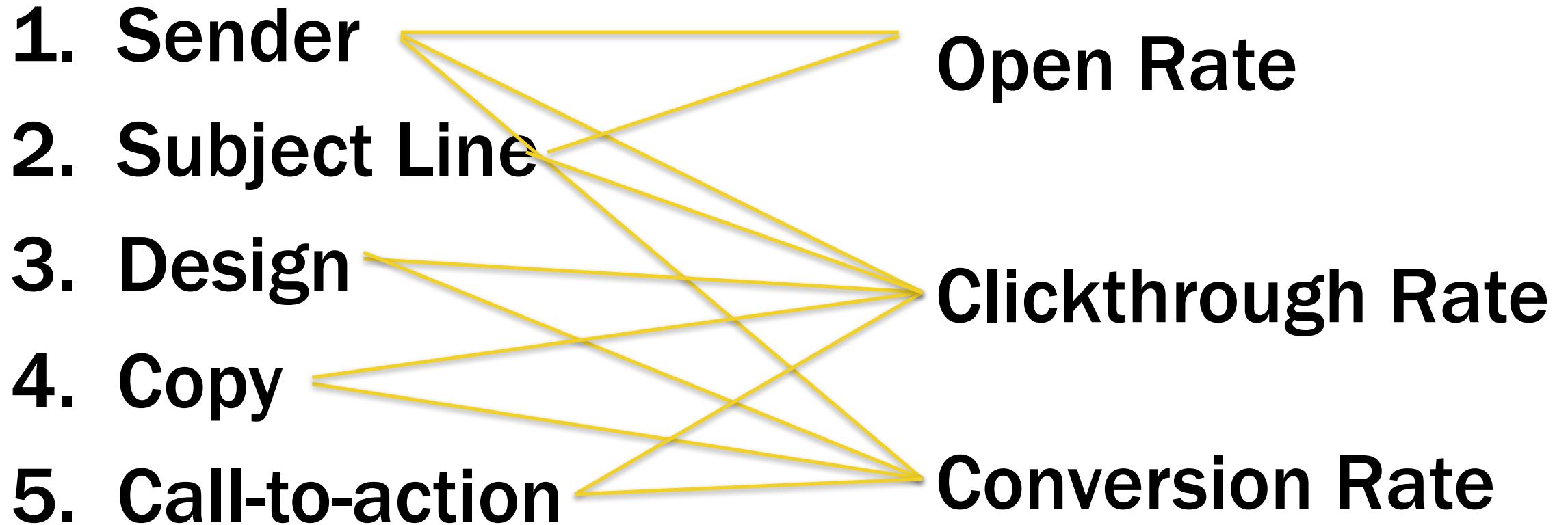


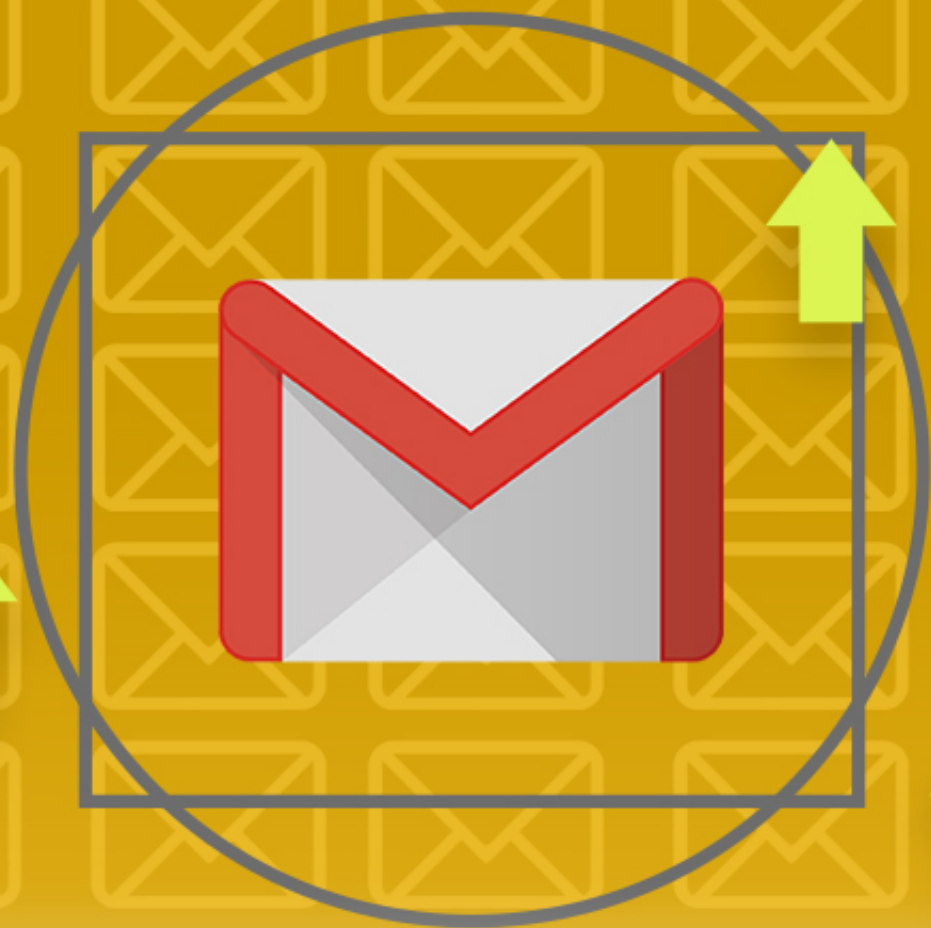
# Elements and Metrics





# Elements and Metrics





# **The Anatomy of an Effective Email Appeal**



# Element 1: **The Sender**

# Sample senders

Dr. David Jeremiah

Feed the Children (2)

Mercy Ships

Media Research Center

Orbis

Stefan Radelich, Feed. (3)

Lara Kaufmann, Direct. (2)

IMA World Health (2)

Jack Graham, PowerPoint .

LIVESTRONG (3)

☐ Food For The Poor (2)

☐ Stacey D. Stewart, March.

☐ Stacey D. Stewart, March.

☐ 98.5 KTIS

☐ In Touch Ministries (2)

☐ The Voice of the Martyrs

☐ Louise Adler - Americ. (2)

☐ Boys & Girls Clubs of. (2)

☐ Joel Osteen Ministries (2)

☐ WNYC Morning Brief

☐ Christy Moore, Heifer In.

☐ Water4

☐ Back to the Bible

☐ The Daily Signal (2)

☐ Nilanga Jayasinghe, WWF

☐ Daily Hope with Rick . (2)

☐ Father Chris Riley

☐ LeSEA Treasury Devotional

☐ Telling the Truth (2)

☐ Winning Walk Devotion. (3)

☐ Truth For Life Daily

☐ Tracy Bevan

☐ Turning Point

# The Fundraiser's Creed

ARTICLE  
1

*We Believe* people give to people,  
that people don't give to organizations,  
or from Websites; people give to people.  
Fundraising is not about programs;  
**it is about relationships.**

# People have a name

**From:** "Big Brothers Big Sisters" <[donotreply@bbbs.org](mailto:donotreply@bbbs.org)>

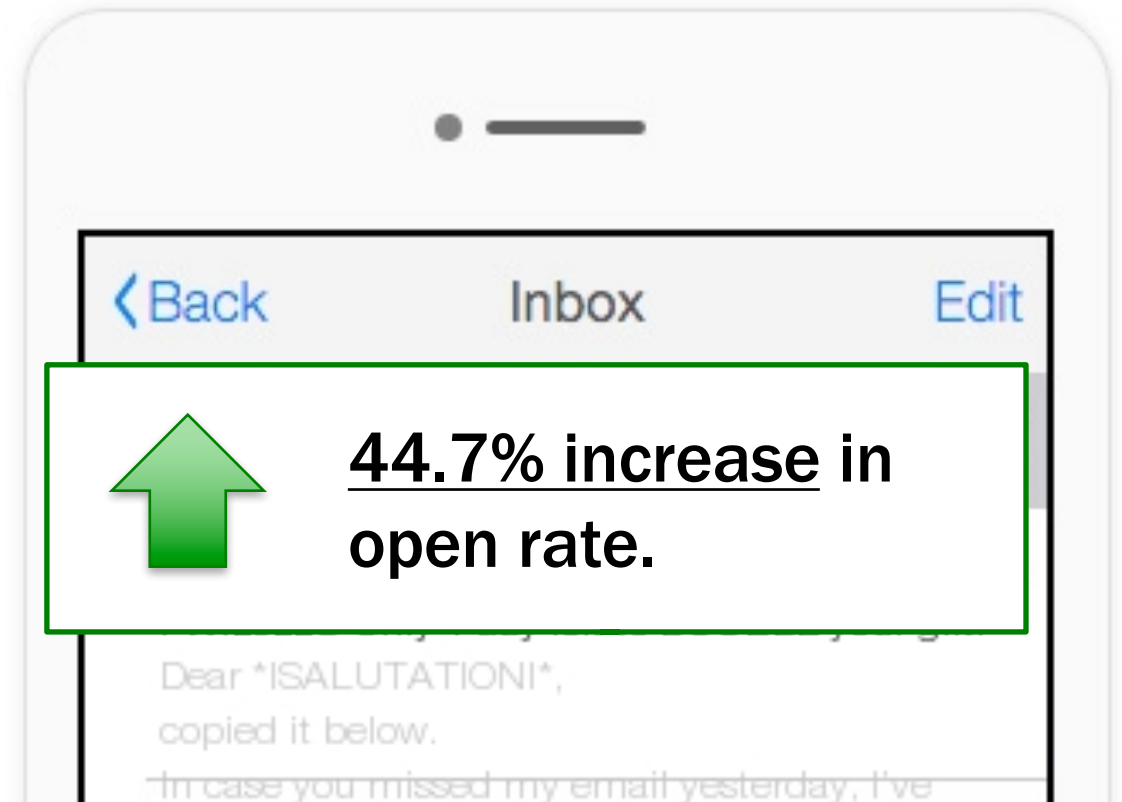
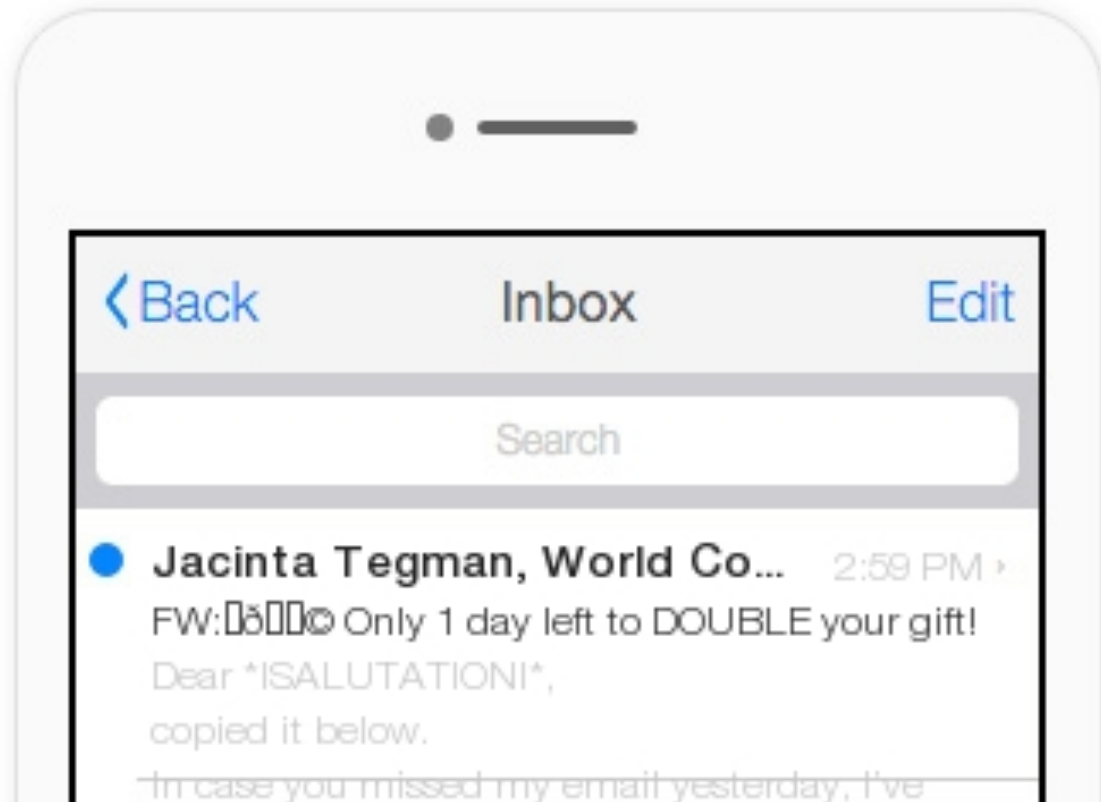
**Date:** July 15, 2015 at 4:53:09 PM CDT

