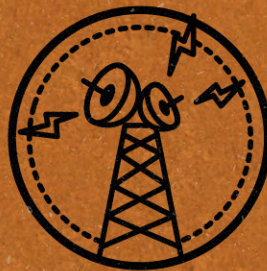


CAMPAIGN

FIELD  **GUIDE**

●●●
ISSUE #3



Build a Communication Strategy

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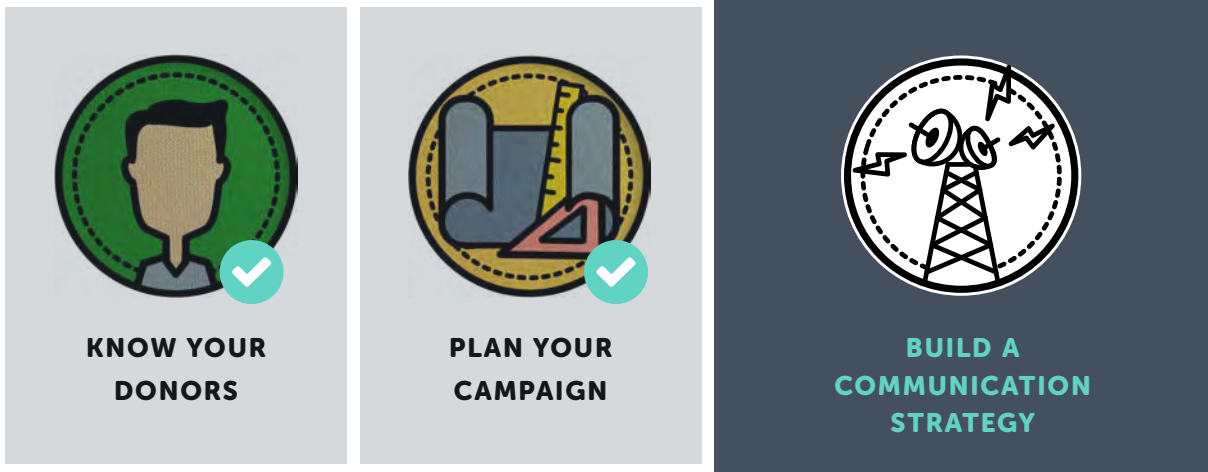
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Introduction

Welcome to the final installment of our Campaign Field Guide series. For those who are just joining us, each Field Guide walks you through one of the three main phases of campaign preparation.

In the first [Know Your Donors Field Guide](#), we covered the first step to prepping for your campaign: identifying your donors and what drives them to give. The next [Plan Your Campaign Field Guide](#) helped you create your campaign roadmap, aka a campaign brief.

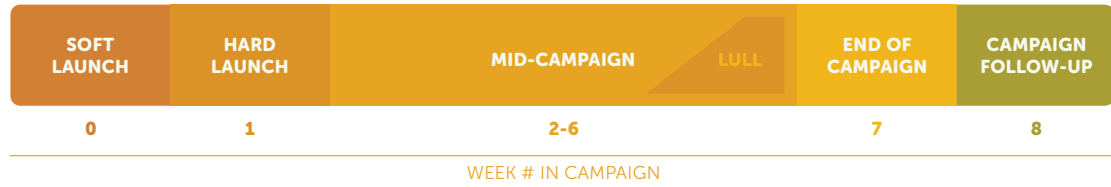


What is this Field Guide about?

The third and final part of this series will go over how to build your campaign's communication strategy. In order to keep supporters engaged throughout your fundraising campaign, you need to deliver the right content through the right channels at the right time.

To help you achieve this, we'll:

1. **Take you step by step through every stage of your fundraising campaign.**

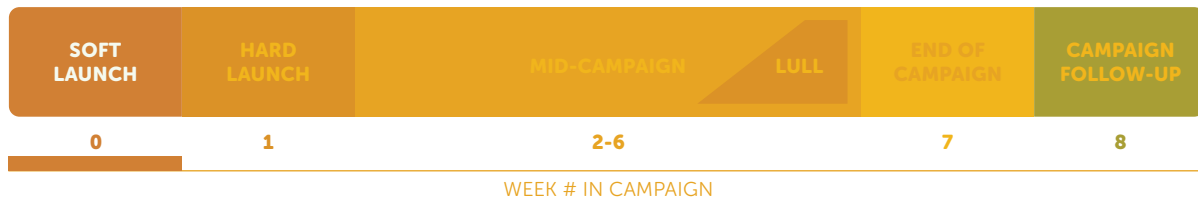


2. **Offer best practices for planning your communications for each stage.**
3. **Provide a checklist you can use to help guide your campaign communications.**

Let's get started!

