

Nathan ([00:00:01](#)):

Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you so much for being here. Welcome to the webinar. We're gonna give just a couple moments here, uh, for everyone to be able to get in. Cause I see the attending number just skyrocketing at the moment, which means lots of folks are joining. Uh, if you're just joining, I would encourage you to jump into impact. I would ask you please into the chat. So click the little chat icon in your zoom toolbar, open up the chat window and let me know, uh, what organization you are from and where in the world you are zooming in from today. I'll jump in and get us started as well. But I'd love to see the different organizations, different locations we have represented. It's always fun to see just how far this moving in of, of growing generosity is, is reaching. And that's really what we're all about here is how do we decode what works in fundraising and make what we're learning as accessible as possible to you and to other fundraisers so we can grow giving.

Nathan ([00:00:55](#)):

Wow, there's a bunch of folks jumping right in. Uh, there's no way I can shout out everyone, but I'll give a few. We've uh, Patricia from Hamilton children's choir in Ontario, Canada, we've got Laura from United way. Also in Ontario, I believe is Ontario. Sorry. I'm not Canadian, but I believe that's right. Uh, Julie clinic with a heart in Lincoln, Nebraska, Amanda, from the pregnancy care center of Rockford, Illinois. That's you see Riley is kind of in the background of this call. Uh, it's pretty much close to her hometown. Uh, who else? We have lots of folks, lots of folks, Diana from w BJC in Baltimore. Welcome Melanie from the Lansing journal in Lansing, Illinois. We got some good Illinois representation. Love it. Uh, friends, you here in Texas. We got Ari from, uh, ATX kids club in Austin. We've got, uh, I apologize if I, uh, mispronounce this, uh, oh, that is Allison there's, uh, some wise in there.

Nathan ([00:01:54](#)):

I wasn't sure what to do with Allison ke from Wallace theater, Leland, Texas. Love it. Wow. We got lots of folks. Well, thank you so much for all of you, uh, making time to be with us today to talk about year end and specifically the last week of the year. Hopefully we make the most of every moment, uh, of this webinar today, because I know that you have really busy schedules right now during this season, you've got lots of projects and emails you're working on and probably ads you're working on. And how do you improve your website and doing all sorts of to make it through the end of the year season, and hopefully bring in the most revenue you possibly can to set yourself self up for a really successful and impactful 20, 22. So we are gonna dive right in, uh, but a few quick things before we get into the content, but we're, uh, today talking about how to maximize your fundraising during the last week of the year.

Nathan ([00:02:46](#)):

A few quick things I wanna just run over really quick. Number one, the most popular question that we ever get asked is, is there gonna be a recording? And the answer is always yes. So we are recording this webinar right now so that you can get a recording later to either watch back in case you wanna go, you know, revisit something. Or if you gotta like step out or run to the restroom or something, you miss something, you can watch it back, or you can share it with a colleague or peer or a friend who might also be, excuse me, interested, uh, in the presentation today, but maybe just couldn't make it for one reason or another. Uh, so that's number one. Number two is that we are gonna send you an email later this evening around 5:00 PM, central time with some links where you'll get number one, the recording, number two, you'll get the slide deck.

Nathan ([00:03:26](#)):

We also have been transcribing these in case you wanna read through a transcript, uh, as well as some other resources that we'll mention throughout the webinar today, we'll send you those links later on, uh, Joe Lynn, thank you. <laugh> she says you, you guys are great and we appreciate the encouragement. Hopefully, uh, we can, uh, make the most of your time today and we will have some time for some additional questions at the very end. Uh, feel free, feel free throughout today to jump in the chat, uh, drop your commentary in, drop your ideas in drop your thoughts in, I may have you vote on some different experiments to day. So feel free to use the chat for that. But if you have questions that you want to see answered at the end of the presentation, click the little button in the, uh, zoom tool bar that says Q and a.

Nathan ([00:04:10](#)):

So not the chat, but the Q and a open that up and drop your questions in there. That's the best way for me to make sure that we see them and then can answer as many as possible. So we are gonna dive in and if you've never been on a next after webinar, uh, before, there's lots of folks on here, I knew who are frequent attend, and we're grateful for you returning, uh, and trusting us as you are diving into year end. But if you've never been on a next after webinar before, uh, next, after is really focused on one main thing, we help nonprofits grow their digital fundraising. And there are three main components to how we do that. Number one, we're a research lab. We do a couple types of research where we're gonna go out and we're gonna study the nonprofit space where we're gonna, uh, make a bunch of donations to a certain amount of organizations and, and look at giving through a different type of bias to try to see, you know, what are organizations doing on their donation page to try to increase recurring giving, or how do organizations follow up after 90 days in a, a new donor welcome series, it's actually a forthcoming research study in this next year.

Nathan ([00:05:09](#)):

So we're gonna take these different looks to see what organization's doing. Then we can take what we learn and take the ideas, and we can go test them using AB testing and optimization, leaning into data to decode what act actually works to grow giving. And we do that largely through our agency. So we are a digital first agency work with a few, uh, different non-profits where we're implementing a lot of data or a lot of AB testing, leaning into data to give donors a voice and ultimately growing digital fundraising results. And then finally we're a training Institute. So we take everything we're learning and try to turn it into like blog posts and webinars and courses and all sorts of things to equip you as much as we can with what works. So welcome. If it's your first time with us on one of these webinars, we're gonna be looking at a bunch of data and testing and learnings that are based in statistics and analytics that are actually proven to increase giving during the last week of the year.

Nathan ([00:06:03](#)):

So let's dive in. I have been thinking about yearend fundraising for quite a while. You probably have two. Uh, but as far back as September, uh, was the first time that we actually like went out and were teaching about year end in this season. So, uh, we kick off this season at, at Neo summit, uh, the nonprofit innovation and optimization summit in September, uh, which is like a conference where you go and you sit in a room full of people and you listen to some speakers on stage and you learn a bunch of stuff. And it's, it's really impactful if you haven't been around human beings in almost two years, I would highly recommend it if you can, if you are able to, because it's a wonderful experience to get together with others and learn together. Uh, so if you can make plans in 2022 to do that, uh, it's, it's gonna be worth it.

Nathan ([00:06:46](#)):

So, but Neo summit is a conference like this. You learn from some incredible human beings. You get to meet some incredible human beings and network with people working for all sorts of great, great causes. And you have a ton of fun. You have a ton of fun doing it. I think these guys are like blowing up aliens in an arcade game here. Uh, and then we also had, um, PLO there this year, but I share all this to say, I've been teaching and thinking about actively talking about year end for at least three months at this point. But year end has actually been on the brain for over a year at this point, because we've conducted a study with our friends at virtuous called the state of year end multi-channel fundraising, where we actually looked at year end strategies in 2020 to try to figure out what are nonprofits doing through a multi-channel fundraising perspective to try to grow giving during the year end season.

Nathan ([00:07:34](#)):

And one of the very first things that we actually looked at was just how much revenue is at stake, how much revenue comes in during the year end window. And we typically define this year, end window as November 15th through the end of the year. So it's about a 45 day period. And what we've found is we look at the different organizations that we work with at next, after is that 35% of online revenue for the entire year comes in during the year end season, which is quite a lot of revenue. That's at stake. We have to come to the table and participate during the season. If we wanna see that type of result. Now, giving Tuesday is typically seen as like one of the big kickoffs of the year end season. And so this just happened last week, giving Tuesday happened last week, and I wanna put things in the right perspective for, for all of us today, so that, you know, what's still coming because sometimes we can get really focused on giving Tuesday, cuz it's a rapidly growing movement every year.