**To:** "Jeff Giddens" <[jeff@nextafter.com](mailto:jeff@nextafter.com)>

**Subject:** Big Impacts: A Bond Nearly Three Decades Strong

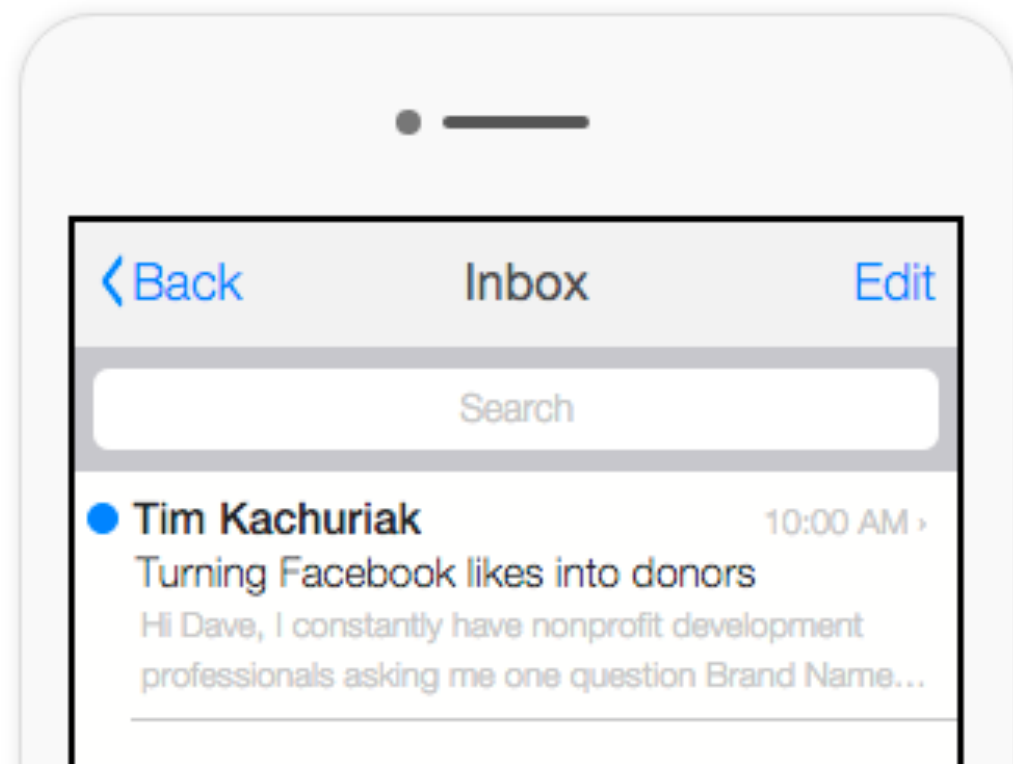
**Reply-To:** <[donotreply@bbbs.org](mailto:donotreply@bbbs.org)>

# Sender names build (or break) trust





# Sender names build (or break) trust



**10.1% decrease in  
open rate.**



**20.7% decrease in  
clickthrough rate.**

# Sender has an impact on subject line

**Your membership expires soon .**

**KERA Member Center**

**Your membership expires soon**

# Sender has an impact on subject line

**My breast cancer patients need your continued support. -**

**Susan G. Komen®**

**My breast cancer patients need your continued support. -**

# **ACTION ITEM:**

*Test a personal sender  
instead of your organization's name.*

# But one caveat...

Reply-To: <[donotreply@bbbs.org](mailto:donotreply@bbbs.org)>



## Element 2: **The Subject Line**

# Subject lines we received today

**[WATCH] You transformed these Americans**

**We've raised \$167,500 in 21 days!**

**Shrike Hunting Practice | Quirky Flamingos | The Calls of a Meadowlark**

**You can't imagine what I saw in Zimbabwe**

**[WARNING] This photo is awful. But it's important.**

**Thank you for praying!**



# Honorable Mention

Register Today for "Pre-Campaign Planning for the CEO" [CORRECTED LINK](#)

# Honorable Mention



## 2017 LEARNING SERIES

### MASTERING THE MAJOR CAMPAIGN:

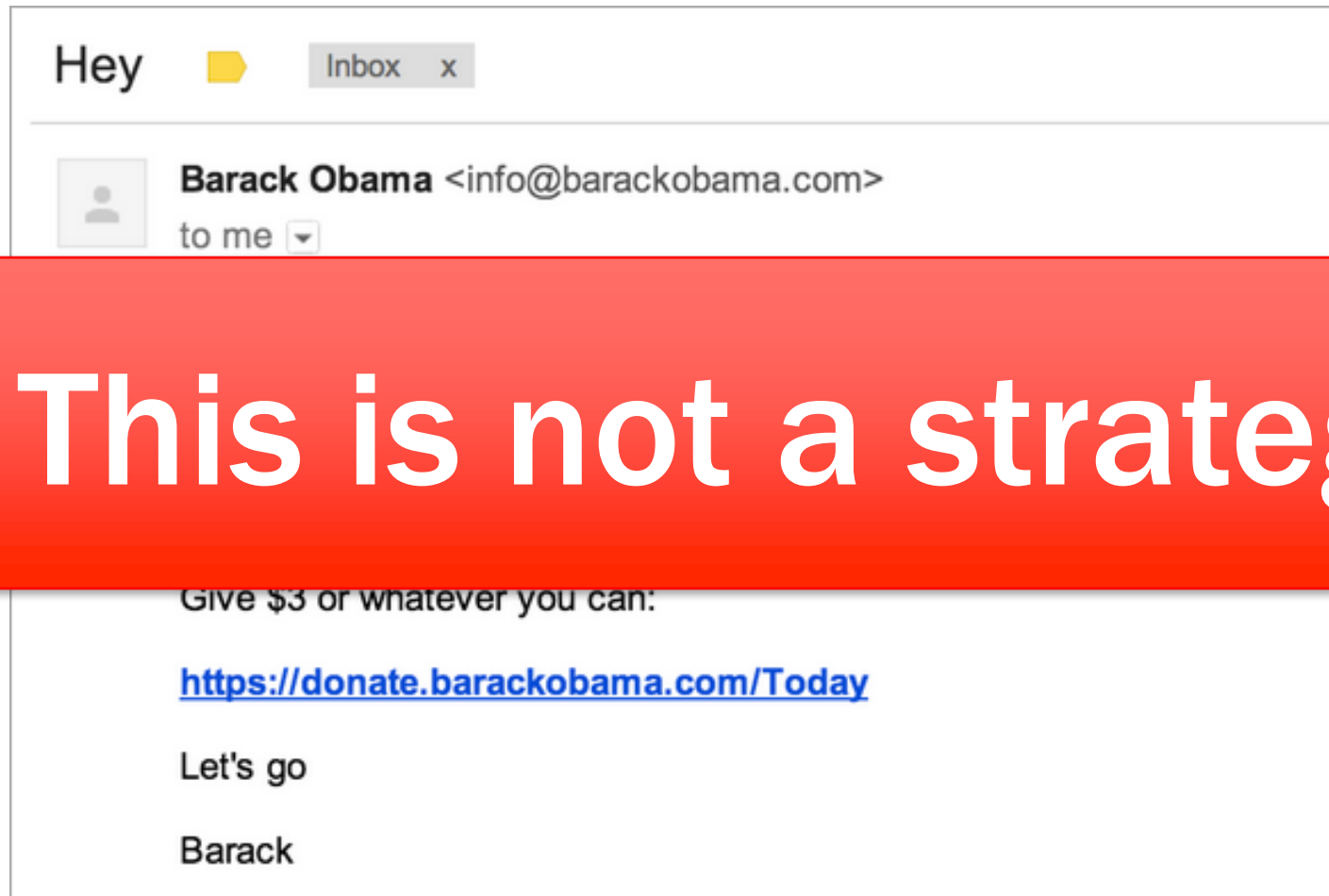
### PRE-CAMPAIGN PLANNING FOR THE CEO

Planning for a campaign requires significant attention, management and oversight by the nonprofit CEO. From project planning to cash flow and from board engagement to allocation of staff resources, CEOs are tasked at all levels to be the leader, chief fundraiser and cheerleader. Whether you are planning for a major project now or in the future, this workshop focuses on everything you need to know and then some.

#### Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

- Understand project planning (capital, program, endowment) in terms of scope, budget, timeline, contracting, philanthropic investment
- Know what you need for a Campaign Readiness assessment - Feasibility Study
- Learn how to prepare with your lead development officer and development department for the campaign readiness assessment and campaign
- Plan for your organizational structure and operational budget during a campaign
- Prepare your board for pre-campaign decision-making and campaign authorization
- Prepare your board for their role in the campaign
- Prepare for campaign management and leadership
- Understand the campaign communication plan, stewardship and donor recognition
- Understand your role before, during and after a major campaign!

# The most famous subject line



**29 EMAIL MARKETING  
SUBJECT LINES THAT GAURANTEE  
INCREASE THE OPEN RATE**

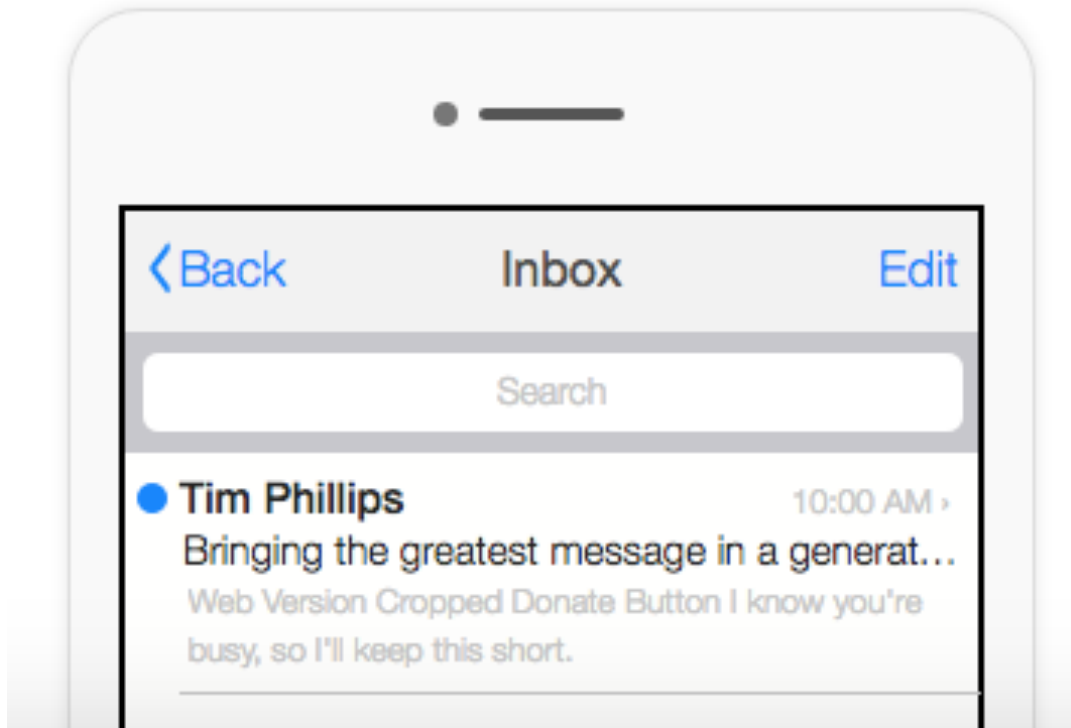


# How subject line tone affects email open rate

Experiment #4116

# How personal tone affects open rate

Control

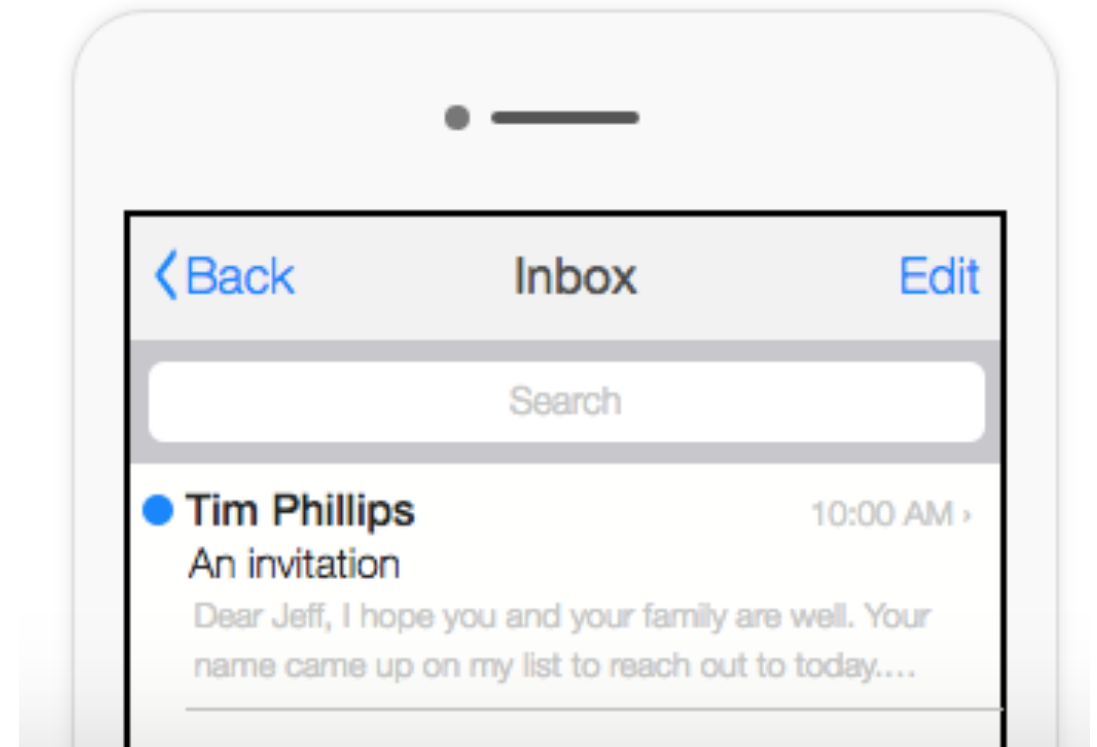


- **Sender is a person, not an organization**
- **Subject line is unclear and cut off**
- **Alt text for images and web version is inserted into preview text**

# How personal tone affects open rate

- **Subject line is personal, heightens interest**
- **Preview text shows personalization**