Chapter 1

Soft launch



As we discussed in the Plan Your Campaign Field Guide, your soft launch is the 1- to 2-week period during which you recruit core supporters into your campaign before you push it out to your entire audience. Asking your biggest advocates to get involved first helps you to build some initial momentum before your main campaign launch. By the time other people find out about your campaign, your soft launch supporters will have already boosted your campaign’s progress and shown it to be active and promising. This can encourage those who are more hesitant to hop on board.

Reach out to these supporters personally. While calling would be ideal, plan to at least send a personalized email to ask them to get involved. Contact your core supporters, including:

- **Passionate volunteers**
- **Past power fundraisers**
- **Social media evangelists**
- **Supporters you can count on to fundraise**



EMAIL Send a personal message to core supporters.

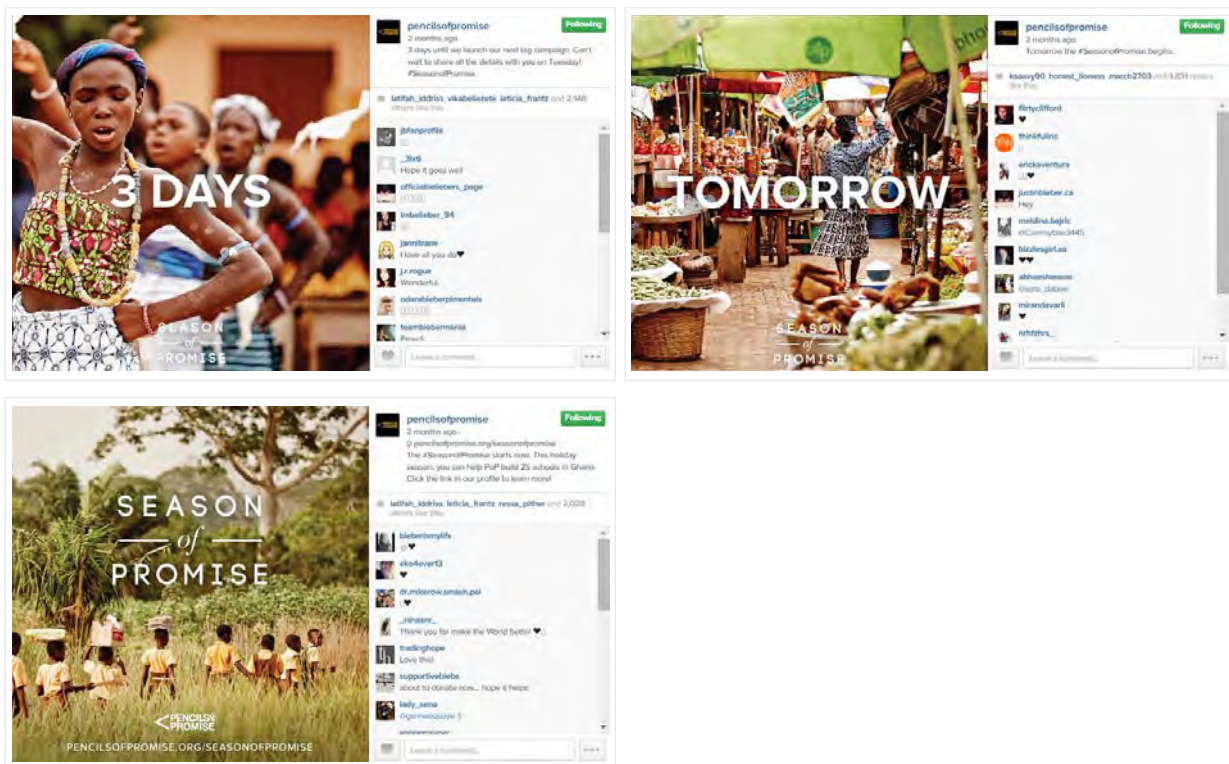
A personalized email can go a long way. Remind them of how they’ve been involved in the past, and why their support was crucial to your organization’s mission. Frame the ask as an invitation to be part of your campaign’s “inner circle.” Make your core supporters feel special and let them know they’re part of a handpicked group that will help drive your campaign’s success. If you’re asking them to fundraise, you can offer to work with them to personalize their fundraising page and set their fundraising goal.