Nathan ([00:08:30](#)):

There's more and more money raised. Uh, it, you, you have to basically be intentionally removed from the, the entire internet and, and like a digital, uh, environ to, to not see something about giving Tuesday. There's like billions and billions and billions of social media impressions around giving Tuesday. It's nearly impossible to not see something about it. So it's huge and it's rapidly growing. It's really easy for us to like get hyper focused on giving Tuesday. And there are a lot of results at stake on giving Tuesday 4.6% of online year end revenue comes in on that day, which is, is significant. I don't want to downplay that. That's significant. However, we have to understand it in the right perspective. If you compare it to December 31st, there is 253% more revenue at stake on the last day of the year compared to giving Tuesday. Now there's some data to suggest that giving Tuesday is actually pretty effective for finding and acquiring new donors.

Nathan ([00:09:26](#)):

But in most cases, we're trying to make sure that we year. And so we're really looking at how do we bring in the most revenue in this season? So if you didn't have a giving Tuesday, this is really good news for you that there's 253% more revenue yet to come on the last day of the year. And then if you zoom back to the entire last week of the year, there's actually 734% more revenue at stake. So even if you had a great giving Tuesday, this is even better news because there's so much more to come. Now it's fascinating as we dug into the data to see what are nonprofits doing in terms of prioritizing these two different days in their strategies. In 2020, we saw that 20% of organizations sent mail to their donors during the week, the whole week of giving Tuesday. Sometimes it's more interesting.

Nathan ([00:10:14](#)):

Look at the inverse of that, cuz that means 80% of organizations did send any form of mail to their active donors during the week of giving Tuesday. Maybe there's an opportunity there for improvement giving Tuesdays past, maybe think about that next year. But compare that to email 57% of organizations sent something, some form of email to their donors during the week of giving Tuesday, which is still a lot. That's like 40 organizations opting out of email communication during this week. But the reason we pulled these numbers is to start to look at it, to compare giving Tuesday to the last week of the year and see is there APRI are, are nonprofits giving the right priority to these two different giving windows? And what we found is that there's not much difference. Keep these two numbers in mind. We've got 20% sending mail, the 57, 50 7% sending email during the week of giving Tuesday, we're gonna scroll down and we see basically the numbers are exactly the same.

Nathan ([00:11:07](#)):

When you look at the last week of the year, there's a lot of organizations opting out. There are some organizations that are communicating, uh, during both weeks. But if, if forced to basically choose, if nonprofits are choosing one over the other, it's fairly equally split, which means that we're not quite getting these days in the right priority. And the reason I share all this with you again, is to, to encourage you that there is so much more at stake yet to come in this year, end season specifically in this final week of the year. And so what we're gonna do today is actually look at a lot of really tactical down to earth strategies that you can use on your website, in your emails and on your donation page to increase giving. Sometimes we spend a lot of time talking up here in like theory, land and principles as to how to grow giving today.

Nathan ([00:11:55](#)):

We're gonna get really tactical. I'm gonna show you a bunch of different things you can do, and some experiments around them to show how you can improve them and maybe make them better to grow giving. Uh, and one caveat that I want to give before we dive into these three key areas is that some of the strategies we're gonna look at today, if you just sort of cherry pick them and tried to put them in a different spot in the year, like say, we're gonna pick one of these website ideas and we're gonna pop it in the middle of August. It might not be as effective cuz a lot of these tactics are gonna be most effective when you have a high level of motivation and a high level of urgency to give. So some of these are most effective when you are close to the deadline, but maybe not as effective earlier on.

Nathan ([00:12:39](#)):

So there's just an important caveat to keep in mind. One strategy does not mean it will work forever in every situation it works during this last week of the year that said, are you ready to dive in two number one? How do you, uh, improve giving on your website? What can you do on your website to make it easier for people to find where to give that really is the core concept here. The few different tactics we're gonna walk through. They're all designed to help people find where to give, because most commonly during the C increase and direct traffic to your website, you're likely gonna see an increase in, uh, organic search visitors to your website during the season. Cuz the motivation to give is typically pretty high. You have this natural deadline baked in with like the tax deadline up at midnight on December 31st.

Nathan ([00:13:31](#)):

Granted that's not the primary reason someone should give to you, but it is a sense of, you know, and urgency. So with uh, urgency being that high, we wanna make it as easy as possible for someone to find

where to give there's a bunch of things you can do. Here's a bunch of different, uh, little tactics that you might use on your website and specifically your homepage, but you can use it across your website too. Uh, obviously having donate link, uh, in your navigation can be effective at driving people towards your giving page, using something like a sticky bar, which is exactly what it sounds like. It's a bar that sticks to the top of your site and gives some sort of call out. Uh, it could be advertising on your homepage, whether it's looks like an ad or it's more like native sort of content driving to your page, you could have popups, you could have these little slide out, uh, banners.

Nathan ([00:14:18](#)):

There's tons of things you can do on your website to draw attention to this call to action of giving during this season. And we're gonna look at a few experience related to a bunch of these different tactics that can kind of show you how to position your ask and position your offer to drive more traffic to your page. And we're gonna start by looking at the navigation. This one is actually really simple, but I, I want you to take a look at this experiment. I'm not gonna show you the result yet. Look at the top. So it says original. This is like the control, the first version of the navigation. I want you to see how fast you can find the donate button. Go take a moment. Can you spot the donate link? Let me know when you have it, jump in the chat and say I've got it.

Nathan ([00:15:02](#)):

If you, if you found the donate link, if you found it yet. All right. Okay. I see a few of you have got it. A few. Got it. Diana says took a bit, but I got it. And uh, Gary like says 3.5 seconds to find it. It shouldn't take 3.5 seconds to find the donate link. It is right here. If you haven't found it yet, it is right here. But when you come to this page, ignore the treatment for a second. Just look at the top. You see these three links across the top, these three little blue links and then there's a search bar. And then your eye jumps down to the navigation. You basically, we re uh, read left to, right? And so you've got home answers. Judaica event get involved four congregations and then donate. So there's basically like 10 different links that you're gonna see before you actually get to the donate link.

Nathan ([00:15:44](#)):

And there's nothing called out about the donation link to make it stand out or draw your eye to it. And so they wandered in this case, can we do something to make it clearer? <affirmative> where to actually give, if motivation is high, how do we get more people to see the opportunity to give? And so in the treatment, can you find where to give the, make my gift button? See, as Steve said yes, right away in the chat. I see that. I see you, Steve. It's really easy to see where the button is. It says, make my gift. Those three little middle links have jumped up to this sort of like tertiary search navigation bar thing at the top. The make my gift button now really stands out. The donate button in the navigation is still there. So there's still that option. And now it's really clear by making it clear where to click, to get to the page.

Nathan ([00:16:30](#)):

Well, they actually saw a 74% increase, not in clicks in donations. And I saw 133% increase in average gift sets. There's something about just making it plain and simple and easy to find where to give that can lead to this increase in giving. So a very simple tactic, but could be quite effective during that last week of the year. Uh, Abby asked, have you tested the language on that button? The answer is yes. And for act in this next experiment, there are actually two different treatments in this one, one said donate. And one said, I, I believe support, uh, or make my gift, something like that. Uh, we typically haven't found a, a huge, significant difference between some of the nuanced language on donate. Uh, you can test that

for yourself and see if it's different for your donors and audience, but it's probably not the most active test from what we've seen, but here's, this is interesting.