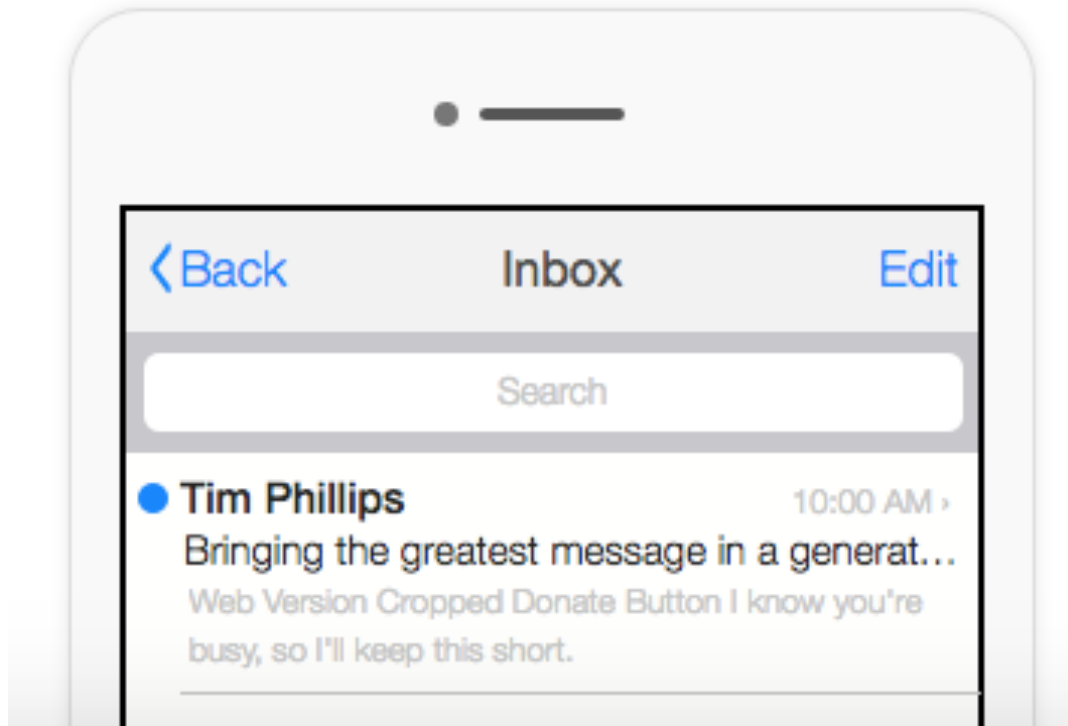
Treatment



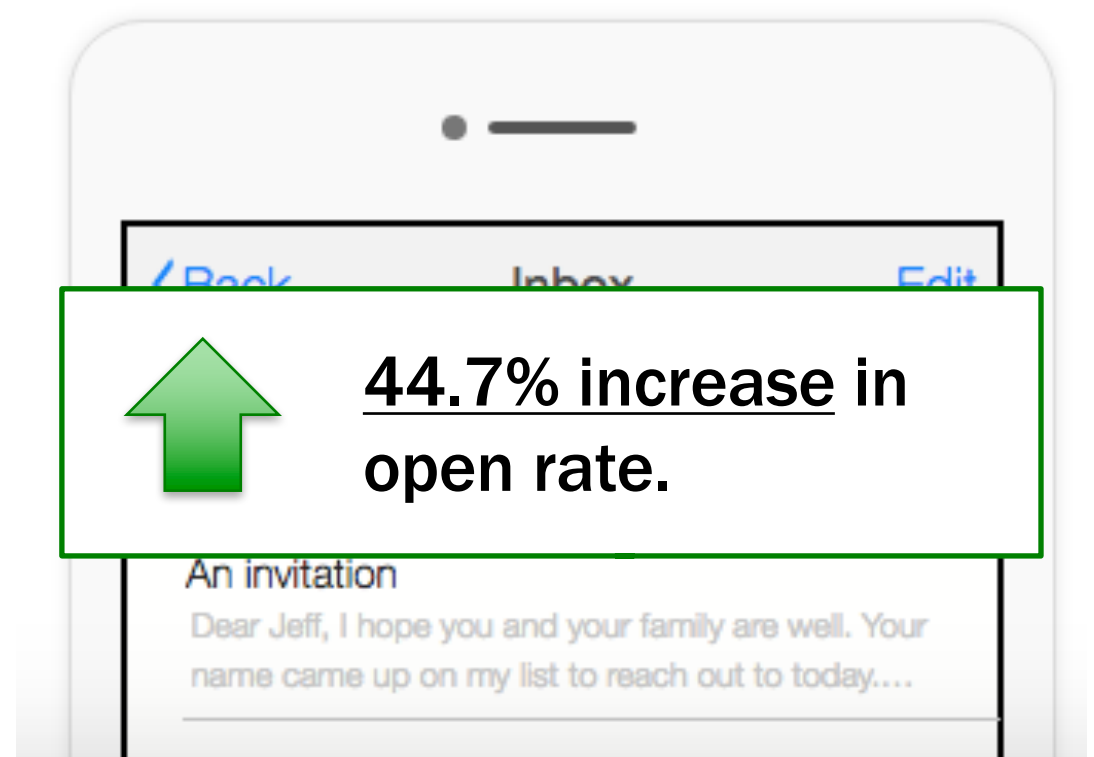


# How personal tone affects open rate

Control



Treatment



# How personal tone affects open rate



44.7% increase in open rate

Version	Open Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	10.2%		
Treatment	14.8%	44.7%	100.0%

## Key Learning:



We believe that people give to people...but they also open emails from people as well. Our communications must be transformed so that the recipient believes it comes from a person.

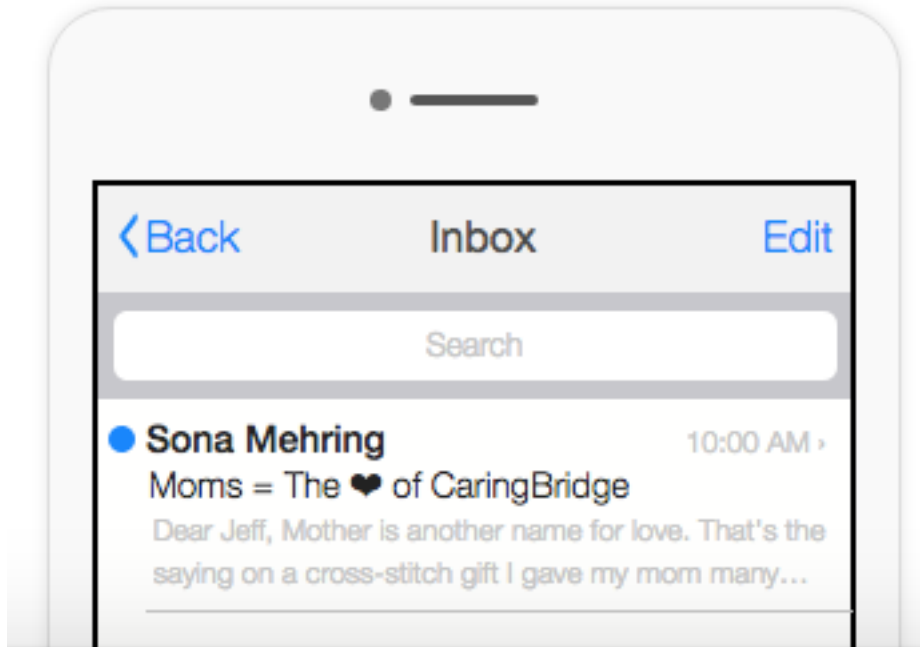


# How subject line personalization affects email open rate

Experiment #4307

# How personal tone affects open rate

Control

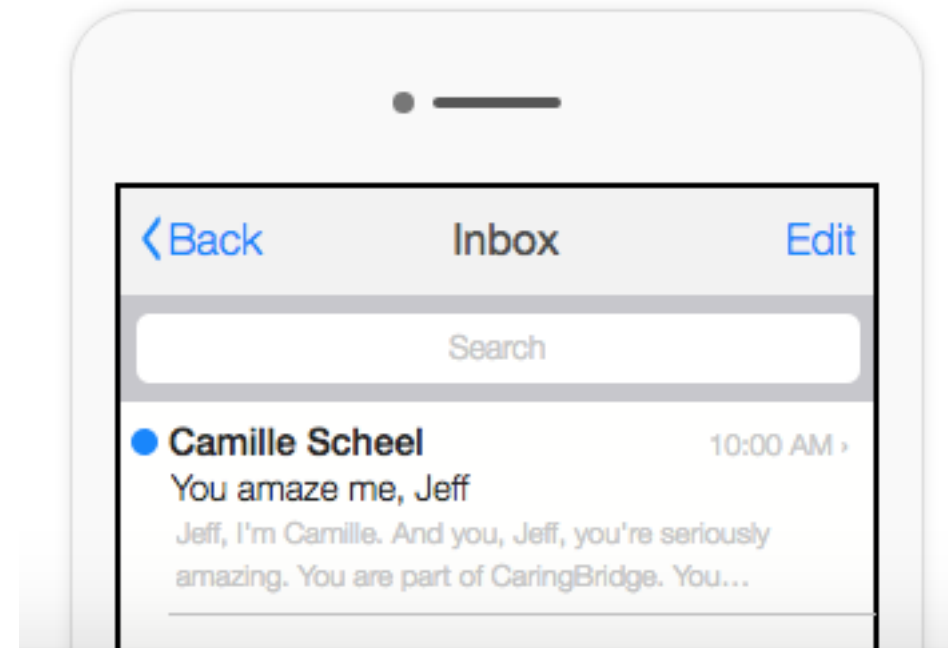


- **Sender is relatively familiar person to the recipient.**
- **Subject line includes emoji, and is organizational-centric.**

# How personal tone affects open rate

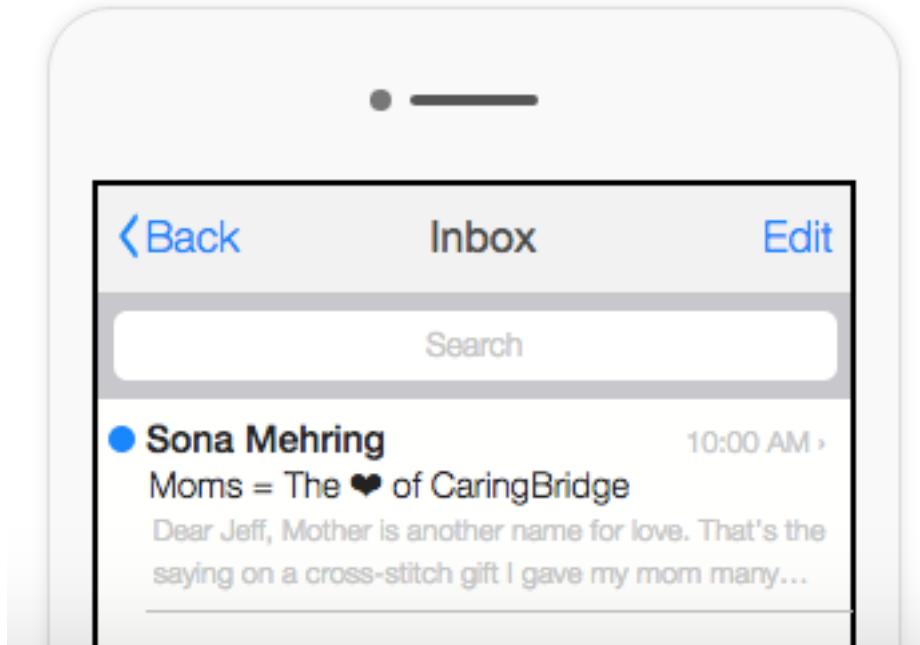
- **Sender is unknown to the recipient.**
- **Subject line is personalized to recipient**
- **Personalization also appears in preview text.**