SOCIAL MEDIA Build anticipation.

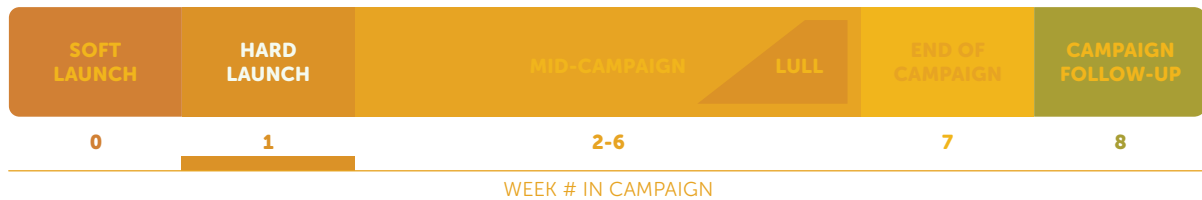
While you're reaching out to your closest supporters through email, you can also use this preliminary week to tease out your campaign to a wider audience on your social channels. One way to build anticipation is by tweeting or posting messages counting down the days until your brand new campaign. This is also the time to introduce your **campaign hashtag**, which will help you pull and monitor any messages that mention your fundraising campaign.

Pencils of Promise, for instance, used Instagram to count down the few days until their newest campaign, and each post included the campaign hashtag. A photo series like this can build excitement and curiosity within your community before your main launch.



Chapter 2

Hard launch



The hard launch is when you open your campaign to the entire public, so you need to be ready to promote it through every marketing channel you have.



EMAIL Send an opening 3-part email series.

Out of all your promotional options, your emails are the most important. These will go out to your entire list of supporters. Rather than sending just a one-off message, increase your chances of reaching people by delivering a 3-part email series. According to an M+R study, 2- to 3-part email series have four times the response rate and almost double the average donation size.¹

1. Email #1: Direct call to action (CTA) to join campaign.

- Introduce your campaign. Weave in your theme, goal, and the basic marketing message that you outlined in the [Plan Your Campaign Field Guide](#).
- Include direct CTA to create a personal fundraising page or donate.

2. Email #2: Message that links to content asset/blog.

- Send a couple days after your first email.
- Share a personal message from your staff, or a quick story of an individual impacted by the cause.

¹ Fox, Eve and Karen Matheson, "Online Fundraising Tactics: What Works?" [M+R Strategic Services. http://www.mrss.com/news/Online_Fundraising_Tactics_May_2007.pdf](http://www.mrss.com/news/Online_Fundraising_Tactics_May_2007.pdf)

- c. Include a CTA to check out the full blog post on your website.
- d. Include a CTA to fundraise or donate.

3. **Email #3: Short and sweet with a direct CTA.**

- a. Send at the end of your hard launch week.
- b. Include a quick message that creates urgency to get involved.
- c. Include a CTA to fundraise or donate.



WEBSITE Promote the campaign on your home page.

Spotlight your campaign front and center on your home page. If you have a rotating banner, it's a good idea to feature your campaign as the first slide image. Anyone who lands on your website should immediately come across your campaign.



SOCIAL MEDIA Ramp up campaign promotion.

The same goes for your social channels. Promote your campaign extensively on your social networks.

Make sure to:

- **Update** your profile pictures, banners, and background images with your campaign's branding and imagery.
- **Turn your regular daily social media posts into campaign promotions.** Ideally, you should post about your campaign at least once on every channel, everyday. At the very least, post at least once a day to promote your campaign.
- **Use your campaign hashtag** in each post.

