

Marketing and Fundraising Challenges for Charities

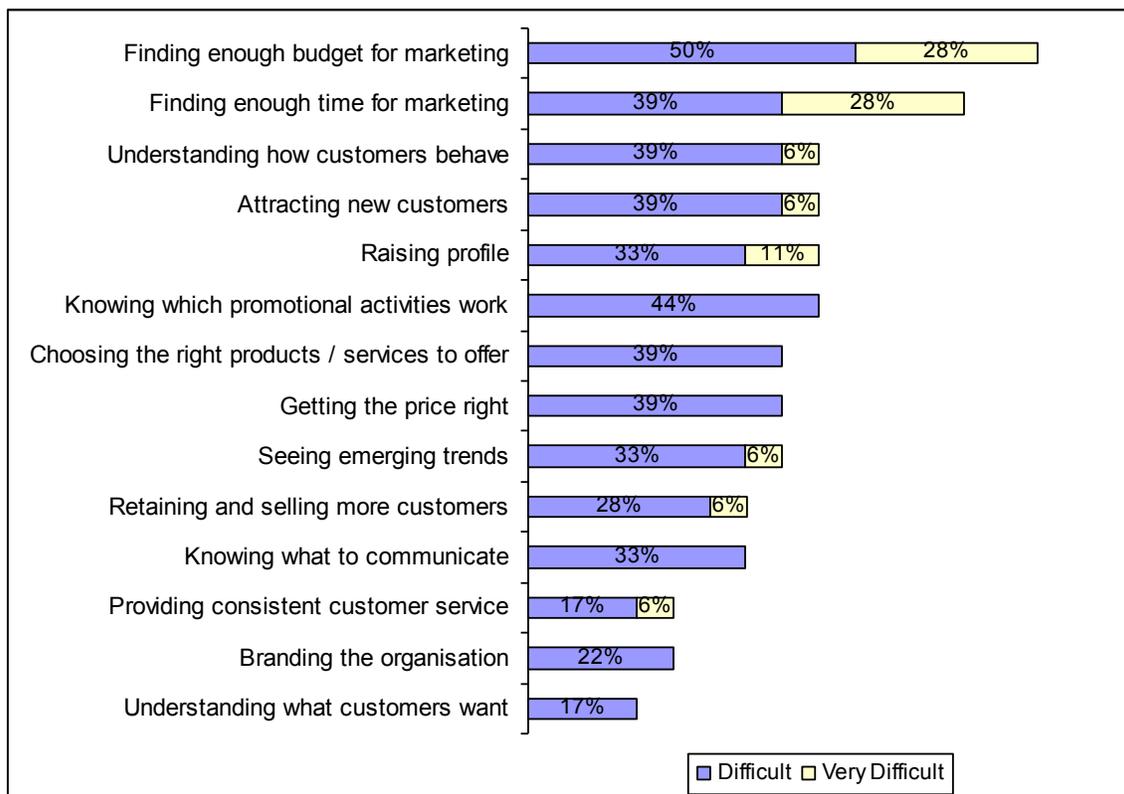
During early 2012 fundraising consultancy Activate Fundraising and marketing firm Strategy Point conducted a short online survey about the key fundraising and marketing challenges facing charities.

A range of charities, including arts, heritage, community, voluntary sector and social enterprises, participated in the research.

1. Key Marketing Challenges

Respondents indicated that the top three marketing challenges for their organisation are:

1. Finding enough budget for marketing;
2. Finding enough time for marketing;
3. Understanding how customers behave.



% of respondents

Strategy Point's David Wallace commented: "Finding time and budget for marketing are common challenges for any organisation, whether in the charity, private or public sector. Often organisations are so preoccupied with day-to-day operations that there rarely seems to be