Treatment

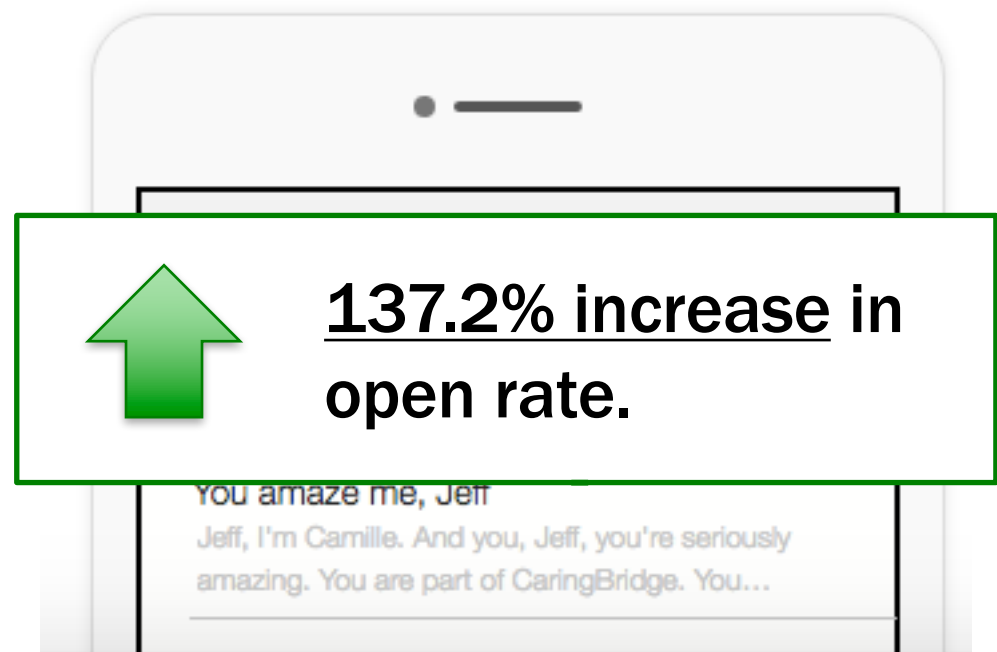


# How personal tone affects open rate

Control



Treatment



# How personal tone affects open rate



**137.2% increase in open rate**

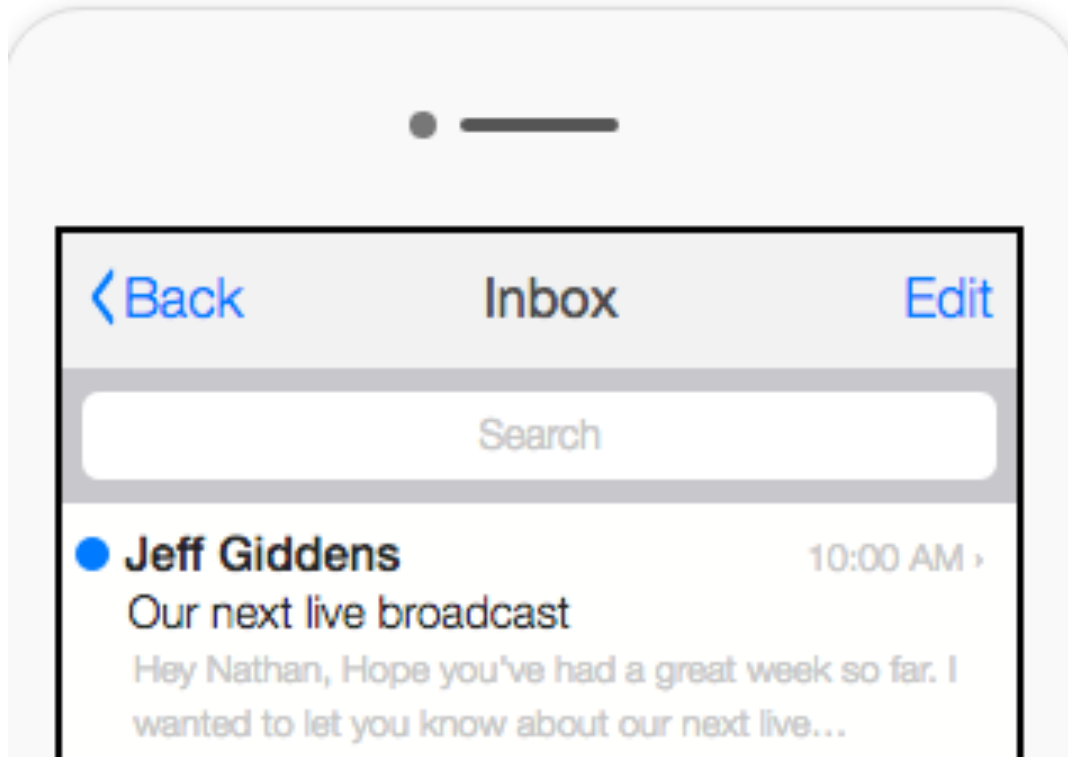
Version	Open Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	7.6%		
Treatment	18.1%	137.2%	100.0%

## Key Learning:

✓ Subject lines that would be difficult for a person to actually write may tip off marketing messages. Additionally, relational gaps can be overcome through personalization.



# Subject line affects clickthrough



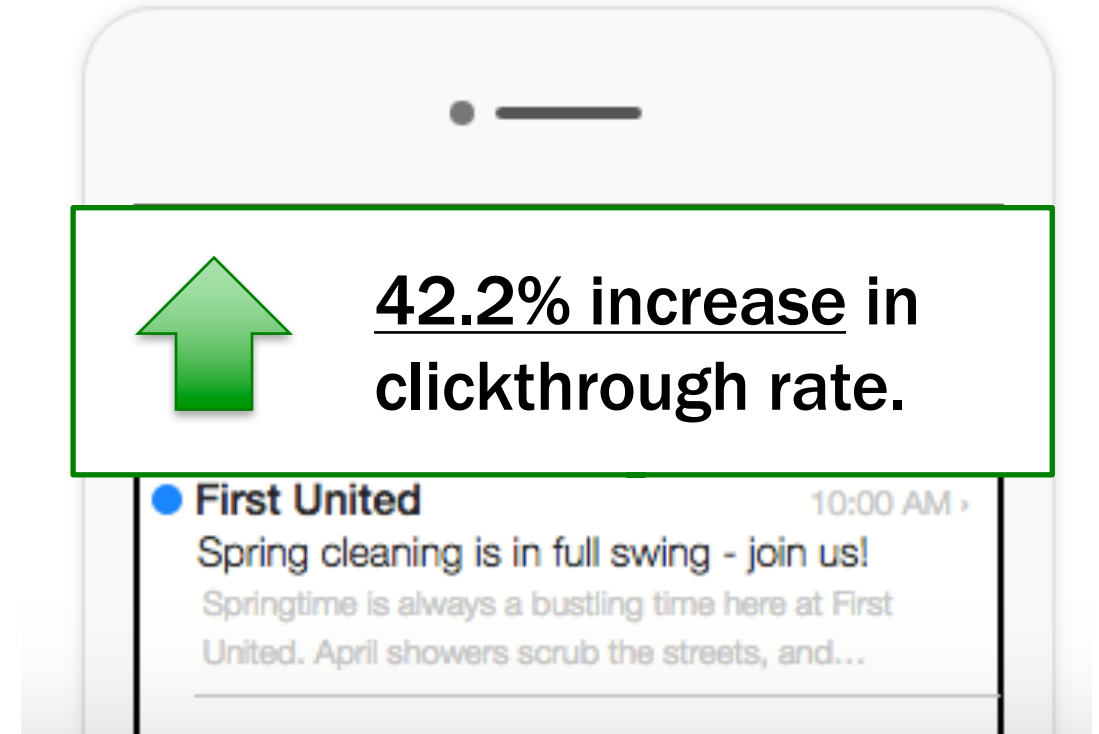
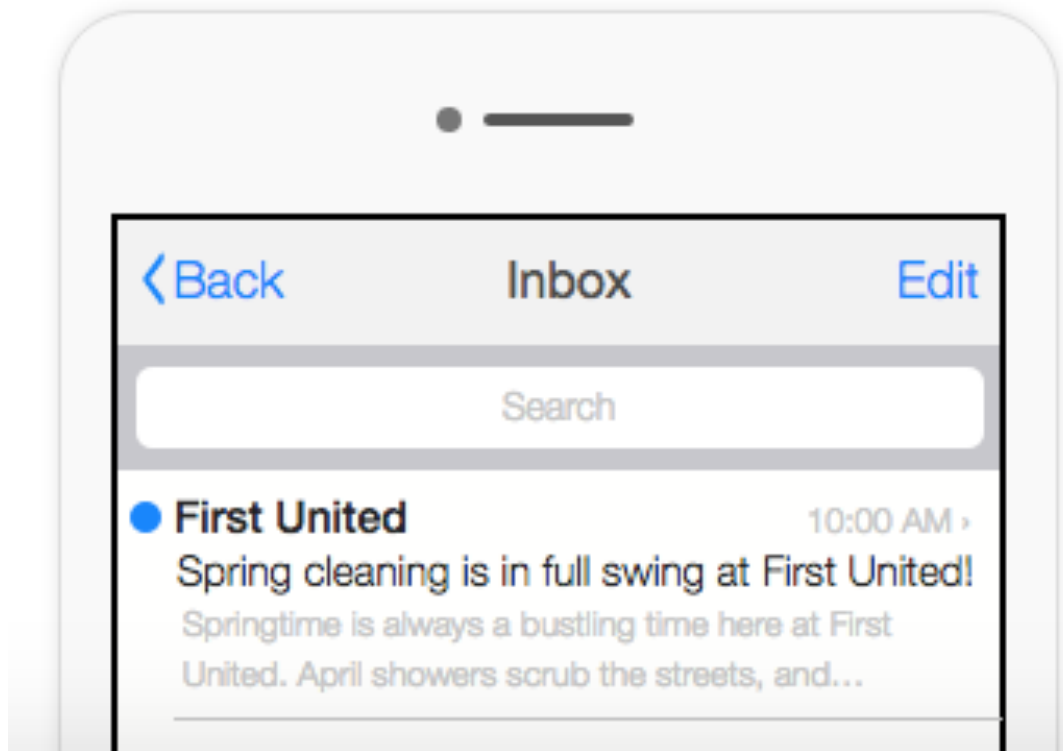
109.8% increase in  
open rate.



19.7% increase in  
clickthrough rate.

never heard back from you. Just wanting to make...

# Subject line affects clickthrough



## **ACTION ITEM:**

*Look in your “sent mail” to find inspiration for a “natural” subject line. But make sure it relates to the copy!*

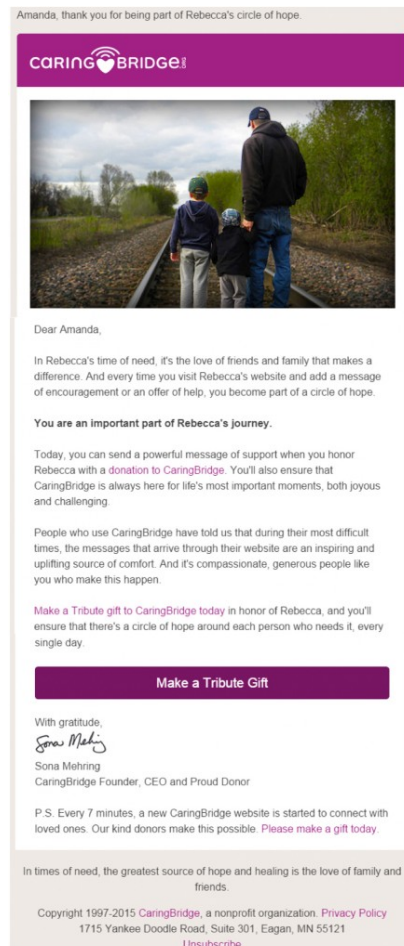


# Element 3: **The Design**



# **How a more personal email design affects performance metrics**

# How a more personal email affects performance metrics



Hi Kelly,

On behalf of CaringBridge, I want to thank you. You are an essential part of Catherine's community – and your support brings comfort on a daily basis.

CaringBridge is a powerful resource. Every 7 minutes, a new CaringBridge website is started. **And we're happy to offer this safe, protected service free of charge as a nonprofit organization.**

That's why I'd like to give you the opportunity to [honor Catherine with a gift to CaringBridge today.](#)

Each CaringBridge website, including Catherine's, is powered by donations from people like you who understand the importance of community during life's most challenging times.

Your gift to CaringBridge on behalf of Catherine ensures that the website that delivers so much hope, healing and comfort stays up and running as long as needed.

[Make my gift to CaringBridge in honor of Catherine.](#)

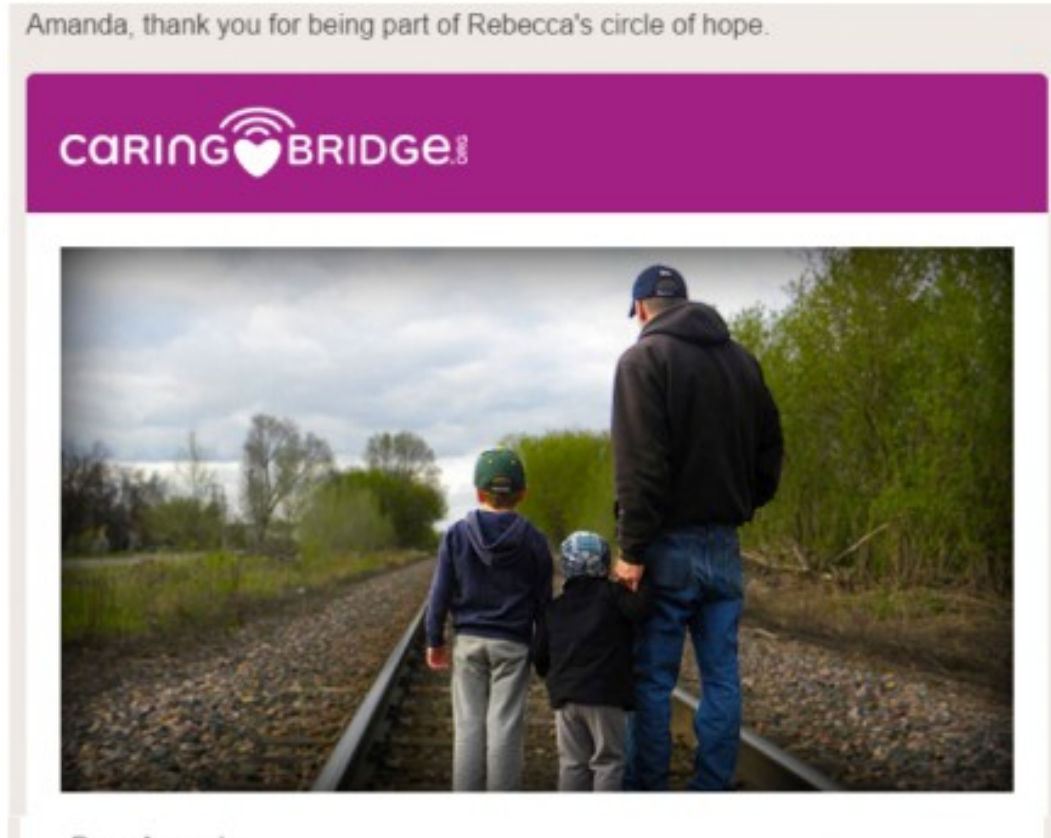
Sincerely,

Kelly Espy  
Senior Development Specialist  
CaringBridge

Copyright © 1997-2015 [CaringBridge®](#), a nonprofit organization. [Privacy Policy](#)