You want to post engaging content that will direct traffic back to your website and inspire people to take action. This is when the content assets you prepared before the campaign come into play. These might include:

- **Stories about individuals impacted by the cause.**
- **Photos and videos highlighting work on the ground.**
- **Snippets of blog stories that link back to your website for the full story.**



NEWSLETTER Include campaign CTA in regularly sent newsletter.

You should keep up your standard communications during your launch and the rest of your campaign. For example, if you send out a regular biweekly or monthly newsletter, make sure it still goes out on time and includes your campaign.

It's important to keep your newsletter primarily about your mission, rather than just a direct appeal for your campaign. But you can feature your fundraising campaign at the bottom of the newsletter, along with a CTA to participate, donate, or learn more.

Promote Incentives

If you have any incentives you want to roll out during your campaign launch, whether it's free swag or a website leaderboard for top fundraisers, promote these through all your communication channels.

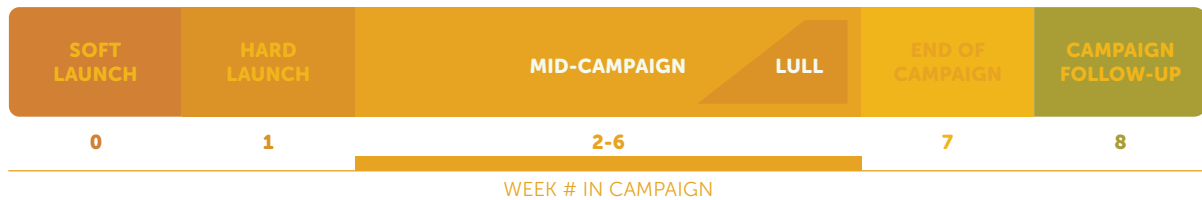


PRO TIP

Be sure to save a few really exciting incentives to announce during the mid-campaign lull (see next chapter!)

Chapter 3

Mid-campaign



After your big kickoff, it's time to dive into the thick of your campaign. In a typical eight-week campaign, these four or five weeks comprise the core time you'll engage and motivate supporters. Through all your channels, deliver content that will excite them and keep them connected to the important work they're doing.



EMAIL Segment your communications.

In order to recruit as many fundraisers and donors as possible, you need to deliver targeted messages that are tailored to match each contact's relationship with your organization. In other words, you need to segment your email campaign.

The first step is to identify the different types of supporters within your audience. This is where the donor personas you created with the [Know Your Donors Field Guide](#) come in handy. Then, if you completed the [Plan Your Campaign Field Guide](#), you will have listed out the different groups of supporters your campaign will target, as well as any special communication plans for each group.

Now that you have your target audiences, you should think about what kinds of asks are appropriate for each group. You want to tailor each ask to each segment's level of involvement and history with your organization.

Create custom donation forms

A great way to do this is by linking your email appeals to custom donation forms for different groups. For instance, let's say you segmented your donor database by past average gift amounts. You can send the same email appeal out to each group, but link the CTA to different donation forms with tailored messaging and appropriate default gift ranges. Not only does this ensure you make a reasonable ask, but it also allows you to try to upgrade certain donors without downgrading larger ones.

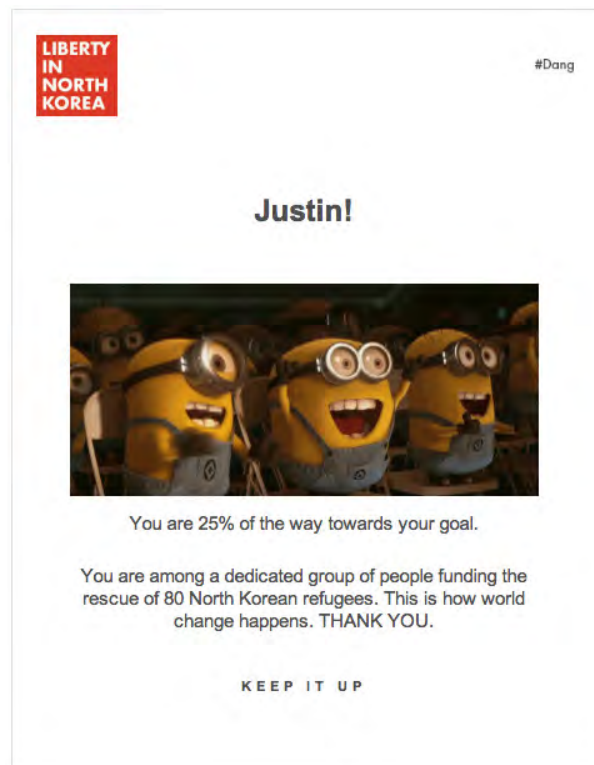
Make sure to send all your contacts at least one email once a week.