Nathan ([00:17:19](#)):

And this is not just a test during the year end season. Uh, this is outside of the year end season. Here's what they saw in version a, just a typical navigation bar. You've got the donate link on the right side of the navigation, which is pretty typical and pretty common. And in the treatment, all they did was at a little styling to the, at link. So they made the background of it purple and they added a little border on it. So it looks like a button. And by just calling it out in a contrasting color, it draws your eye to it right away here. It is donate. It led to a hundred percent increase in donor conversion. So again, this is just really simple tactic, but it can be quite impactful, make it abundantly clear and make it super easy for someone to see your donate button in your navigation, either by adding an additional button up top, or maybe just changing the color of the link so that your eye is drawn to it.

Nathan ([00:18:07](#)):

And it stands out from the rest of the options in your navigation. So there's tactic number one for you super easy to implement, super easy to do and can make a tremendous impact on giving. Let's talk about homepage ads because you probably are gonna have a lot of traffic on your homepage. Uh, homepage traffic is, is really interesting cuz there's a lot of varieties in most motivations. Typically when someone comes to your homepage, some people are looking to give, some people are looking for, uh, maybe a, a bunch of different types of content. Some people are trying to find out more information about you and your organization. There's lots of different motivations, but we can use this real estate on the homepage to drive people towards giving during this season. One thing I wanna point out to you, here's an ex example of what it might look like.

Nathan ([00:18:50](#)):

This banner says double your gift, help parents fight or help parents with their toughest challenges. Find out more, this can be an effective thing to have on your site throughout the season. But I wanna call out to you that, that this becomes more effective, the closer to the deadline that you get. So this is one of those things where you might see some results or early on, but it's gonna be most effective when urgency is high. In fact, with this specific banner, you can see the difference in conversion rates based on when it ran so early in the season. Uh, this is December 6th through 13th, few years ago, you can see that, but had a 1.1% conversion rate. But once you got towards this last week of the year, this isn't even quite the last few days, the 21st through 27th, you see the conversion rate jump up significantly to a 4.6% conversion rate.

Nathan ([00:19:39](#)):

So I think it's important to understand just when these things become most effective and it is as urgency increases and you creep towards that deadline, those conversion rates you can expect to see grow. Let's take a moment and look at an experiment around this as well. This is, isn't so much a traditional banner ad that you might, you know, be used to seeing. This is more just using, using the space on the page and trying to figure out how do we position this native space on our homepage in order to lead towards giving. So this organization, uh, you can see right here from this image had sort of a branded, uh, branded design logo catch phrase for their E end season. It says this Christmas change a life. You can see that designed text and then it says shop. Now, now it, it, it might take a lot of context for you to really

understand the impact that you can make by starting to shop now, because in this CA context, you can actually go shop for really meaningful gifts for, for, um, you know, people in this sort of community.

Nathan ([00:20:38](#)):

That's, that's depicted in the, the image where you can buy a goat for a family. And that might actually make a tremendous economic impact on that family. But none of that context is really made clear on the, on the page. And so what they tested was what if we kind of dropped some of the, the, this larger like branding imagery and used more of the space on our homepage to present a clear value proposition as to why you might give. So now it says something very different. You can change a life. So it still has that tag. You can change a life with a gift. This Christmas, give a gift that can meet a critical need of a child or family living in poverty. When a family receives a goat education, water, or some other tangible solution, their lives are changed for years to come change a life by giving a gift.

Nathan ([00:21:23](#)):

It still leans into their tagline for the season. But now they're using, uh, this homepage space that may typically be reserved for, for tradit more traditional like banner ads and things like that. They're using it to present a clear value proposition, adding some more text, adding some more copy, giving some more context. And what it led to was a 35% increase in donations, which is quite remarkable. So can consider not just using space on your homepage to, to give a quick link to your donation page, but actually providing enough context in the real estate you have on your homepage to help someone understand the value of giving that could lead to an increase in donations. So here's your takeaway here? Use prime real estate on your homepage to increase traffic to your or donation page. Uh, I see there's a question. Can you define what you mean by conversion rate?

Nathan ([00:22:13](#)):

Is that anyone who visited the website clicked on this or donated? When I say conversion rate almost every time I say conversion rate, especially today, we're gonna be talking about the number of people who converted into a donor. So typically a conversion rate is like the amount of people coming to your site compared to the number of donations. And it ends up being a percentage. So we look back here at say this 1.1 to 4.6% conversion rate. That's the amount of people that saw the, this banner versus the amount of people that actually ended up giving. So it's a conversion into a donation, hopefully that helps clear thing up. Let's look at an example of a popup and there's a couple types of popups that you might use. One of them, uh, is a time that popup. Now, when I say the word popup, or even show you something like this, you might have a lot of anxiety.

Nathan ([00:23:02](#)):

In fact, I do sometimes too, because, oh boy, there's a ton of terrible, just bad popups all over the internet. You might be spamed with popups. When, when you land on a page, there may be some really effective popups in terms of the copy, but then sometimes like the timing of them gets off. You open a page and a popup comes right up. And like I was, what is this thing? And you close it and you scroll down the page and another one comes up and another one comes up and they can be really distracting and overwhelming, but if used effectively and in a timely fashion and in a context that makes sense for the visitor, they can be effective. And so in this case, this timed, popup pops up after someone has been on the page for a little bit, and it says, time is running out.

Nathan ([00:23:44](#)):

Then it actually has a countdown clock right there, uh, on the popup itself. So elevating the sense of urgency, putting the deadline right in front of someone and saying, there's only a few days that remain to make your tax deductible gift, make your gift. Now in version B, they wondered, can we actually put our matching incentive right there on the popup? Could that maybe lead to more giving? And so not just leveraging the deadline, but also the incentive on the popup in this case led to a 56% increase in people clicking through to go to the donation page. So consider using a timed popup on your page, not something that maybe pops up instantly and is like writing someone's face. Give them a little bit of time on the page. You can maybe even test when the popup comes up to see, is there a more effective time to show it, but this can be an effective way to make sure someone clearly knows where to go to give and give.

Nathan ([00:24:35](#)):

Before the deadline Allison's asking if popup blockers interfere with this, they a hundred percent interfere with this. Uh, there's no way around that if people are using popup blockers, but even so they can still be effective, especially for those, uh, that don't have a popup blocker running cuz not, not everyone does. Uh, Jesse has a question, would banners and popups still be effective if we do not have a donor match for end of year? Absolutely. They can absolutely be effective. Uh, I don't have the exact click numbers from this popup, uh, but popups can be used in a lot of different contexts and in a lot of different ways. So even if you don't have an incentive, I would still encourage you to, you know, throw that countdown clock on there, help someone see the urgency to give. And that may drive more people to your page.

Nathan ([00:25:17](#)):

Uh, Lori asked what dates you would do this. Uh, I would run something like this the whole last week of the year. You may have different forms of a popup that you run through the length of the season. Uh, but one thing we'll actually look at is the, the, the timing of a countdown clock. We'll look at this later as to when a countdown clock becomes most effective. So, uh, keep that in mind. We'll talk about countdown clocks a little bit later. Let's talk about exit intent popups for a moment because an exit 10 popup is a little bit different. If this term is not earlier to you, uh, just give you a, a quick little run through of what it might look like. When I come to a page, I may be reading through a blog post or an article or something like that.