# How a more personal email affects performance metrics

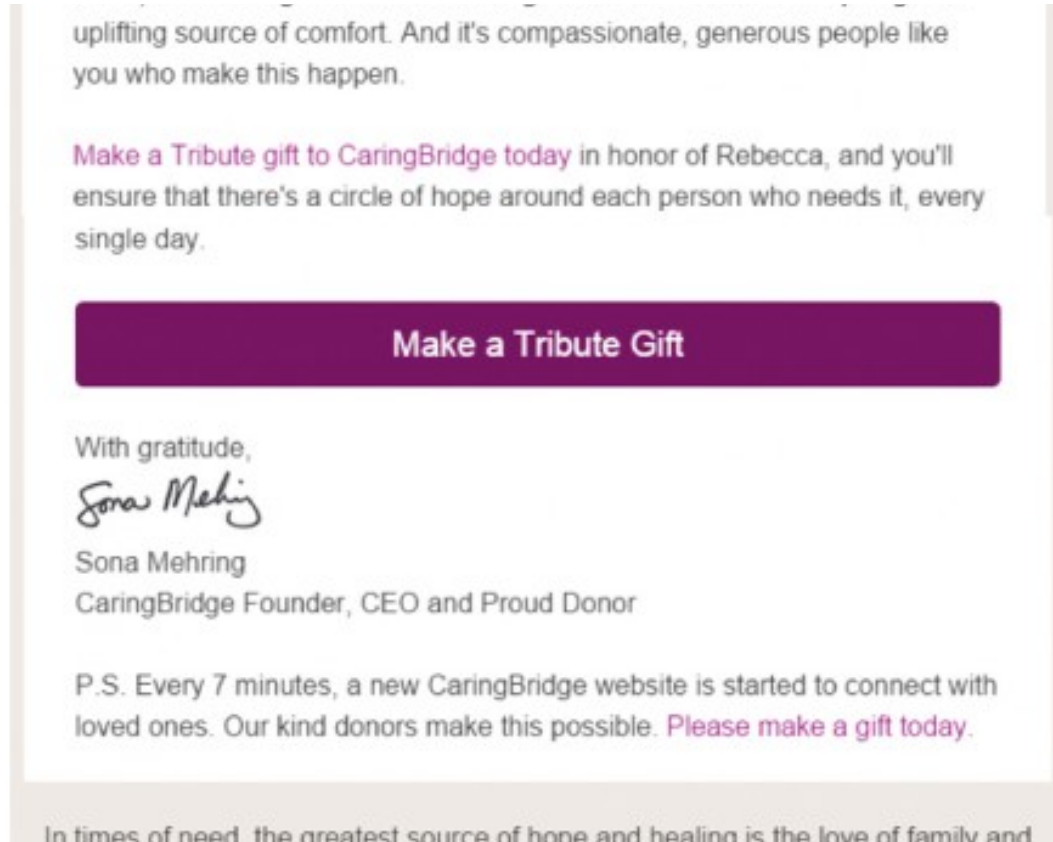
## Control



- Heavily designed email
- Sent from the founder
- Makes calls to action with large buttons

# How a more personal email affects performance metrics

## Control



- Heavily designed email
- Sent from the founder
- Makes calls to action with large buttons



# How a more personal email affects performance metrics

## Treatment



Hi Kelly,

On behalf of CaringBridge, I want to thank you. You are an essential part of Catherine's community – and your support brings comfort on a daily basis.

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That's why I'd like to give you the opportunity to [honor Catherine with a gift to CaringBridge today.](#)

- Designed to mimic “Outlook” emails
- Sent from a member of the development team
- No “designed” elements except logo and signature

# How a more personal email affects performance metrics

## Treatment

life's most challenging times.

Your gift to CaringBridge on behalf of Catherine ensures that the website that delivers so much hope, healing and comfort stays up and running as long as needed.

[Make my gift to CaringBridge in honor of Catherine.](#)

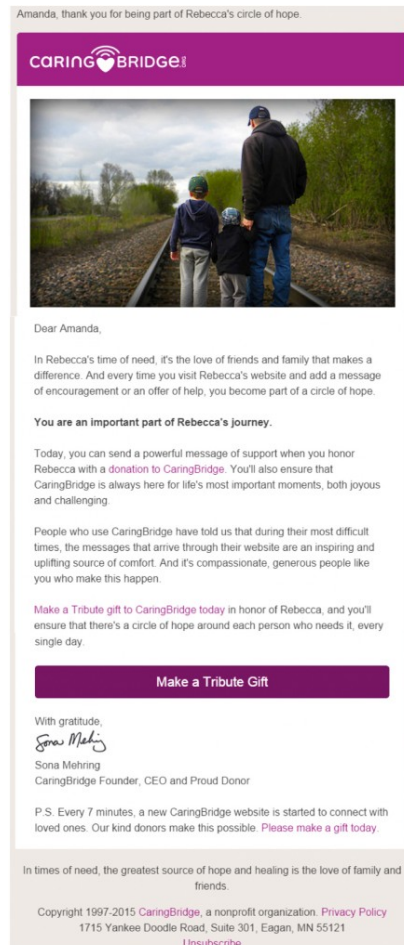
Sincerely,



Kelly Espy  
Senior Development Specialist  
CaringBridge

- **Designed to mimic “Outlook” emails**
- **Sent from a member of the development team**
- **No “designed” elements except logo and signature**

# How a more personal email affects performance metrics



Hi Kelly,

On behalf of CaringBridge, I want to thank you. You are an essential part of Catherine's community – and your support brings comfort on a daily basis.

CaringBridge is a powerful resource. Every 7 minutes, a new CaringBridge website is started. **And we're happy to offer this safe, protected service free of charge as a nonprofit organization.**



**6.3% increase in**  
**open rate.**

[Make my gift to CaringBridge in honor of Catherine.](#)

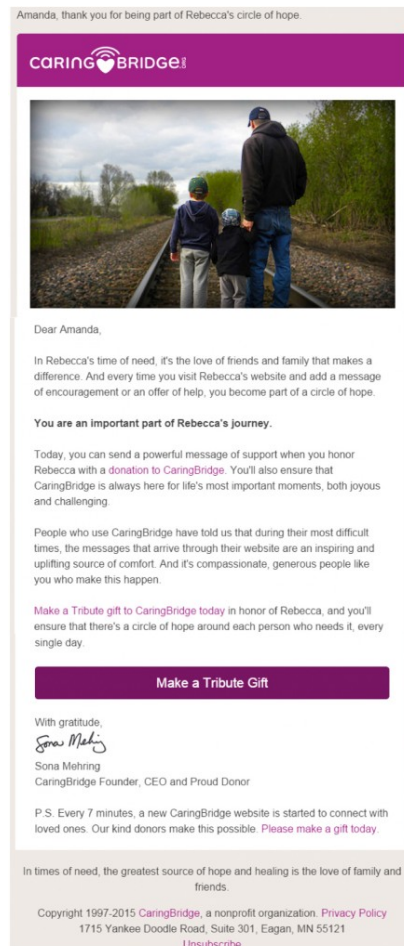
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kelly Espy".

Kelly Espy  
Senior Development Specialist  
CaringBridge

Copyright © 1997-2015 [CaringBridge®](#), a nonprofit organization. [Privacy Policy](#)

# How a more personal email affects performance metrics



Hi Kelly,

On behalf of CaringBridge, I want to thank you. You are an essential part of Catherine's community – and your support brings comfort on a daily basis.

CaringBridge is a powerful resource. Every 7 minutes, a new CaringBridge website is started. **And we're happy to offer this safe, protected service free of charge as a nonprofit organization.**



**32.5% increase in**  
**clickthrough rate.**

[Make my gift to CaringBridge in honor of Catherine.](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Kelly Espy'.

Kelly Espy  
Senior Development Specialist  
CaringBridge

Copyright © 1997-2015 [CaringBridge®](#), a nonprofit organization. [Privacy Policy](#)

# How a more personal email affects performance metrics



6.3% increase in open rate

Version	Open Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	49.6%		
Treatment	52.7%	6.3%	100.0%

## Key Learning:



A different sender and subject line (from someone they had previously not heard from) was able to successfully increase open rate.

# How a more personal email affects performance metrics



**32.5% increase in clickthrough rate**

Version	Conv. Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	6.3%		
Treatment	8.4%	32.5%	100.0%

## Key Learning:



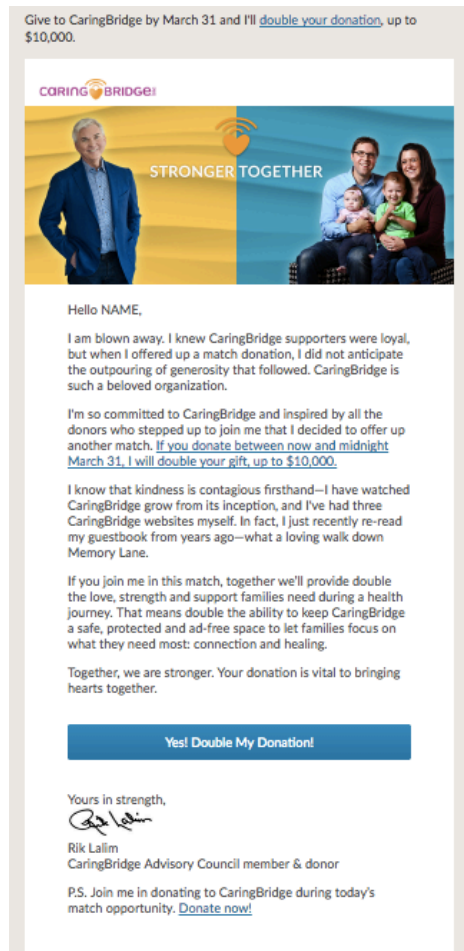
Redesigning the email to look more like emails that people send and receive every day significantly improved response rate. People respond to emails that look like they come from people, rather than an organization.



# How the design of a fundraising email affects clickthrough rate

Experiment #4174

# How fundraising email design affects clickthrough rate




- Sender is unknown to audience
- Templated email is intended to give context to the ask and reinforce the brand
- Images give context to donation ask



# How fundraising email design affects clickthrough rate

- Branding and images are stripped out, creating a personal feel for the appeal
- Email still contains templated elements, but is responsive and not designed.

## Treatment

  
Click to go back, hold to see history

Hello First name,

I am blown away. I knew CaringBridge supporters were loyal, but when I offered up my first match donation, I did not anticipate the outpouring of generosity that followed. CaringBridge is such a beloved organization.

I'm so committed to CaringBridge and inspired by all the donors who stepped up to join me that I decided to offer up another match. [If you donate between now and midnight March 31, I will double your gift, up to \\$10,000.](#)

I know that kindness is contagious firsthand—I have watched CaringBridge grow from its inception, and I have had three CaringBridge websites myself. In fact, I just recently re-read my guestbook from years ago—what a loving walk down Memory Lane.

If you join me in this match, together we'll provide double the love, strength and support families need during a health journey. That means double the ability to keep CaringBridge a safe, protected and ad-free space to let families focus on what they need most: connection and healing.

Together, we are stronger. Your donation is vital to bringing hearts together.

[Yes! Double My Donation!](#)

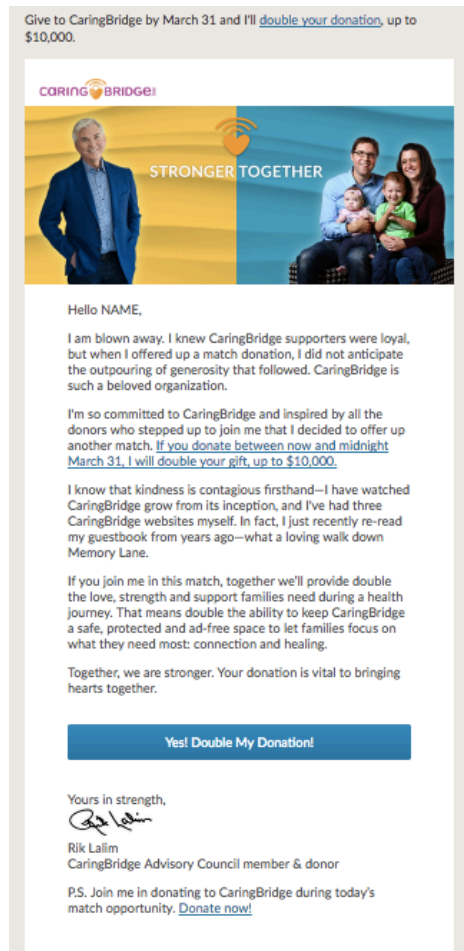
Yours in strength,



Rik Lalim  
CaringBridge Advisory Council member & donor

P.S. Join me in donating to CaringBridge during today's match opportunity. [Donate now!](#)

# How fundraising email design affects clickthrough rate



[Click to go back, hold to see history](#)

Hello First name,

I am blown away. I knew CaringBridge supporters were loyal, but when I offered up my first match donation, I did not anticipate the outpouring of generosity that followed. CaringBridge is such a beloved organization.

I'm so committed to CaringBridge and inspired by all the donors who stepped up to join me that I decided to offer up another match. [If you donate between now and midnight March 31, I will double your gift, up to \\$10,000.](#)

I know that kindness is contagious firsthand—I have watched CaringBridge grow from its inception, and I have had three CaringBridge websites myself. In fact, I just recently re-read



**80.3% increase in**  
**clickthrough rate.**

[Yes! Double My Donation!](#)

Yours in strength,  
  
Rik Lalim  
CaringBridge Advisory Council member & donor

P.S. Join me in donating to CaringBridge during today's match opportunity. [Donate now!](#)

# How fundraising email design affects clickthrough rate




80.3% increase in clickthrough rate

Version	CTR	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.17 %		
Treatment	.30%	80.3%	100.0%

## Key Learning:

- ✓ Email templates may reinforce the brand and increase the authority of an email, but they also tip our hand to the recipient that our email is “marketing”. Thus, fewer people to take the intended action and click.

# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate




Dear Friend,


At this special time of year, we are so grateful for all of our friends, alumni, and supporters like you.

Please take a moment and [view this special video message from our students](#) who wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a blessed new year.

Thank you again for supporting Hillsdale College.



Larry P. Arnn  
President, Hillsdale College  
Pursuing Truth — Defending Liberty Since 1844



Hillsdale College 33 East College St Hillsdale, MI 49242 USA

You received this email because you are subscribed to News and Information from Hillsdale College.

Update your [email preferences](#) to choose the types of emails you receive or to unsubscribe.

Dear Friend,

At this special time of year, we are so grateful for all of our friends, alumni, and supporters like you.

Please take a moment and [view this special video message from our students](#) who wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a blessed new year.



**19.6% increase in**  
**clickthrough rate.**

Larry P. Arnn  
President, Hillsdale College  
Pursuing Truth — Defending Liberty Since 1844

© Hillsdale College  
33 East College St  
Hillsdale, MI 49242  
USA

[manage your email preferences](#)  
[unsubscribe](#)



# How a signature image in an email affects clickthrough rate

Experiment #5435

# How signature image affects clickthrough rate

## Control

Hello,

I'd like to invite you to join me in studying the U.S. Supreme Court in [Hillsdale College's newest free online course](#).