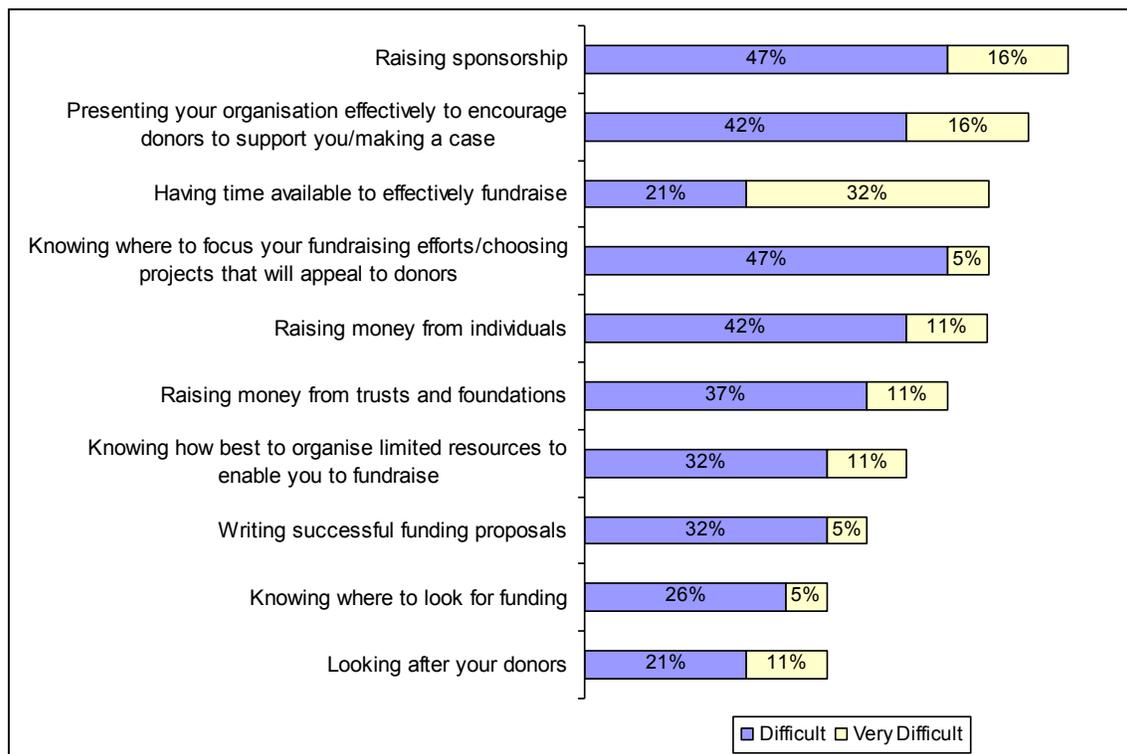
enough time for marketing. However, in my experience how much time they set aside for marketing is less important than how smart they are about using the time. Those that develop a structured, targeted and integrated strategic marketing plan tend to focus and use their time, money and energy much more efficiently and effectively.

Not having enough budget should not hold charities back from getting on with their marketing either. There have never been so many free marketing channels available – whether it’s creating a website for free using Getting British Business Online (www.gbbo.co.uk), communicating using freemium e-marketing tools such as Mailchimp, engaging with them via social media like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, and undertaking research using the free version of SurveyMonkey. And those are just some of the online options.”

2. Key Fundraising Challenges

Respondents indicated that the top three fundraising challenges for their organisation are:

1. Raising sponsorship;
2. Presenting the organisation effectively to encourage donors to support / making a case;
3. Having time available to effectively fundraise.



% of respondents

Heather Stewart of Activate Fundraising commented: “ Many smaller charities struggle to raise sponsorship which is often due to a combination of factors, such as lack of access to networks or difficulty in competing with larger charities who can provide better promotional opportunities. Often, charities should look less at the ‘usual suspects’ and start by focusing on their neighbours – who are often far more supportive as they can have some awareness of a charity’s impact on its local community. And speak to all of your contacts – board, staff and other stakeholders to find out who they know that they would be willing to introduce to your organization.

Presenting your organisation effectively is a question of ensuring that projects that you are fundraising for fit with your mission and aims – after all, if they don’t, why are you doing them? By

focusing on your central message and making sure that any fundraising projects ‘fit’ with your objectives, it becomes easier to make a clear, succinct and strong case for support.

Time is the ongoing problem for all charities, particularly smaller charities which don’t have many resources available for fundraising. As with marketing, the most important aspect to consider is how to best use your time and that all comes down to planning. You will need to invest time to plan in the first place but, by mapping out what it is you want to achieve and when, where you need to look for funding starts to become more obvious. A fundraising strategy should support your business plan to enable you to achieve its objectives, while a fundraising calendar will flag up deadlines for funding sources, as well as highlighting opportunities to promote your charity or use your resources effectively to support your fundraising – such as sending your existing newsletter to donors or using social media campaigns to create a buzz around your fundraising.”

3. Activate Fundraising and Strategy Point

Activate Fundraising provides tailored fundraising for a range of organisations – including arts & heritage; education, social enterprises and the voluntary sector – working with clients to provide fundraising suited to their specific needs. By taking a proactive, hands-on approach, Activate achieves tangible results and leaves clients with a legacy of skills.

With over 16 years fundraising experience, specifically major donor and trust fundraising; sponsorship and donor stewardship, Heather Stewart (Activate Fundraising) works with charities to leverage their resources and successfully achieve their fundraising objectives. She develops and delivers funding strategies, provides fundraising training, governance advice and hands-on fundraising. Heather is a member of the Institute of Fundraising.

Our website has lots of free resources and ideas from developing a fundraising strategy to writing successful funding applications: www.activatefundraising.com

Strategy Point is a pragmatic, strategic marketing consultancy that helps organisations grow by focusing them on generating customer demand. It works across sectors, bringing fresh, customer-focused thinking.

David Wallace (Strategy Point) has over 25 years’ experience in planning, developing and executing marketing strategy for organisations of all sizes in the private, public and voluntary sectors. He has significant experience in corporate social responsibility from the commercial organisation’s perspective. With an MBA from London Business School, he is able to take a broad business perspective. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and a Marketing Society Business Leader. David is also a volunteer aftercare advisor for the Prince’s Scottish Youth Business Trust.

David and Heather have cooperated successfully on several projects in the past, including for the National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh Napier University and Scottish Dance Traditions.

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