Nathan ([00:25:56](#)):

And maybe I spend a couple minutes reading and then I I'm, I've read the article that I would, I was intending to read. Now I move my cursor up to the top of the page to click back or to click the X or maybe open a new, do a new search. And when my cursor moves in that direction to basically go replace the URL or click the button, click the back button, click the X that's when an exit intent popup fires. So when it looks like the user is about to leave, you can show something like this. This is from an organization called caring bridge. Their control of an exit intent. Popup says they, before you go, will you consider something most caring bridge visitors? Don't realize that each site is kept private, secure and ad free because people like you pledge a monthly gift since you understand how the nonprofit works and how it keeps people connected, would you consider becoming a caring bridge partner?

Nathan ([00:26:45](#)):

So they're showing this when they know that someone has been engaging on their site, someone who has experienced, uh, the value of caring bridge, and then when they go to exit, they're showing this

popup to say, Hey, before you go, will you consider this? And then they also test it in the, the context of this popup. What are, if we used a little bit of social proof to show how many others are actually joining in this cause would you consider joining 328 fellow supporters and becoming a caring bridge partner. This led to a 12% increase in donations. So consider using a popup like this. That's really, uh, designed to show up at a particular context when someone is engaging with you and just kind of grab their attention before they leave your website in a conversational way. So consider using both time popups and exit intent popups to try to drive donation page traffic and make sure that these popups are, are furthering and continuing a conversation.

Nathan ([00:27:39](#)):

They're not just like big, giant advertising in front of someone's face, but you're trying to craft language that that makes sense to the user and is presented in context. Here's another one. I think if there's one of these is gonna be brand new to you, it might be this one, uh, at least in our context as non-profits and fundraisers, this might be new, but you've probably seen these in article ads or what we typically call like a dear reader ad on various news sites. So, uh, for example, would be something like the wall street journal that wants you to sign up for a subscription. If you get to see a free article, they may use a dear reader ad inside the article to ask you to sign up. You know, the guardian does this as they try to, uh, get different, uh, people to, to donate, to support their, uh, journalism.

Nathan ([00:28:22](#)):

They put these little dear reader, article articles, uh, inside the article itself. And you can do this too. If you have different blog posts, news articles, uh, and just content pages on your website. Here's an example. This nonprofit is called Illinois policy. They do exactly what you might expect, which is they craft policy for the state of Illinois. If you're reading through one of their article pages, uh, you would get this can slide out, uh, pop up if you will. It's a, it's a slider. It comes out the side of the page. After you scroll down a certain amount of the page and it says, get Illinois' top stories delivered to your inbox. You can fill out the form, subscribe to get Illinois policy alerts. And after this, you can find an opportunity to donate, but primarily they're trying to get people to sign up, uh, here to their newsletter, but they wondered could we reposition this to try to lead to more donations and what would be the most effective way to do that?

Nathan ([00:29:13](#)):

And so what they did was they inserted a dear reader and it looks like this. So now you're, you're reading through this article and instead of like a ad that pops out from the side of the screen, this looks like, and it is native content on the page. It's not an, it doesn't jump out like an ad. It wouldn't be blocked by an ad blocker, a popup blocker. It's just something on the page. In the article, it says, dear reader talks about the value proposition to give and then says support Illinois policy Institute. And they still have 695% increase in conversions. And this is actually people donating as a result of this dear reader. So this can be a tool to use inside of your content pages, to lead people, to give, and some of the best experts in pros that using some of these dear reader article or dear reader ads is Wikipedia.

Nathan ([00:29:59](#)):

So if you've in on Wikipedia at all in the past couple of weeks, you've probably seen this on top of one of their pages. This is kind of more of like a sticky bar that shows up at the top. Wikipedia has given you \$2 and 75 cents worth of knowledge this year, take a minute to donate. And I love that. It says, yes, I'll donate. Or you can say, you can't really say, no, you say no, maybe later when I have have more time. So

then they're gonna actually prompt you again to give later on, uh, deeper on their side. You might find something like this that really is taking over a main chunk of content and positioning a donation ask right in front of the reader. It actually has a donation form right there. It says, please don't scroll past this 98% of our readers.

Nathan ([00:30:39](#)):

Don't give, they simply look the other way. If we've given you 275ologist a year, take a minute to donate and you can give right there on the page. So if you want some inspiration for how to do these in a pretty interesting and effective way, just go to Wikipedia. You'll find some great examples there. And they're always testing too. And they publish some of their testing results, which is pretty fascinating. So head to Wikipedia, get some, and then go set up one of these dear reader ads on your articles, blogs, news, or any real content pages that you have on your website. This could be effective during the season. And then the last tactical I'll share with you related to your website today is something called a homepage takeover. Now it's pretty, self-explanatory in the name, but the implement of it might be a little bit more difficult.

Nathan ([00:31:24](#)):

So this might be for a slightly more advanced user and word of caution. Again, there's lots of motivations of people that are coming to your homepage. So we want, we do wanna be careful and understanding of, of the impact that we may have on our web traffic. If we're taking over our homepage with a donation form. So just something to think about something to take some care, as you would try to implement one of these takeovers, but here's what it would look like. So this organization, missionary Oates, they're a Catholic missions organization, uh, and on their homepage instead of just their traditional homepage, they took it over with a donation opportunity. I don't have the whole page to show you, uh, but essentially on this page, there's a value proposition, a reason to give that's explained a donation appeal and then lower down the page.

Nathan ([00:32:11](#)):

There is a donation form. So you can give right there on the homepage. And anyone who comes with the homepage is gonna see this first. Now this led to an 11% increase in donations because you're ensuring and guaranteeing that anybody who comes to your site is gonna see this opportunity to give, they don't have to click any further buttons or anything to go find the page to give they can do so right here. And if you're concerned that well, like what, what if someone comes with the page they don't wanna give, and they're looking for an article. If they're looking for a video or they're looking for some content, well, you can add a little link like this. If you prefer click here to continue to our homepage. So there's some little things you can do to just give people the option to bypass it and go find the content they're looking for.

Nathan ([00:32:54](#)):

This is something to test and something to try, uh, this season. Again, it may take a little bit more like a technical expertise to implement, uh, but I do believe that you can do it and it could be quite effective. In fact, in this case, it actually increased giving for mobile traffic. It increased giving for email traffic, and it increased giving for returning traffic. So this can be quite impactful. Use a homepage taker during homepage over during the last couple of days of the year, probably the 30th and 31st, if you can, and there you go. There's a bunch of things that you can do on your website. I don't expect that you're gonna take every single one of those and go implement them this week and get them ready to go. I

would encourage you to pick one or two things that you can realistically go accomplish before the last week of the year and set your mind done those.

Nathan ([00:33:40](#)):

Cause I would rather you do one thing and do one thing well than try to do 10 things and not have, 'em not really work. So pick one or two things, uh, and go for it. Let's talk about email shifting course. A little bit key concept around email is really three things to keep in mind. We need to send personal emails, the increase urgency, and clearly ask someone to give I'll say those again. Number one, their personal emails sent from a human being that increase urgency and make a clear donation appeal, a clear call to action to give if you've been participating, uh, in our year end fundraising course, hopefully you have, if not, it's, it's not too late. It's, it's getting close to too late, but you can still sign up for this course for free. Uh, there's a lot of different emails that you hopefully are sending throughout the course of the season.