If we are to do our duty as a people, we need to understand how our Constitution has been undermined and how the judicial branch of government has played a role in that. To this purpose, I invite you to enroll in Hillsdale College's new free online course, ["The U.S. Supreme Court."](#)

I will deliver two of the course's ten lectures, and the others will be given by my colleagues on Hillsdale's faculty. We will also have Q&A sessions after each lecture. Over 10,000 Americans have already joined us—**so don't wait to start your course.**

Again, there is no cost to take the course and you can watch the lectures at your leisure.

[You can activate your course here >>](#)

Warm regards,



Larry P. Arnn  
President, Hillsdale College  
Pursuing Truth—Defending Liberty since 1844

- Three calls to action
- More opportunities to click
- Signature image below final signoff

# How signature image affects clickthrough rate

- Single link
- Removed signature image and replaced it with standard signature block.

## Treatment

Hello,

I'd like to invite you to join me in studying the U.S. Supreme Court in Hillsdale College's newest free online course.

If we are to do our duty as a people, we need to understand how our Constitution has been undermined and how the judicial branch of government has played a role in that. To this purpose, I invite you to enroll in Hillsdale College's new free online course, "The U.S. Supreme Court."

I will deliver two of the course's ten lectures, and the others will be given by my colleagues on Hillsdale's faculty. We will also have Q&A sessions after each lecture. Over 10,000 Americans have already joined us—so don't wait to start your course. Here's a link for you to start your course:

<http://lp.hillsdale.edu/the-supreme-court/>

Warm regards,

Larry P. Arnn  
President, Hillsdale College

# How signature image affects clickthrough rate

## Control

Hello,

I'd like to invite you to join me in studying the U.S. Supreme Court in [Hillsdale College's newest free online course](#).

If we are to do our duty as a people, we need to understand how our Constitution has been undermined and how the judicial branch of government has played a role in that. To this purpose, I invite you to enroll in Hillsdale College's new free online course, "[The U.S. Supreme Court](#)."

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Warm regards,



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Pursuing Truth—Defending Liberty since 1844

## Treatment

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If we are to do our duty as a people, we need to understand how our Constitution has been undermined and how the judicial branch of government has played a role



**12.9% increase in**  
**clickthrough rate.**

<http://lp.hillsdale.edu/the-supreme-court/>

Warm regards,

Larry P. Arnn  
President, Hillsdale College



# How signature image affects clickthrough rate



**12.9% increase in clickthrough rate**

Version	CTR	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	1.2%		
Treatment	1.3%	12.9%	100%

## Key Learning:

☑ This indicates that the signature had a slight effect on reducing the recipient's trust of the sender, which resulted in fewer recipients taking action.



# How urgency affects conversion and average gift

Experiment #412

# Countdown Clock vs. Plain Email

## Control

Dear << Test Salutation >>,

I wanted to send you a quick reminder to make your online gift to Dallas Theological Seminary today. Your gift is an investment that will produce a return greater than any worldly investment you could make.

Generous donors have already helped DTS meet the Challenge Gift of \$450,000, but it's not too late to make your gift! *Every penny counts* to help DTS equip servant-leaders to boldly proclaim the Good News of Jesus.

Before you help ring in the new year, help lay the groundwork to advance God's kingdom in 2015.

**Make your year-end gift now.**

Sincerely,

Mark L. Bailey, PhD  
President  
Dallas Theological Seminary

You are receiving this email because you donated to DTS and opted to receive emails.  
[unsubscribe](#)

## Background:

- **Client: Dallas Theological Seminary**
- **Last two emails in the CYE campaign**
- **Email has a direct call to action to make a gift**



# Countdown Clock vs. Plain Email

## Tested Elements:

- Identical copy within the email
- Added an animated gif that counted down to Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>

## Treatment

Dear << Test Salutation >>,

I wanted to send you a quick reminder to make your online gift to Dallas Theological Seminary today. Your gift is an investment that will produce a return greater than any worldly investment you could make.

DEADLINE: MIDNIGHT 12/31/2014

04	23	28	33
DAYS	HOURS	MINS	SECS

Generous donors have already helped DTS meet the Challenge Gift of \$450,000, but it's not too late to make your gift! *Every penny counts* to help DTS equip servant-leaders to boldly proclaim the Good News of Jesus.

Before you help ring in the new year, help lay the groundwork to advance God's kingdom in 2015.

**Make your year-end gift now.**

Sincerely,

Mark L. Bailey, PhD  
President  
Dallas Theological Seminary

You are receiving this email because you donated to DTS and opted to receive emails.  
[unsubscribe](#)

# Countdown Clock vs. Plain Email

## Control

Dear << Test Salutation >>,

I wanted to send you a quick reminder to make your online gift to Dallas Theological Seminary today. Your gift is an investment that will produce a return greater than any worldly investment you could make.

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Sincerely,

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President  
Dallas Theological Seminary

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[unsubscribe](#)

## Treatment

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04	23	28	33
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Before you help ring in the new year, help lay the groundwork to advance God's kingdom in 2015.

**Make your year-end gift now.**

Sincerely,

Mark L. Bailey, PhD  
President  
Dallas T

You are rec  
[unsubscribe](#)



**51.5% increase**  
**in response rate**

# Countdown Clock vs. Plain Email



51.1% increase in response rate

Version	Resp. Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
C: Plain Email	0.2%		
T1: Countdown Clock	0.3%	51.1%	95.6%

## Key Learning:



The countdown clock in the email increased response rate by 51.1% and average gift by 106.6%. The added urgency has the ability to affect both a donors willingness to give and the amount they give.

# **ACTION ITEM:**

*Using a template? Try stripping design elements out of your emails.*



# Element 4: **The Copy**





# How personal tone in a fundraising appeal affects donor conversion

Experiment #4171

# How personal tone in appeal affects donor conversion

## Control



Hello First name,

When your world has been turned upside down, every connection counts. Every bit of strength. Every heart brought together.

Erica, whose 6-month-old son Graham was diagnosed with a serious cancer, says she couldn't imagine taking this long, sometimes scary journey without CaringBridge to share news and receive strength.

[You can make sure CaringBridge is here for them](#), and for everyone who needs calm seas in times of turbulence, with your donation today—a **donation that will go twice as far on March 16 with a \$15,000 matching gift opportunity** from our generous friend and donor, Rik Lalim.

Your compassion ensures that Erica's family can continue to rely on us for a safe, protected, ad-free space to share their successes and frustrations, hopes and fears—their journey. And family and friends can be there every step of the way.

[Yes! Match My Gift Now!](#)

Yours in hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Espy".

Kelly Espy  
CaringBridge Senior Development Specialist

P.S. There's no time like the present to bring hearts together. Together, we can be stronger. [Donate now and double your impact!](#)

- Traditional appeals had branded template and large CTA buttons
- Email is centered around another family, unknown to the reader

# How personal tone in appeal affects donor conversion

- New appeal made a simple, clear ask.
- Initial copy gave relevance to the ask: “I know you’ve been using CaringBridge recently”.
- Branding moved to signature block

## Treatment

Hello First name,

I know you’ve been using CaringBridge recently to stay connected to your loved ones, and I hope it’s been a source of strength for you.

Right now, we’re in a short campaign to raise money to keep CaringBridge there for you, and those like you who need a safe, protected place to connect during life’s most challenging times.

As a nonprofit, CaringBridge is supported by donations from the people who use and appreciate the site.

If you’d like to support this campaign right now, your gift will be doubled by a generous donor, up to \$15,000, if you use this link to make your gift by midnight, March 16.

[Click here to have your gift matched today >>](#)

It’s the safest, most secure way to make sure CaringBridge will always be here when your loved ones need it most.

We appreciate your support – thank you!



Kelly Espy  
CaringBridge Senior Development Specialist

CARING  BRIDGE

# How personal tone in appeal affects donor conversion

## Control



Hello First name,

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Erica, whose 6-month-old son Graham was diagnosed with a serious cancer, says she couldn't imagine taking this long, sometimes scary journey without CaringBridge to share news and receive strength.

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[Yes! Match My Gift Now!](#)

Yours in hope,

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Kelly Espy  
CaringBridge Senior Development Specialist

P.S. There's no time like the present to bring hearts together. Together, we can be stronger. [Donate now and double your impact!](#)

## Treatment

Hello First name,

I know you've been using CaringBridge recently to stay connected to your loved ones, and I hope it's been a source of strength for you.

Right now, we're in a short campaign to raise money to keep CaringBridge there for you, and those like you who need a safe, protected place to connect during life's most challenging times.



**145.5% increase in**  
**conversion rate.**

It's the safest, most secure way to make sure CaringBridge will always be here when your loved ones need it most.

We appreciate your support – thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly Espy".

Kelly Espy  
CaringBridge Senior Development Specialist



# How personal tone in appeal affects donor conversion



**145.5% increase in conversion rate**

Version	Conv. Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.01%		
Treatment	.02%	145.5%	99.5%

## Key Learning:

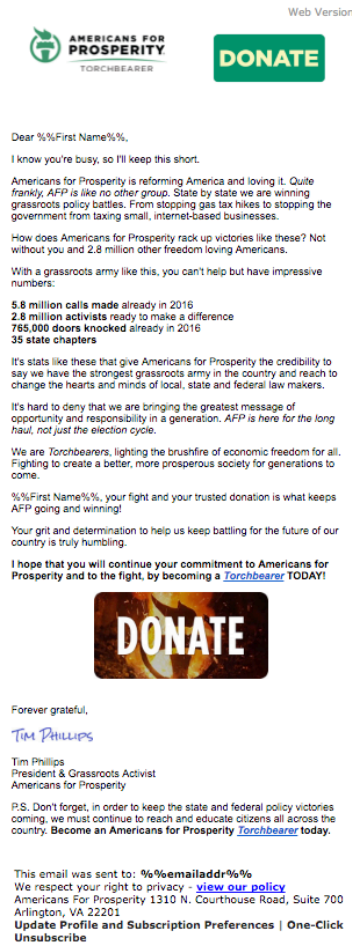
- ✓ It's easy to revert to an omniscient marketing voice when writing on behalf of a brand. But people give to people, and they respond more when they believe that a person is on the other side of the conversation.



# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

Experiment #4117

# How personal tone affects open rate



- Images instantly give away our motive for sending
- Image-focused CTA looks like marketing rather than a message
- CTA is linked in copy and is unclear.

# How personal tone affects open rate

- Images are removed
- Copy begins with a personal gesture
- Ask is framed as an invitation
- "Raw" link is cut and pasted.

## Treatment



Dear %%First Name%%,

I hope you and your family are well.

Your name came up on my list to reach out to today. You're one of our most principled supporters-I know I can count on you to help fight important policy battles against gas tax hikes, internet taxes, and much more.

We've been working hard for you. So far, our activists have made 5.8 million calls on your behalf. Our activists have also knocked on 765,000 doors to make sure that *your principles* are represented.

We won't stop working to promote economic freedom and free-market principles, even in an election cycle where many candidates outright ignore them. This is a long game, not a short battle.

I know you feel the same way. And I'd like to invite you into an elite, principled group: the *Torchbearers*.

With the monthly support of these *Torchbearers*, we ensure that your Congressman feels your support of opportunity and economic freedom every single day. And *Torchbearers* stand as the protectors of the free market, teaching the principles to young people wooed by the impossible promises of socialism.

%%First Name%%, I've included a link below for you to become a *Torchbearer* today. I hope you'll strongly consider it.

<https://americansforprosperity.org/torchbearers/>

Please let me know if you have any questions about this program. I'd be honored if you joined us.

Forever grateful,

*Tim Phillips*

Tim Phillips  
President & Grassroots Activist  
Americans for Prosperity

This email was sent to: %%emailaddr%%

We respect your right to privacy - [view our policy](#)

Americans For Prosperity 1310 N. Courthouse Road, Suite 700  
Arlington, VA 22201

[Update Profile and Subscription Preferences](#) | [One-Click Unsubscribe](#)



# How personal tone affects open rate

Web Version



Dear %%First Name%%,

I know you're busy, so I'll keep this short.

Americans for Prosperity is reforming America and loving it. Quite frankly, AFP is like no other group. State by state we are winning grassroots policy battles. From stopping gas tax hikes to stopping the government from taxing small, internet-based businesses.

How does Americans for Prosperity rack up victories like these? Not without you and 2.8 million other freedom loving Americans.

With a grassroots army like this, you can't help but have impressive numbers:

5.8 million calls made already in 2016  
2.8 million activists ready to make a difference  
765,000 doors knocked already in 2016  
35 state chapters

It's stats like these that give Americans for Prosperity the credibility to say we have the strongest grassroots army in the country and reach to change the hearts and minds of local, state and federal law makers.

It's hard to deny that we are bringing the greatest message of opportunity and responsibility in a generation. AFP is here for the long haul, not just the election cycle.

We are *Torchbearers*, lighting the brushfire of economic freedom for all. Fighting to create a better, more prosperous society for generations to come.

%%First Name%%, your fight and your trusted donation is what keeps AFP going and winning!

Your grit and determination to help us keep battling for the future of our country is truly humbling.

I hope that you will continue your commitment to Americans for Prosperity and to the fight, by becoming a [Torchbearer](#) TODAY!



Forever grateful,

TIM PHILLIPS

Tim Phillips  
President & Grassroots Activist  
Americans for Prosperity

P.S. Don't forget, in order to keep the state and federal policy victories coming, we must continue to reach and educate citizens all across the country. **Become an Americans for Prosperity [Torchbearer](#) today.**

This email was sent to: %emailaddr%  
We respect your right to privacy - [view our policy](#)  
Americans For Prosperity 1310 N. Courthouse Road, Suite 700  
Arlington, VA 22201  
[Update Profile and Subscription Preferences](#) | [One-Click Unsubscribe](#)



Dear %%First Name%%,

I hope you and your family are well.

