

Greater Bay Area Make-A-Wish Case Study

“How Can We Afford Not to Work With You?”

Situation: *Direct Marketing Coming Up Short*

The Greater Bay Area Make-A-Wish Foundation had been running its direct marketing program for five years with very little to show for it at the end of the day. Because the direct costs of running the program were so high, and the messages were not on-target, they raised very little money, and few of those gifts served as major giving leads. The staff members were also spending an enormous amount of time managing the many details of the program, which added to the overall program costs.

Make-A-Wish knew that it needed to improve its program, but they were concerned about spending additional resources on a program that wasn't working. They asked Mal Warwick & Associates, “How can we afford to work with a direct marketing agency when we're not making much money on our direct marketing program?”

Mal Warwick & Associates Strategy: *Restructure, Renew and Ramp Up*

Restructure: In our first year of working together, we completely restructured the program. We explored all aspects of the existing program and focused on areas that would bring improved results without dramatically increasing the team's workload. Our solution included:

- Launching a new four-effort annual renewal series asking donors to renew their support
- Implementing a new, less costly acquisition package
- Revamping special appeals to better highlight the children being served by the chapter

Renew: When we analyzed the donor data, we uncovered a growth opportunity with lapsed donors. Therefore, we added a reactivation program to reinstate lapsed donors, introduced an enhanced new donor welcome package to keep new donors engaged and implemented a multi-tiered thank you program to maintain communication with all donors.

Ramp Up: By applying the Mal Warwick & Associates proprietary DonorValue segmentation system we were immediately able to generate significant improvements – mailing after mailing. Their new appeals raised more money, and their new renewal series encouraged donors to upgrade from existing levels. We also created a leadership giving society to recognize and reward gifts at higher levels. As for new donor acquisition, due to extensive list knowledge and less costly acquisition package, their cost to acquire a donor was reduced while response rates simultaneously increased.

Results: *More Wishes Granted*

What was the bottom line impact? The Greater Bay Area Make-A-Wish Foundation benefited from a more than 80% increase in net revenue during their first year with Mal Warwick & Associates. With their new program bringing in exceptional results, the staff is now able to focus their energy on cultivating and soliciting major gift prospects from the new leadership giving society. A focused modification and upgrade of their direct marketing program is allowing more wishes to be granted each day.

Now, at Make-A-Wish they are asking themselves, “How could we afford not to work with you?”