Nathan ([00:34:30](#)):

We're gonna zero in on these last two days of the year, December 30th and December 31st. And look at three emails you can send during the timeframe, but these are gonna be most effective. Few have been using, uh, the past few weeks of the, of the year to articulate your value proposition over time. So hopefully you've kicked off on giving Tuesday. Hopefully you're sending some different cultivation, cultivating content throughout the season, priming people for a donation appeal. That's gonna come later. And then these three emails that we're gonna talk about. What I typically like to call a closer email, similar to like a closing picture who is most effective when they come in at the end of the game to kind of like seal the deal. They're not quite as effective if you put 'em in, in the first inning, there's a time and a place for a closing picture and there's a time and a place for a closing email they're most effective again when urgency and motivation are high.

Nathan ([00:35:21](#)):

And we've explained our value proposition over time, let's dive into the December 30th email. What can you do? What should you do? <laugh> Lauren loves the baseball analogy. Thank you, honestly, Lauren, I don't love baseball. I got super into it in 2005 and the white Sox won the world series. Uh, and then I kind of, I kind of, uh, forgot about baseball after that, cuz then it wasn't as exciting anymore. They weren't as good the next year and I kind of pieced out. But, uh, anyway, I'm glad you enjoyed the baseball analogy. So let's talk about December 30th and let's dive in this email, right? Call me out as the bander and that's fine. I'm okay with that. Uh, the December 30th email, here's an example of what one might look like and you can pretty clearly see without even diving into it yet that this is all about increasing urgency and increasing incentive on the 30th.

Nathan ([00:36:10](#)):

If you have any new incentives, like maybe you've had a matching challenge and now you have a, a triple matching challenge. So your gift could have been done. And now the next two days, it could be tripled or quadruple or whatever, introduce any new incentives on December 30th. Maybe there's a new opportunity to get a free gift or something like that. Like a free, thank you gift. When you donate, introduce any new incentives, increase urgency, clearly ask for a donation. Let's look at the special Olympics example. Cause I do think, uh, it's kind of a fun one because basically everything in this email does, one of two things, everything in red here is increasing the sense of urgency give before midnight tomorrow, you've got this giant countdown clock in the middle of the email. Then it says, give now, give now, give now. And then at the end give before midnight, tomorrow, all of that is increasing urgency.

Nathan ([00:37:03](#)):

And then here, everything in green is increasing or adding an additional incentive to give. So these are not like fundamentally new reasons why someone should give, they're not talking about, uh, in depth, the impact that someone can make, but incentives and urgency can be or reasons to, uh, give someone to not delay their giving, to inspire them, to give now rather than later, or maybe to give it a higher level. And that's what the incentives here are doing. Your gift can be tripled today. You can give triple the support, triple the joy tripled the button says triple your gift. And then it says three times as many athletes get access to healthcare, three times, many athletes step off the sidelines, three times as many athletes live in a unified world. And then even the URL special olympics.org/triple your gift. Everything is increasing urgency or it's adding an incentive reasons to not delay and to give your gift now before the deadline.

Nathan ([00:37:58](#)):

So that's tip of what your December 30th email should look like. And I would actually encourage you assuming that you have been talking about different reasons to give throughout the course of the season to, to make sure and not introduce a lot of like value proposition heavy copy in this email. In fact, this experiment is really interesting to me. Uh, this, uh, email was sent on actually on December 31st. Uh, but you can see version a has a lot more characters. The length of the copy of the email is pretty significant compared to version B and the additional copy in version a is all about reasons why someone should give, like what's the actual impact they can make with a donation in a version B they remove that value proposition copy. And so all that's left is, is copy, framed around making sure that you give your gift in time.

Nathan ([00:38:46](#)):

It's a quick reminder to make sure you give your gift before the deadline. And here's the result. 32% less value proposition and copy in this email led to a 30% increase in donations. Now this is one of those examples where I would say do not just sort of cherry pick this and go pop this in the middle of August and think it's gonna work. This is effective because urgency is high there's incentive to give there's a clear deadline and they've been articulating their value proposition over the course of the season. If you doing that, this can be really effective to just focus in on the quick reminder, here's a checklist for you for December 30th, call your donor by name, or if they're not a donor acknowledge the relationship, are they a subscriber? Have they been some sort of, uh, volunteer or some sort of advocate for you throughout the season?

Nathan ([00:39:34](#)):

Uh, acknowledge the deadline and the urgency to give as well as any incentives you have announce any new incentives, if you have them. And then finally clearly ask someone to give here's your checklist. It's pretty straight forward. Here's one of the best performing emails that we've seen in this timeframe around December 30th. Uh, it looks like this. We won't read all the copy, but a few things I'll call out for you is it's sent from the president of the organization. This is the original, I'm gonna show you a treatment. The original was sent from the president of the organization. Uh, all of the previous appeals have come from this same sender and the tone is very formal and it's very professional, which is, is typically what you'd expect from a fundraising email. They typically have the same sort of like formal professional approach, especially when they come from the president or the founder of an organization.

Nathan ([00:40:23](#)):

But they wondered what if we took a different approach? What if we took a more personal humanized and authentic approach? And so they sent from the director of membership who, if, if you're receiving an email from the president of an organization, especially a major one, it might be hard to believe that they're actually sending one-to-one emails to a donor specifically, uh, might be like a hundred dollars donor and more believable if it's a major gift, but we're talking more about, uh, smaller donations here. So they sent from the director of membership who is more believable that they might be in your inbox having a one-to-one conversation. Uh, this person is a new sender, her name's Christie, and she's a new sender in the inbox, which that in, in and of itself can be an effective tool to get more people to open and be curious like, oh, I haven't heard from you before.

Nathan ([00:41:08](#)):

It's something new. And then the tone is really different. It's friendly. It's informal, it's empathetic meets the donor where they're at the subject line just says, checking in, it's really informal and personal. She says, Hey, there <laugh>. She says, I wanted to check in, uh, you can make your contribution here clearly asking for donation, not asking someone to stand with them, but just to chip in and give your gift here. Uh, and then even closes by saying all my best, just really informal, but friendly human empathetic and authentic language. And this approach, the more human centered approach led to 136% increase in donations and 103% increase in average gift size. So you can do this too. It is easier said than done to write an email that actually sounds like a real human being. We get so trapped in this sort of like marketing language and marketing speak sometimes as we write copy.

Nathan ([00:42:01](#)):

So you might have to go give your copy to a friend or a colleague and have them read it out loud and see what it sounds like, cuz it sound like a human being or does it sound like a, you know, a marketing robot or a marketing machine, but if we can lean into empathy, building human relationships, you might see quite a difference in your results on December 31st, we're gonna take kind of an interesting approach. I like taking this approach. I think it's really human. I think you get a lot of interesting responses and the data says you're actually gonna see, uh, uh, growth in responses back donations. So here's what I'd encourage you to do is to send two different emails. But it, it basically is gonna feel like one communication thread. So in the morning you're gonna send a quick reminder email with a clear call to action, reminding them of the deadline.

Nathan ([00:42:47](#)):

And then in the evening you're gonna send an email that includes the morning's email, but adds a little note on top, just like an email forward or an email reply. That's just a quick little prompt, a quick little reminder in case they haven't given yet. This is typically how humans behave in the inbox. If I'm waiting on a reply from someone and I need to hear by from them by say tomorrow, I'm gonna jump in my inbox. I'm gonna find my original email and I'm gonna hit forward or reply and send them a quick notes, say, Hey, I sent you this email. Did you get it? Just wanna make sure I hear back from you by tomorrow. Just add a quick little check in response. That's how humans behave in the inbox. And so we wanna do the same thing in our emails. Diana asks, do you exclude people who already gave in response to the morning email?