Your name came up on my list to reach out to today. You're one of our most principled supporters-I know I can count on you to help fight important policy battles against gas tax hikes, internet taxes, and much more.

We've been working hard for you. So far, our activists have made 5.8 million calls on your behalf. Our activists have also knocked on 765,000 doors to make sure that your principles are represented.



**91.3% increase in  
conversion rate.**

Please let me know if you have any questions about this program.  
I'd be honored if you joined us.

Forever grateful,

Tim Phillips

Tim Phillips  
President & Grassroots Activist  
Americans for Prosperity

This email was sent to: %emailaddr%  
We respect your right to privacy - [view our policy](#)  
Americans for Prosperity 1310 N. Courthouse Road, Suite 700  
Arlington, VA 22201  
[Update Profile and Subscription Preferences](#) | [One-Click Unsubscribe](#)

# How personal tone affects open rate



44.7% increase in clickthrough rate

Version	Clickthrough Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.31%		
Treatment	.60%	91.3%	99.5%

## Key Learning:

- ✓ Our readers are more likely to take action when they believe that the communication is coming from a real person.



# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

Experiment #3423

# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

## Control

Dear << Test First Name >>,

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

**They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need Jesus.**



Here at Jews for Jesus, we weep and pound the table about the Jewish people who don't know Christ. In fact, we feel *very specifically* called by God to reach the Jewish community with the saving message of Jesus Christ.

- Email starts with **strong statement that doesn't address the reader.**
- Image pasted into email seems to denote a template.

# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

## Control

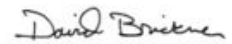
neip.

Would you be willing to support Jews for Jesus — **especially now in this holy season as we celebrate Christ's resurrection?** If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?

[You can help reach unbelieving Jewish people by giving a gift to Jews for Jesus.](#)

**Give a gift to Jews for Jesus today!**

Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

  
David Brickner,  
Executive Director,  
Jews for Jesus

- Link and button copy may present decision friction.
- Signature is non-native to personal emails.

# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

- Copy starts with a personal greeting.
- Intro paragraph gives context and qualification.
- Statement is presented as information, rather than position.

## Treatment

Dear << Test First Name >>,

I hope you and your family are well.

Since I know you have a heart for the Jewish people, I wanted to send you a quick note about a burden that has been on my heart.

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

**They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need Jesus.**

# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

- **Personalization is repeated.**
- **Link is given context, and personalization is repeated in thank-you.**
- **Email signature is plain-text.**

## Treatment

<< Test First Name >>, would you be willing to make a donation to Jews for Jesus — especially now in this holy season as we celebrate Christ's resurrection? If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?

If the call to reach unbelieving Jewish people resonates with you, here's a link to make a special donation today towards this effort:  
[JewsforJesus.org/SupportEvangelism](https://JewsforJesus.org/SupportEvangelism)

Thank you so much, << Test First Name >>.  
Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

David Brickner  
Executive Director  
Jews for Jesus

# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

Dear << Test First Name >>,

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

**They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need Jesus.**



Here at Jews for Jesus, we weep and pound the table about the Jewish people who don't know Christ. In fact, we feel *very specifically* called by God to reach the Jewish community with the saving message of Jesus Christ.

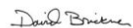
**We know that there are many thoughtful Christians who believe this as well. That's why we're asking you for your help.**

Would you be willing to support Jews for Jesus — **especially now in this holy season as we celebrate Christ's resurrection?** If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?

[You can help reach unbelieving Jewish people by giving a gift to Jews for Jesus.](#)

[Give a gift to Jews for Jesus today!](#)

Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

  
David Brickner,  
Executive Director,  
Jews for Jesus

Dear << Test First Name >>,

I hope you and your family are well.

Since I know you have a heart for the Jewish people, I wanted to send you a quick note about a burden that has been on my heart.

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

**They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need**



**109.2% increase in**  
**clickthrough rate.**

to Jews for Jesus — **especially now in this holy season as we celebrate Christ's resurrection?** If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?

If the call to reach unbelieving Jewish people resonates with you, here's a link to make a special donation today towards this effort:  
[JewsforJesus.org/SupportEvangelism](#)

Thank you so much, << Test First Name >>.  
Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

David Brickner  
Executive Director  
Jews for Jesus



# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate

Dear << Test First Name >>,

A growing number of Christian leaders recently made statements that no mission work should go towards conducting or supporting sharing Jesus with the Jewish community. Essentially, they argue that since the Jewish people are already "God's people," they don't need to be saved by faith in Jesus.

**They couldn't be more wrong. Jewish people really do need Jesus.**



Here at Jews for Jesus, we weep and pound the table about the Jewish people who don't know Christ. In fact, we feel *very specifically* called by God to reach the Jewish community with the saving message of Jesus Christ.

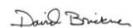
**We know that there are many thoughtful Christians who believe this as well. That's why we're asking you for your help.**

Would you be willing to support Jews for Jesus — **especially now in this holy season as we celebrate Christ's resurrection?** If Jesus really and truly rose from the dead, then how can we even contemplate not telling that good news to Jewish people?

[You can help reach unbelieving Jewish people by giving a gift to Jews for Jesus.](#)

[Give a gift to Jews for Jesus today!](#)

Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

  
David Brickner,  
Executive Director,  
Jews for Jesus

Dear << Test First Name >>,

I hope you and your family are well.

Since I know you have a heart for the Jewish people, I wanted to send you a quick note about a burden that has been on my heart



**109.2% increase in**  
**clickthrough rate.**

Jewish people who don't know Christ. In fact, we feel very specifically called by God to reach the Jewish community with the saving message of Jesus Christ.



**304.8% increase in**  
**donor conversion.**

[Jews for Jesus.org/jesus-support-translation](#)

Thank you so much, << Test First Name >>.

Your brother in Jesus the Messiah,

David Brickner  
Executive Director  
Jews for Jesus

# How personal tone affects clickthrough rate



109.2% increase in clickthrough rate

Version	Clickthrough Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.21%		
Treatment	.44%	109.2%	100.0%

## Key Learning:

- ✓ When email copy addresses the recipient personally and gives context for both the communication and the ask, clickthrough rate may increase.

# How personal tone affects donor conversion



**304.8% increase in donor conversion**

Version	Conversion Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.03%		
Treatment	.12%	304.8%	100.0%

## Key Learning:

- ✓ When email copy addresses the recipient personally and gives context for both the communication and the ask, donors are more likely to give.

*The most underrated marketing metric is*  
**THE REPLY.**

# **ACTION ITEM:**

*Read your emails out loud,  
and have them read back to you  
Does it sound like you?*



# Element 5: **The Call-to-action**



# How direct donation asks in an email impact performance

Experiment #6186

# How direct ask affects conversion

## Control

I hope this finds you well.

If you've been watching the news lately, you know it seems as if all Illinois politicians can talk about is raising taxes.

The General Assembly has proposed an increase in the income tax rate, a sales tax on services, a payroll tax, a tax on sugary drinks, and more – all within the past month. Based on the discussion, you would think politicians have done all they can to reform spending.

You and I know that's not true.

That's why we need your help. [Find out how you can help advance responsible spending and other essential reforms – instead of more tax hikes.](#)

That's why we need your help. [Find out how you can help advance responsible spending and other essential reforms – instead of more tax hikes.](#)

Your support will help put a stop to business as usual in Springfield – and help make Illinois a state that offers opportunity for all.



John Tillman  
CEO  
Illinois Policy Institute

ILLINOIS  
POLICY  
INSTITUTE

- Control email had a soft ask, even though the call-to-action was clearly to give a donation: “Find out”



# How direct ask affects conversion

- Magnified the intensity and clarity of the ask.
- Included “raw link” to focus CTA and provide clear next step.

## Treatment

I hope this finds you well.

You've probably heard our politicians talk repeatedly about taxes – namely, raising them. Again and again.

In the past month, they've proposed to increase your income taxes and payroll taxes, add a sales tax on services, and even tax your sugary drinks.

But you and I know the truth: The way out of our state's fiscal mess is through spending cuts, not tax increases.

**Your generous donation will help get this plan in front of every lawmaker, so they can face the facts: Illinois doesn't need any new taxes.**

Here's a secure link to make your donation today and support this effort.

<https://www.illinoispolicy.org/illinois-comeback>

can face the facts: Illinois doesn't need any new taxes.

Here's a secure link to make your donation today and support this effort.

<https://www.illinoispolicy.org/illinois-comeback>



John Tillman  
CEO  
Illinois Policy Institute

ILLINOIS  
POLICY  
INSTITUTE

# How direct ask affects conversion

Control

That's why we need your help. Find out how you can help advance responsible spending and other essential reforms – instead of more tax hikes.

Treatment



**246.1% increase in**  
**conversion rate.**

# How direct ask affects conversion



**246.1% increase in conversion rate**

Version	Conv. Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.06%		
Treatment	.20%	246.1%	99.2%

## Key Learning:

- ✓ Increasing the intensity and clarity of the ask, along with the visual positioning of the link can positively affect donations by increasing the motivation of the donor and aligning it with the call-to-action.



# How the ask amount in an email fundraising appeal affects clickthrough rate

Experiment #4132

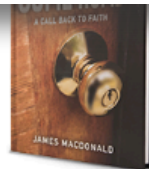
# Ask amount affects clickthrough rate

Test First Name,

Is there someone in your life who has wandered away from God? Chances are, there is.

A prodigal son or daughter. A wayward friend. A relative that

*Come Home* will be sent to you in thanks for your donation to Harvest Ministries this month. **Will you give a gift of \$35, 45, or more today?** Thank you for playing an important part in this ministry.



# Ask amount affects clickthrough rate

*Come Home* will be sent to you in thanks for your donation to Harvest Ministries this month. **Will you give a gift of \$35, 45, or more today?** Thank you for playing an important part in this ministry.



8.7% decrease in  
clickthrough rate.



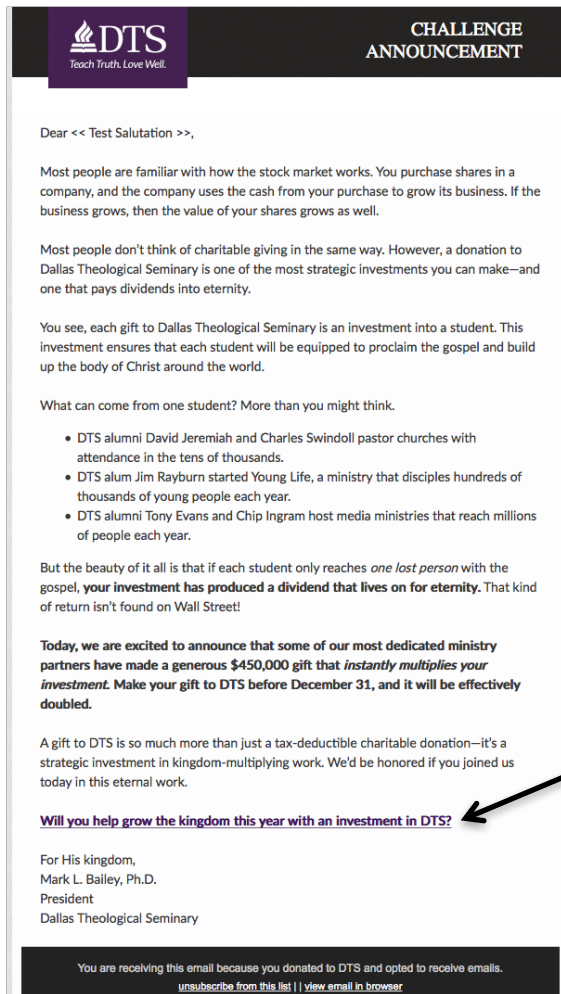
34.2% increase in  
clickthrough rate.



**How the clarity of the  
call-to-action affects  
donor conversion rate**

# Clarity of CTA affects donor conversion

## Control



## Background:

- Client: Dallas Theological Seminary
- Third email in the CYE campaign
- Email has long copy with a direct ask in the email

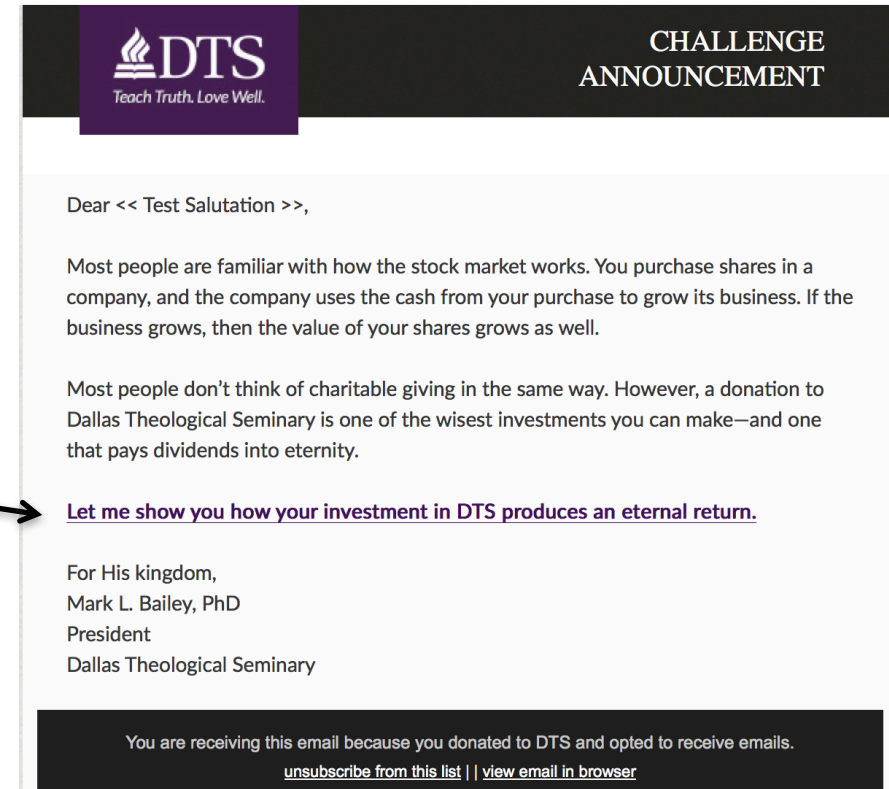


# Clarity of CTA affects donor conversion

## Tested Elements:


- Shortened the email by moving content to landing page
- Made a softer call to action in the email

## Treatment



# Clarity of CTA affects donor conversion

## Control

CHALLENGE  
ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear << Test Salutation >>.