Launch a Separate Email Campaign for Fundraisers

Fundraisers require special campaign emails to guide and motivate them. An excellent way to communicate with them is to schedule a series of emails in response to their fundraising activity. This maintains consistent, relevant communications with each fundraiser, energizing them to boost their efforts.

Here are some ways to guide fundraisers throughout your campaign:

- **Send a fundraising tips sheet** shortly after they create a personal fundraising page
- **Plan automated emails that congratulate fundraisers for reaching certain milestones toward their goals.** Check out this example from Liberty in North Korea. This type of recognition can keep supporters motivated as they're cheered on by your organization.
- **Send emails to energize fundraisers whose pages have been inactive for a few days.**



- **Remind fundraisers to donate to their own pages.** Not only does this demonstrate their own commitment to their campaign, but it also helps build their own progress. People are more likely to make contributions the closer the individual fundraiser gets to his or her goal.

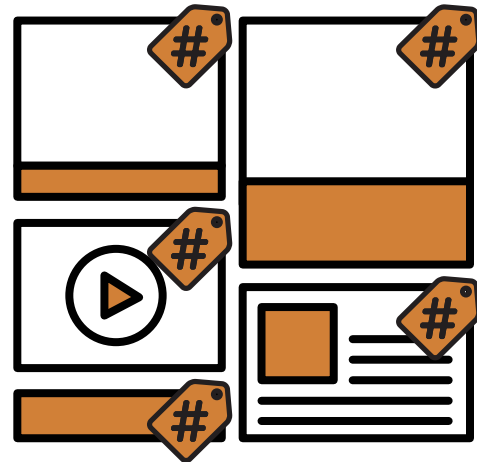


SOCIAL MEDIA: Engage donors and fundraisers.

Throughout the campaign, use your social networks to sustain excitement in your fundraising community. Update your networks multiple times each day, and focus on initiating and joining in conversations to keep supporters engaged.

To keep donors and fundraisers motivated, try the following:

- **Emphasize your campaign hashtag throughout your campaign.** To engage supporters a step further, ask them to tweet or upload their own pictures using your hashtag.
- **Show support by tagging and calling out individual donors or fundraisers.**
- **Give shout-outs to sponsors,** which they can then share and retweet to their own networks.
- **Answer questions and offer quick fundraising tips and advice to fundraisers.**
- **Ask followers to share and retweet your posts to boost visibility.**



Also continue to post interesting and engaging content that will excite and remind supporters about the important work they're doing. Here are some ideas to fill up your content arsenal:

- **Photo blogs of your work in the field and the people it impacts.**
- **Video testimonials** from beneficiaries, staff members, and volunteers of how they're impacted by the cause.
- **Interesting stats and infographics about the issue.**
- **Inspiring video messages from your staff leaders.**

Mid-Campaign Lull

While fundraising usually ramps up at the start and end of a campaign, activity often dips midway. This is the perfect time to roll out any incentives or fundraising activities that will reinvigorate supporters.

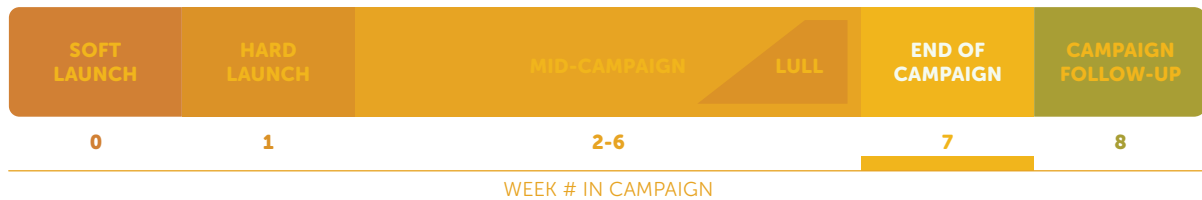
For instance, you may want to:

- **Announce a donation matching period to excite supporters about stretching their dollar.**
- **Kick off a social media or fundraising challenge** (e.g. get X donations in X days, and win a chance to be entered in a drawing for a prize).