Nathan ([00:43:31](#)):

Uh, you certainly can. You certainly can. You might on this this day, especially if they've just given maybe an hour ago or something like that, you, you probably would wanna exclude them. You may find that

there are some people willing to give two gifts, even on the same day, maybe better to err on the side of know excluding people that that literally just gave here's a closer look at the morning. Email. This one says just hours left to double your gift. Today is your last chance to double your gift. You will help children and families please. While there's still time, click here and give clear call to action, clear URL to give. Thank you for remembering those in greatest need. As we ring in the new year, God bless you. And then in the evening they sent the same email and just included a little reminder note at the top.

Nathan ([00:44:16](#)):

Pam just wanted to send you a quick note to make sure you received the email. I don't want you to miss out on the chance to double your gift. God bless Jasinta. This is really simple. This is, this is probably gonna take you five minutes to write and then set up in your email platform. You're gonna be good to go. This be can be quite an effective email. In fact, we use this, not just for donations, but we even use this, uh, to get people like yourself to sign up for webinars like this one. So maybe, maybe you, you, uh, signed up for this webinar as a result of, of this type of strategy, but we've tested it here as well. Or typically we might send an invite to a webinar and see a certain amount of people reply. And then the next week we'd send a resend where we'd say, well, if you didn't reply to the first one, maybe we should take a brand new approach and a brand new like messaging angle.

Nathan ([00:45:03](#)):

So we'd write a new email. We'd send that out to people that hadn't signed up and try to approach it from a new, hopefully more relevant angle. But here's what we tested into. Uh, and I see a few of you are saying you've signed up as a result of this here. We tested into this more forward style, um, email resend. It's a lot easier to set up because all you have to write is hi, I emailed you last week. Notice you hadn't responded. Will you be joining us on the webinar next week? Here's the link then down below is the entire original email. This isn't completely rewritten. It's just a copy paste of the same original email, just adding this little check-in reminder at the top. And here's what we saw was are you ready? A 20% increase in people signing up because we acted like a human in the inbox because we are human trying to have relationships and meaningful interactions with other people in the inbox.

Nathan ([00:45:57](#)):

We're just trying to do it at scale, but that doesn't mean it's any less authentic. Here's your checklist for this December 31st, uh, two emails. Number one, call your donors by name, acknowledge your relationship. Remind them of the deadlines to give clearly a ask them. Clearly ask them to give before the deadline, don't ask them to stand with you. Don't ask them to give hope. Don't ask them to learn more, but ask them to give that's the next step the donor can take and then send a quick personal reminder at the end of the day. Now we're gonna wrap up with this. We've got about, it looks like 14 minutes left. We're gonna talk about the donation page quickly, and then we should have some time for questions. If you've got additional questions, we have an answer throughout, feel free to drop over to the Q and a and put them in there. But let's talk about the donation page, emphasize your incentives and increase urgency throughout your page.

Nathan ([00:46:50](#)):

Now you've probably worked really hard to put together other, a robust yearend campaign. Maybe you have some ads going, or you have ads that are about to be going, cuz you're, I'm taking your valuable time today, but you're working hard at getting an ad campaign running. You've worked hard to get some direct mail stuff out the door. Maybe you've got some letters, you've got some postcards you're sending

emails. Hopefully you're adding a few more emails into your, uh, campaign, even as we speak. Uh, and then you're working really hard on your site. You've got this unified approach to your messaging. Maybe you've got a nice little tagline or some sort of branding around your end and all of that stuff to create this cohesive campaign. And then what happens all too often is we we've worked so hard on these like outbound, uh, marketing, fundraising, uh, resources, campaigns, and tools.

Nathan ([00:47:35](#)):

And then we send people to just like the regular old donation page and think that that's gonna work. But typically what happens when we have a, a unified campaign that lands on just the regular donation page is that this, this sense of whiplash of like I read about this and I wanted to give to this aspect of, of the campaign, but then I landed on this donation page and it says nothing about what I saw on the ad or nothing about what I saw in the email. The design looks totally different. The language is totally different. We don't want our donors to experience this because if there's any que of like, am I in the right place? Am I actually, is this even the same organization is the same. Cause is my gift gonna make the impact that you said it was gonna make? If I have those questions that come up, I'm probably not gonna give I'm probably gonna opt out of giving altogether.

Nathan ([00:48:23](#)):

And if I do choose to give, I'm probably giving it a lower level because I don't have confidence that my gift is going to what I think it's gonna go to. So we wanna avoid this experience for donors altogether. We wanna make sure that they come to a cohesive year end donation page that aligns with the messaging that's out in our advertising and emails and postcards and letters and all that stuff. We want a continuous congruent experience. Here's a few simple things and I mean, simple things that you can do on your page, uh, to help it align with your other messaging and advertising in your headline. Maybe just mention that it's, you're giving related to your end. In this case, this experiment version a, excuse me says you can help secure a better future, which sounds like a typical headline you might see on lots of different donation pages.

Nathan ([00:49:10](#)):

The true Reedman says make your yearend gift to our organization. It is abundantly clear that I, I have said yes, because I saw your ad. Yes. I want to give to you at year end. Now I know in the headline I'm giving to you at year end. So make some mention of yearend giving in your headline. In this case, it led to an almost 11% increase in giving, just adjusting a few words. Same thing is true in your body. Copy. You can see between version a and version B that these pages are super similar in terms of layout design, and even the main reasons to give. But the headline is a little bit different. It says you can show love and compassion to someone in need has a little sub-headline with a year end gift to missionary Oates, and then the copy from their talks giving related to year end.

Nathan ([00:49:53](#)):

It's not just giving in general, but giving related to year end. And this led to a 12% increase in donations. So again, they're little changes, but they can make quite a difference by just aligning our messaging with what came before countdown clocks. I promised you that we would come back and talk about countdown clocks a little bit. This again is a very simple way to increase urgency on your donation page and let people know that there you can't delay your giving anymore. You have to give now if you want to, if you wanna get in before the deadline, adding a countdown clock on this page led to a 61.8%

increase in donations. And these are so simple to implement. We'll look at some tools at the very end you can use. I'll give you some, uh, links for those. This is so simple to implement.

Nathan ([00:50:37](#)):

It's really just copying and pasting a little, uh, HTML code and can be quite impactful, but it's really important to know when it count on clock is most effective. Similar to the homepage ads we looked at, we tend to see that a count on clock is only most effective at the end of the campaign, whether it's a high urgency campaign in the middle of the year or it's the year end campaign count on clocks are gonna be most effective. When you are closer to the deadline, you can see on your screen. The orange line, uh, is conversion rate in a fiscal year end campaign. When the countdown clock is shown and the blue line is conversion rate. When the countdown clock is not shown and you can see it, it kind of goes back and forth in the first couple weeks of the campaign, the no countdown clock tends to outperform the, the orange, the width countdown clock.

Nathan ([00:51:26](#)):

Then when you get to the last week, well, the orange line stays on top pretty much the whole time. Meaning that count on clock is leading to an increase in giving when urgency is high. And this makes sense because if you go to a donation page and it says give before the deadline and you see a count on clock that says there's only 28 days left to give like 28 days left, like that's, that's not urgent. I'm gonna remember at least three or four times before the end of 28 days that I should give. So I don't need to take the time out of what I'm doing right now to give I got tons of time. But if you come to the donation page and it says there's three days left, like at least for me personally, there's no chance I'm gonna remember to give to you. If I leave this page in the next three days, there's too much going on in my brain. I'm not gonna remember. And so I feel the urgency as I'm closer to the deadline. So we need to understand when they're most effective, uh, and just, and know that using it too early could actually lead to a decrease in giving, but it's gonna be most effective towards the end.