Most people are familiar with how the stock market works. You purchase shares in a company, and the company uses the cash from your purchase to grow its business. If the business grows, then the value of your shares grows as well.

Most people don't think of charitable giving in the same way. However, a donation to Dallas Theological Seminary is one of the most strategic investments you can make—and one that pays dividends into eternity.

You see, each gift to Dallas Theological Seminary is an investment into a student. This investment ensures that each student will be equipped to proclaim the gospel and build up the body of Christ around the world.

What can come from one student? More than you might think.

- DTS alumni David Jeremiah and Charles Swindoll pastor churches with attendance in the tens of thousands.
- DTS alum Jim Rayburn started Young Life, a ministry that disciples hundreds of thousands of young people each year.
- DTS alumni Tony Evans and Chip Ingram host media ministries that reach millions of people each year.

But the beauty of it all is that if each student only reaches *one lost person* with the gospel, **your investment has produced a dividend that lives on for eternity.** That kind of return isn't found on Wall Street!

Today, we are excited to announce that some of our most dedicated ministry partners have made a generous \$450,000 gift that *instantly multiplies your investment*. Make your gift to DTS before December 31, and it will be effectively doubled.


A gift to DTS is so much more than just a tax-deductible charitable donation—it's a strategic investment in kingdom-multiplying work. We'd be honored if you joined us today in this eternal work.


Will you help grow the kingdom this year with an investment in DTS?

For His kingdom,  
Mark L. Bailey, Ph.D.  
President  
Dallas Theological Seminary


You are receiving this email because you donated to DTS and opted to receive emails.  
[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [view email in browser](#)

## Treatment

CHALLENGE  
ANNOUNCEMENT

**481.4% increase**  
**in click rate**

Dallas Theological Seminary is one of the wisest investments you can make—and one that pays dividends into eternity.

**67.1% decrease in**  
**conversion rate.**

You are receiving this email because you donated to DTS and opted to receive emails.  
[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [view email in browser](#)



# How increasing the relevancy of the cause to the reader affected donor conversion

Experiment #6487

# “Telling” versus “asking” increases relevancy

## Control

I hope your week is going well.

This week, a group of Illinois state senators introduced a plan to balance the state's budget without tax hikes.

You read that right: The new plan relies on meaningful spending cuts and economic reforms instead of taking more money from taxpayers like you.

Illinoisans are hungry for this kind of reform. In fact, we recently commissioned a poll that found more than half of Illinois voters want lawmakers to balance the state budget by only cutting spending.

But status-quo politicians in Springfield don't want things to change. They want to continue their tax-and-spend habits.

That's where you become a critical part of this effort.

**Your generous donation will help pressure key lawmakers to support this no-tax-hike budget.**

Here's a secure link to make your donation today and support this effort.

<https://illinoispolicy.org/no-tax-hikes>



John Tillman  
CEO  
Illinois Policy

- Control email told the donor that they were a critical part of the budget fight, and that their donation would do some good.

# “Telling” versus “asking” increases relevancy

- Treatment email asked them: “Would you be able to help?” and augmented the force with “I’d be honored if you joined us.”

## Treatment

I wanted to get this news to you as soon as I could – a group of Illinois state senators introduced a plan this week to balance the state’s budget **without tax hikes**.

Illinois Policy scholars have championed this kind of plan, one that relies on meaningful spending and economic reforms instead of taking more money from taxpayers like you.

But now, the fight begins.

Status-quo politicians in Springfield don’t want things to change. They want to continue their tax-and-spend habits. That’s where you can help turn up the heat.

We’re raising money to help pressure key lawmakers to support this no-tax-hike budget – and we’re going to need every bit of support we can raise.

Would you be able to help us push this important new budget forward?

This bill could have an incredible impact on your taxes – and on our state, which desperately needs a balanced budget.

I’d be honored if you joined us at this critical inflection point.

Here’s a secure link to make your donation today and support this effort:

<https://illinoispolicy.org/no-tax-hikes>

Thanks for standing for balanced budgets and lower taxes.



John Tillman  
CEO  
Illinois Policy

# “Telling” versus “asking” increases relevancy

## Control

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Here's a secure link to make your donation today and support this effort.

<https://illinoispolicy.org/no-tax-hikes>



John Tillman  
CEO  
Illinois Policy

## Treatment

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But now, the fight begins.



**328% increase in**  
**conversion rate.**

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Here's a secure link to make your donation today and support this effort:

<https://illinoispolicy.org/no-tax-hikes>

Thanks for standing for balanced budgets and lower taxes.



John Tillman  
CEO  
Illinois Policy

# “Telling” versus “asking” increases relevancy



328% increase in conversion rate

Version	Conv. Rate	Relative Diff	Stat Confidence
Control	.08%		
Treatment	.33%	328%	99.0%

## Key Learning:

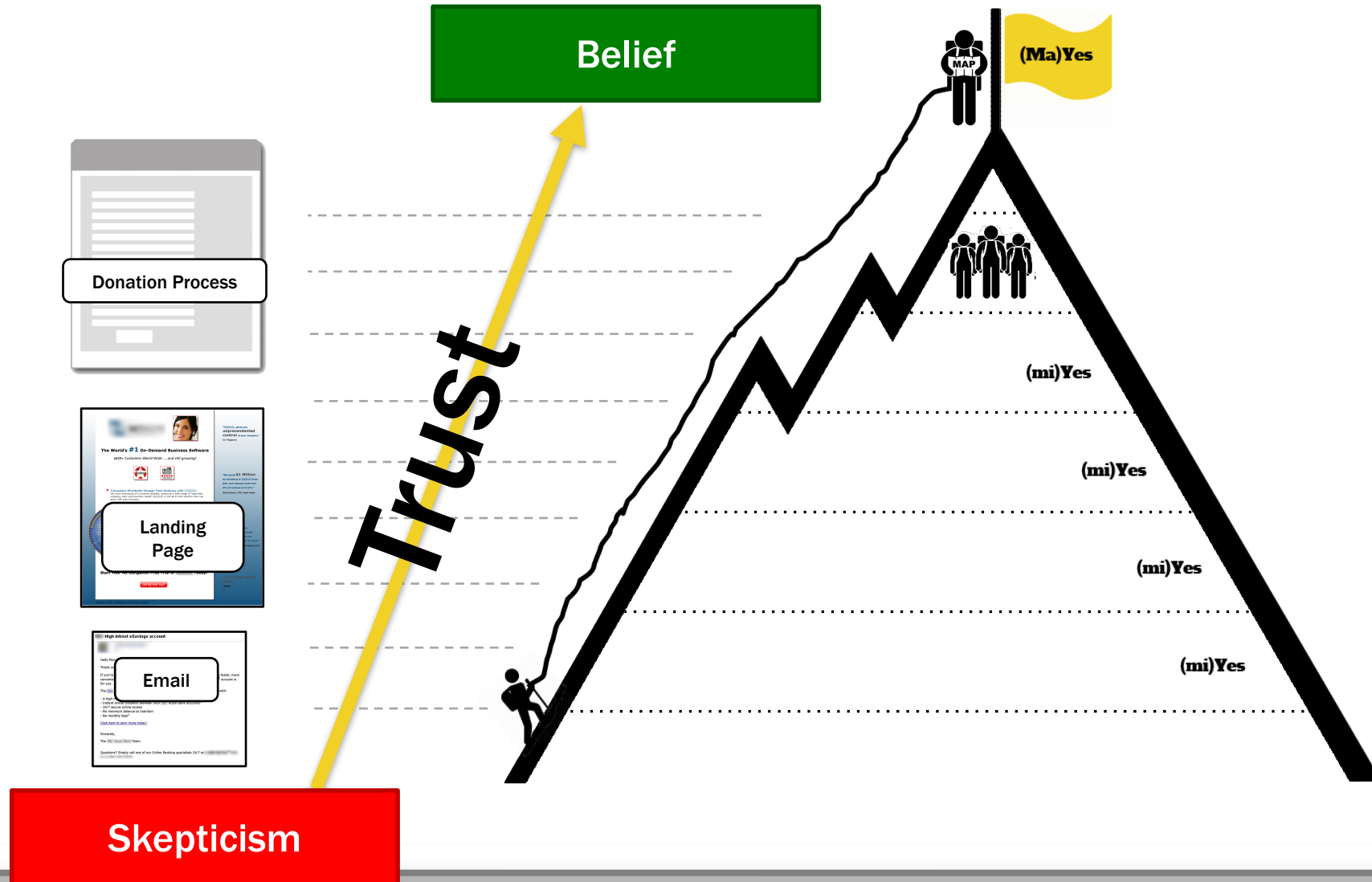
- ✓ Even though it the call-to-action was clear in the control email, we were Able to increase the perceived relevancy of the call-to-action to the reader by asking in non-linked text and winning the “mental commitment” first.

# **ACTION ITEM:**

*Test the directness of your call-to-action.*



# Building trust through email



# Good news...



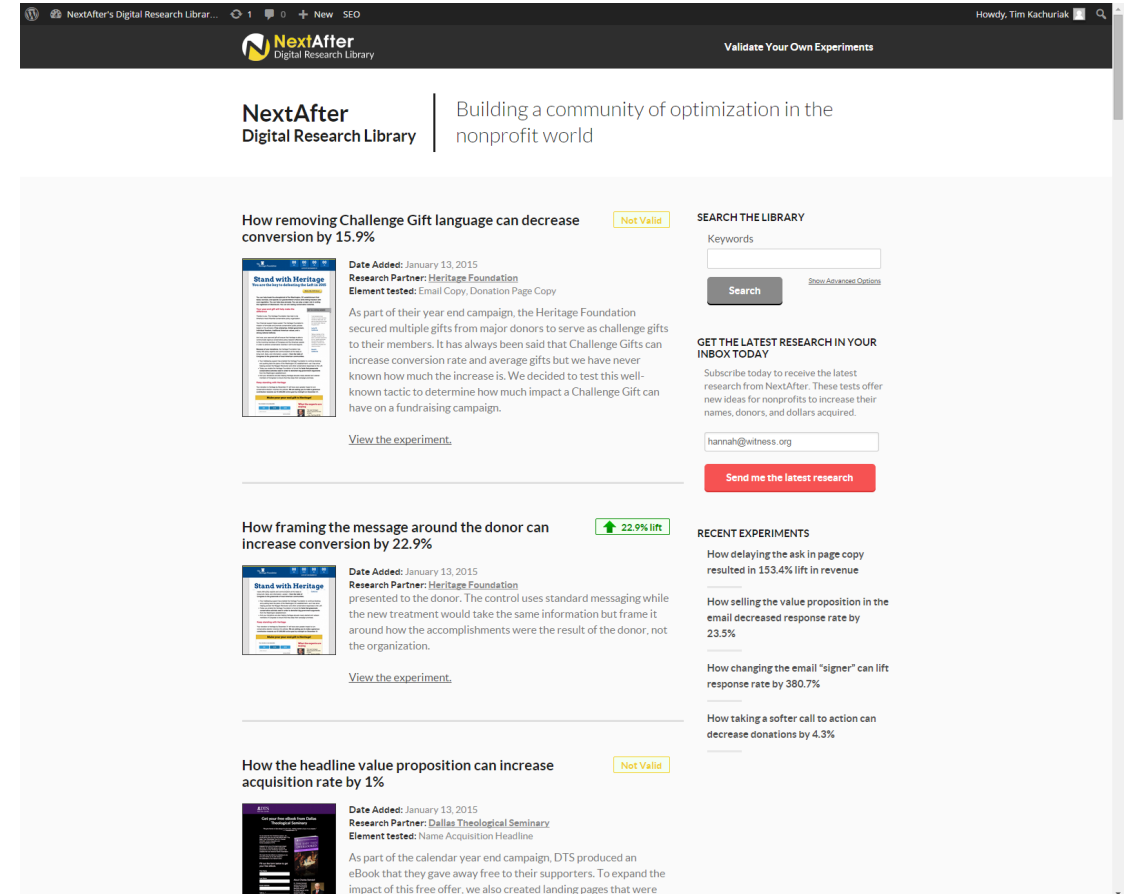
**You don't have to know  
all the answers!**

**You just need to know  
how to find out the right  
answers.**

# Check Out The NextAfter Research Library

[nextafter.com/research](https://nextafter.com/research)

- All of the experiments we reviewed today, plus many more
- We will send an email after the call today



The screenshot displays the NextAfter Digital Research Library website. The header includes the NextAfter logo and the tagline "Building a community of optimization in the nonprofit world". The main content area lists three experiments:

- How removing Challenge Gift language can decrease conversion by 15.9%** (Status: Not Valid). The experiment was added on January 13, 2015, by the Heritage Foundation. It tested the impact of removing challenge gift language on conversion. A thumbnail image of the experiment page is shown.
- How framing the message around the donor can increase conversion by 22.9%** (Status: 22.9% lift). The experiment was added on January 13, 2015, by the Heritage Foundation. It tested the impact of framing the message around the donor on conversion. A thumbnail image of the experiment page is shown.
- How the headline value proposition can increase acquisition rate by 1%** (Status: Not Valid). The experiment was added on January 13, 2015, by the Dallas Theological Seminary. It tested the impact of the headline value proposition on acquisition rate. A thumbnail image of the experiment page is shown.

On the right side of the page, there is a search bar labeled "SEARCH THE LIBRARY" and a section titled "GET THE LATEST RESEARCH IN YOUR INBOX TODAY" with a subscription form.

*Donors do not think of money as an*  
**ENCUMBRANCE**  
*that needs to be*  
**UNBURDENED**

*-Robert Hartsook*





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**Q&A**