Whatever the incentive, announce it through both email and social media to spread the word.

Chapter 4

End of campaign



Your campaign is drawing to a close, but don't sit back and kick up your feet just yet. Now's the time to make your final sprint to the finish line.



EMAIL Send your closing email series.

Your closing email series is just as important as your opening series. Send these two emails during the final week of your campaign.

1. **Email #1: Last week reminder.**
 - a. Send at the beginning of the final week.
 - b. Let supporters know there's only one week left.
 - c. Demonstrate what's been accomplished to date, then rally support to increase impact in these last few days (e.g. "We've funded four wells so far. Help us make it six!").
 - d. Include a CTA to donate

2. **Email #2: Last chance to donate.**
 - a. Send 2 to 3 days before campaign ends.
 - b. Thank supporters and celebrate what you've achieved together.
 - c. Ramp up urgency to make last minute contributions to help boost your campaign over the edge.
 - d. Include a CTA to donate.



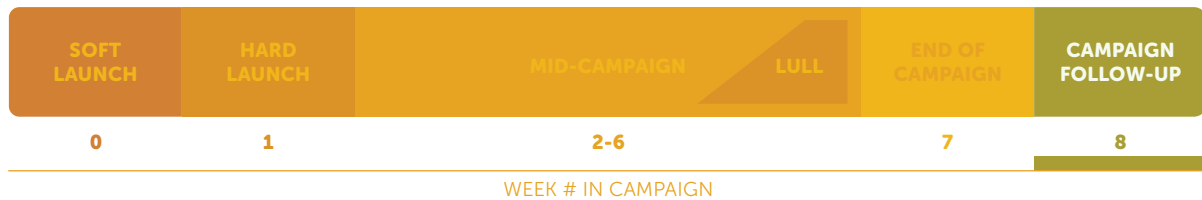
SOCIAL MEDIA: Build a sense of urgency.

To stir last minute support, use your social channels to build a sense of urgency and encourage people they can still make a difference.

- In the same way you counted down to your campaign hard launch, **broadcast your approaching deadline in a series of images, tweets, or social media posts.**
- **Showcase stats about your campaign's impact to date,** and encourage supporters to help amplify it even further.
- **Feature thank-you messages from beneficiaries** for everything your community has helped make possible so far.

Chapter 5

Campaign follow-up



A fundraiser’s work doesn’t end when the campaign ends. Following up is a crucial part of your fundraising strategy and can turn a one-time donor into a lifelong supporter.

When it comes to post-campaign communications, there are two main things you must remember to do through all of your channels:



EMAIL, SOCIAL MEDIA, & WEBSITE

Thank your supporters

Whether it’s through handwritten letters or personalized emails, express your sincere gratitude for their involvement and support. Your thank you is a crucial opportunity to solidify donor relationships. If possible, use segmentation to thank donors specific to their involvement and really make them feel special.

- **Send personal handwritten notes to your large donors.**
- **Send personalized emails thanking lower-tier donors for their support.**
- **Treat your fundraisers as a separate segment.** Sending them an email thanking them for a donation will not only make your organization seem careless, but it will also downplay all the hard work they devoted to your mission. This group is special, so let them hear it!

Share the campaign's results

- **Demonstrate the impact of their support through concrete numbers** like total dollar amount raised, tangible resources funded (e.g, 10,000 backpacks for kids), or even the number of fundraisers who raised over a particular amount
- **Use personal stories from the field.** These stories can create an emotional impact that strengthens donor/fundraiser relationships and provides a narrative for how their contributions will be used in the future.

The goal of your follow-up is to get new donors and fundraisers into your regular communication stream, so you can keep them engaged and strengthen your overall fundraising community. Because it's all about nurturing relationships, these intentional communications should last until your next fundraising initiative.