Nathan ([00:52:29](#)):

Let's talk about progress bars just for a moment as well. Progress bar can be really effective to help someone not necessarily feel a sense of urgency to give, although possibly, but, but helping someone feel like they're a part of something, a part of a movement that they're contributing to something meaningful and impactful that they can help close the goal and actually accomplish something of great significance progress bar can be quite effective. You can see the one on your screen is counting up towards the goal. Uh, this screenshot is after they actually hit the goal, and then they extended the goal and all that stuff, but this can be quite effective. A progress bar on this page led to a 20% increase in revenue for a visitor. So try using a progress bar on your page. Sometimes it can be to implement though. And I get that.

Nathan ([00:53:11](#)):

But one thing you might try is actually changing from a, a financial based goal, like a revenue based goal to maybe a number of donors, goal here's one example, uh, another caring bridge example. We looked at one from them earlier. Here's another one little giving widget. I believe this is a popup. It says today's goal. And you see it's at 88% of the goal. And then the copy says caring breach has received a 100,000 challenge, a hundred thousand dollars challenge gift, but only if we raise a hundred thousand dollars before midnight, would you help? That sounds quite impactful. I'm quite effective, but if I can only give a hundred dollars, I can do some quick math to understand that like my a hundred dollars gift, isn't really

gonna make a tremendous impact on a hundred thousand dollars goal, I could give a hundred bucks and I'm probably not gonna see that percentage move really at all.

Nathan ([00:54:02](#)):

So it might be hard for me to see the impact the it I can have if I'm not giving a thousand dollars gift or a \$10,000 gift, I can get 50 bucks or a hundred bucks or maybe 200 bucks. What impact does that have? But if you use something like this, where they actually attested this type of strategy, where every hour, they had a number of donors goal. And so when you look at this page, now, it says there's two donations left to reach the goal. Will you make your donation now? So if I'm gonna give 20 bucks or 50 bucks or a hundred bucks or a thousand bucks, I can get us 50% closer to hitting that goal. And so I can see the impact that my donation is gonna have on hitting this goal. And this actually led to a 25% increase in donations by helping someone feel closer to the impact they could have on reaching the goal.

Nathan ([00:54:47](#)):

So this is something I'm not saying you should just, uh, you know, trust me with everything and go, you know, pour everything into this donor number based goal, but you should test it if it's pretty interesting, you should see how this works for you and for your organization. And then finally incentives just having an incentive might not be enough. You may have a great incentive. You may have a great matching challenge where your gift can be tripled or quadrupled or whatever. And maybe you've got a free gift that somebody gets after they donate as a thank you gift for them. What do your donors know about it? Is it clear on the page? What they're getting. In fact, both of these donation pages, your gift can be matched. They both say your support today doubles through a \$645,000 matching gift. And it's easy to assume that putting that language on there is enough, but version B, you can see the giant orange bar on your screen.

Nathan ([00:55:37](#)):

It is hard to miss when you come to this page reminder, a generous donor will match your donation today up to \$645,000. By adding this little sticky by at the top in a high contrast color, it makes it impossible to not see when you come to the page, it's actually led to a 44% increase in donations. Again, your gift can be matched on both page, both pages, but version B made it abundantly clear, impossible to miss that there's an incentive to give and your gift can be matched. So make sure that donors know out the incentives that you have go out of your way to make sure that they know about them. Now, before we wrap up, I wanna share a few tools that you can use to implement some of these tactics. Cause I've given you a bunch of things that you can do again, you probably can't do every single one by the last week of the year, but if you're gonna try to implement one or two, here's a few tools to consider for sticky bars and popups, a few tools you might use.

Nathan ([00:56:30](#)):

One being unbalanced. Unbound is primarily a landing page building tool to make people like you and me, people who aren't like, uh, developers and know, you know, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and all this stuff to like build custom pages. They empower you and me to go build some really beautiful pages, uh, without having to write a line of code. So consider Unbound for landing pages, but they also have some great sticky bar and popup tools that you can use, not just on unbalanced pages, but across your website as well, uh, consider using Sumo or Sumo me, if you just Google that, you'll find it. Uh, some other great little widget tools for popups and slideouts, and then just browse the WordPress plugin

library. If you're on a WordPress website, you'll find lots of great tools in there. Many of them for free countdown clocks, there's two tools I'd consider, uh, using one being motion mail app.

Nathan ([00:57:18](#)):

If you're trying to insert a countdown clock into an email, uh, the other one being power dot, I O if you're trying to add countdown clocks to a website, now, word of caution on email iOS 15, as I understand it is actually blocking countdown clocks from showing it doesn't enable you to like dynamically generate one anymore. So if you're trying to insert a countdown clock in an email, it might not be as effective this year as it has been in the past, because it may not show up for iOS 15 users. So just the word of caution. Uh, and then again, check your WordPress plugin library. You might find some free tools there as well. It looks like Angela's sad about not adding countdown clocks to an email. The good news Angela is that we're all in the same boat <laugh> and so we just gotta find new ways to increase urgency.

Nathan ([00:58:02](#)):

Uh, so Angela, you're not alone. Uh, and the, then finally, if you're wanting to add dear readers or do some AB testing, uh, or do some other customizations like change the color of your donate link in your navigation, it may be hard to do this in your content management tool, whether it's WordPress or otherwise sometimes, uh, we don't have the access to go jump in and make those changes. But if you have Google optimized, it's easy to install it's free and it makes it really easy to make some of these more complicated changes even without jumping into code most of the time. So feel free to check that out as a great tool for adding some of those more customizations, uh, as well as running AB testing to prove what works to grow, giving two more things for you. Two more resource. Uh, if you wanna basically get the ebook version of this webinar, you can to dive deep, uh, maybe have this next to you, either on an iPad or on your screen.

Nathan ([00:58:53](#)):

Maybe you can print it out. As you're working through some of these strategies. You can go to the URL on your screen. We'll send this out in an email. You can also pull up your phone, open your camera, grab that QR code and go download this. Uh, and then one other tool or one other resource I wanna give you as well is when you're ready to start thinking about 20, 22, because that's coming almost as fast as the last week of the year, when you're ready to start thinking about how to grow giving in 2022, I'd love to be a resource for you as much as I can, as much as we can here at next after. Uh, we have, uh, what we call the next after Institute that you can become a member of get access to eight on-demand training courses. Uh, if you're a member, you get invites to these monthly members, discussions and webinars, uh, where you can have discussions, get some feedback from your peers.

Nathan ([00:59:41](#)):

Uh, we do these monthly cohort courses where you can work through a course with a group of your peers, and you'll be invited to feedback on campaigns and, and yeah, share ideas together. And I'd love for you to check this out. You can actually start a membership for free for 30 days next [after.com/membership](#). So you can sort of dip your toes in, see what it's like, see you if it's valuable and then choose if you wanna continue after that. So I'd encourage you to check this out, start your free trial, cause I'd love to equip you as best we can for growth in 2022. Now we're right at two o'clock Central's time. That is, uh, but I'll stick around for a little bit. If we have additional questions. Thank you so much, everyone. This has been, uh, wonderful to see all the, uh, I ideas coming out, the, the

thoughtful commentary on year end and how to grow giving. So I'm gonna open my Q and a panel, uh, and see if there's any questions in here we should jump into and Riley, feel free to jump in here too. If are there any questions that stand out that we should make sure to answer before we close down here?

