
Understanding your audience is key to delivering targeted messages

Why is it important to understand your audience?

Whether the aim of your marketing is to increase donations to your [localgiving.com](https://www.localgiving.com) page, encourage more volunteers or to motivate fundraisers, clearly defining your audience and understanding their behaviour is key to successful communication.

The days of 'Dorothy Donor' are gone and 'one cap' will never fit all. Now more than ever it is vital for voluntary groups to delve deeper into **who** their target audience is in order to deliver a focussed message to the right person at the right time when they are most receptive to it.

Building supporter profiles

The first stage is to think about who you want to attract:

- additional members to your group
- more regular donors
- more volunteers with IT skills
- people who will fundraise for you
- local press
- local councillors
- employees
- funding bodies

For each segment, think about whether these stakeholders are male or female, of a specific age, from a certain part of Slough, enjoy a particular lifestyle, visit certain places of interest or have a certain personality type. Once you have gathered this information you can start to develop 'profiles' of each group. This will help you to understand the motivations and influences of these groups and in turn will help you to shape the content of your messaging.

For example:

Objective - To increase donations to your youth group by encouraging Slough's young people to take part in a charity football match

Target audience profile - Male and females, aged 13-18 years who live in Slough with an interest in sport. Enjoys communicating by SMS, Facebook and Twitter and socialises with friends at the local leisure centre, sports clubs, football clubs and cinema on student nights

Influencers - include parents, teachers, friends, relatives and coaches

Target - Schools, colleges, cinema, football clubs, sports centres, local cafes, supermarkets

Message to young people - 'Challenging young people of Slough - Have fun with your friends by taking part in a charity football match to raise money for your local youth group'

Message to parents - 'Keep your children active. Encourage your son or daughter and their friends to take part in a charity football match to raise money for their local youth group'

Message to teachers - 'Motivate your students to give back to their community by encouraging them to take part in a charity football match to raise money for their local youth group'

Method of communication:

Targeting young people - Facebook and Twitter campaigns, SMS messaging, posters and leaflets displayed on notice boards of clubs, schools and colleges. Leaflets handed out on student night at the cinema

Targeting parents - Leaflets handed out to parent/ teachers associations of local schools, small advert placed in the latest edition of 'Families' magazine distributed throughout East Berkshire schools, posters displayed in local supermarkets

Targeting teachers - Leaflets and posters handed out to schools and colleges, visit head teachers to encourage participation and promotion of event

It's all about segmenting your audience into groups with similar characteristics and then targeting them with focussed messages

So, a charity who understands their audience and how to appeal to them stands a better chance of increasing their income than those who do not.

For further information on how to get a better understanding of your audience and how to create audience profiles please contact [Carol Strachan](#) – Donor Marketing Officer Slough CVS on 01753 524176.