Riley ([01:00:41](#)):

Um, yeah, I wrote a couple <affirmative> so, um, one of the questions that I thought was kind of interesting was, um, are there any other incentives that you could use other than a matching gift?

Nathan ([01:00:55](#)):

Sure. Uh, the, I mean the word incentive can, can be applied to a bunch of different things. The, the matching gift is probably the most common thing that you see during the year end season. Almost everybody has a match, uh, but it can, it we've tested and proven that even, even when everybody has a match, it can still be quite effective. Uh, but beyond that, uh, common incentives would be like, uh, giving a free, thank you gift, whether that's a book or some other piece of content, uh, when someone gives as a, as a thank you for their donation, especially like broadcast organizations and things like that. Sometimes you can have like a, a free do people listen to CDs anymore. Some people do, especially, uh, donors that, that, that actively give might maybe it's a CD of a broadcast or something like that. There's tons of different opportunities for different resources that you might have around that you could use as sort of a premium offer or an incentive. If Diana says a music download, yeah. I'd encourage you to be, uh, as creative as you can coming up with incentives. And sometimes it's incentive enough to, to have a high urgency deadline and count on clock. That's, that's part of incentive as well.

Riley ([01:01:59](#)):

And then there's another question that I really like that we get a lot of times on webinars and stuff. Um, Diane had mentioned it and Eric also had mentioned it, but they noticed that all of our examples were pretty much plain text emails, and they're not highly designed with graphic graphics or pictures. And why is that Nathan?

Nathan ([01:02:19](#)):

It really comes down to the same concept. We, we mentioned a few times today, but around email where we're trying to be human, we're trying to have a human relationship in the inbox. We, we often say that, uh, you know, people give to people, not to email machines, not to nameless or faceless organizations, but they give to real human be. So as best as we can, we're trying to act like an authentic, believable human that you can actually reply to in the inbox. And this isn't just like a feel good strategy. We test this over and over and over and over and over and over and see that it leads to positive results almost every time. Now, sometimes you might try just sending from a person instead of your organization name, but then the email is still like heavily designed that may not lead to great results. It kind of has to be an all encompassing, you know, test or experiment where you're leaning into authenticity in this humanity, in the inbox, by sending from a person using tone and Lang language that's warm and friendly and familiar and conversational and involving and removing some of the design from your emails. So again, they're believable and people actually reply to them, which maybe is scary, but it can lead to tremendous results.

Nathan ([01:03:37](#)):

What else we got Riley?

Riley ([01:03:40](#)):

Um, there was another question about, um, do you have any suggestions for like best placement of countdown, clocks or timers in an email? Is it best to put them at the top or within the actual message? Does it matter?

Nathan ([01:03:54](#)):

That's a good question in an email. I don't actually, I don't know. I couldn't say with confidence either way, we may have some experimentation around that, but it's not, nothing's coming to my brain right away. Um, but again, the thing that comes to my mind about email is that it's getting harder and harder to use countdown clocks in an email. So they may be kind of less effective than they have in the past, regardless of where you place them. Uh, but something to consider on your donation page, especially if you're using both a countdown clock and progress bar, we have seen some indication that if you, if you put those things next to each other, it can actually just add more confusion and lead to lower giving, seeing a progress bar and countdown clock together is like two different forms of information and two very visual styles that may cause confusion. So if you're gonna use both of them, consider spacing them out on the page. So you may, we have a count on clock at the top and a progress bar, like right above your form, or right above your gift array. So there are different spaces on the page. Your brain can actually process what's being communicated to it, uh, without causing any more confusion.

Riley ([01:04:58](#)):

Cool. Um, and then a question from Amy, she asks how often is too often, too often to email donors, uh, to a small nonprofit at the end of the year. But I think this can apply to anyone. Is there, is there too many emails you can send? Is there like too few you can send,

Nathan ([01:05:15](#)):

There's almost certainly a line of what what's too many emails granted. I think that's gonna be different organization to organization. I can't tell you exactly for yours. I would imagine that you have, if you have a smaller email file, uh, typically what that means is, I mean, people might actually be closer to you, maybe, you know, a lot of those people, even by I name, uh, which, uh, on the one hand you might say, if you got a smaller file, maybe you wanna send less, but you might actually get away with more communication if you know those people. So I, I can't say definitively one way or the other. Um, but most typically what we see is most organizations send too few. Uh, so I'd almost err on the side of sending too many, but one thing you can do to try to mitigate that, uh, that we have tested into is that instead of just having like an unsubscribed button or unsubscribed link at the bottom, if you could actually add an additional link to give someone the opportunity to just say, Hey, I've already given, or, or maybe it's like, I, I'm not ready to give during this season, like contacting you basically next year, give them some op opportunity to sort of opt out of the campaign, but not necessarily unsubscribe from you altogether that may help mitigate some of the concern about emailing too much.

Nathan ([01:06:27](#)):

Cuz you're giving your recipient the power to say, no, I'm not ready for that right now. And they can kind of pause emails from you. Uh, and then you can feel more confident about the emails that do go out that you are emailing people that want to get those, uh, communications.

Riley ([01:06:42](#)):

I think, I think this is interesting too. So say you're, you're just kind of getting started on, uh, your year end fundraising right now and you didn't have time to do a cultivation series. Like we had talked about, um, if you can only send like one or two email before the end of the year, what dates are the best time to do that?

Nathan ([01:07:04](#)):

Uh, sooner is better than later for getting started on that first one, if, if you're really locked into two emails total, which I, I would imagine you probably have more flexibility than that, but if we're gonna, you know, isolate to just that, I'd probably send something like, uh, and you can find out more about this in our yearend course as well. Maybe we can shoot that link out. Uh, but there's a type of email that we call like the yearend kickoff email, the year end overview email, where you basically sort of lay out the stakes as to what's changed related to your cause this year and what's changing or what are your goals going into 2022? So you can lay out this clear picture for people as to what are they actually impacting, what are they going to be giving to? Uh, what's the goal, what's the vision for where we're going in the next year, uh, to start to build, uh, basically some sort of trust between you and the donor that they might consider giving to you?

Nathan ([01:07:53](#)):

Uh, that can be a direct appeal. And then at the very last week of the year, the very end on the 30th 31st, I would send those couple of high urgency emails. Um, but beyond that, I would really highly encourage you to insert some cultivation between now and then. So send that initial appeal, send those high urgency ones at the end, but also maybe share some stories as best you can as to, uh, stories of impact or testimonials of people that have been impacted by your organization. Uh, share some, uh, maybe you send an, an email from your president or founder or, or whatever, uh, talking about how, you know, how they've been able to see impact as they look at the organization as a whole. There's a ton of ways you can sort of position it without actually asking for donations in these cultivation emails, but just lean into sharing some stories and illustrating for people. How a donation has made a tremendous impact throughout the year, and then close it out with us higher emails. Let's do, uh, maybe two more questions if we, if we have them. Cause we got a little bit of time still.

Riley ([01:09:00](#)):

Um, Nathan, I don't know if you'll know this one off the top of your head, but someone had asked does disclosing the matching gift amount affect donations. So saying matching up to \$50,000 versus your donation will be matched dollar per dollar.

Nathan ([01:09:18](#)):

Uh, I don't know. I don't know that we've like isolated that in an experiment. I, I would tend to air on the side of transparency as to, as to what the matching amount is so that people clearly know, um, I would think, and that is different than me knowing I would think that that would be the more effective approach, but that's, that's actually something you could pretty easily, easily test. It's really just kind of a copy test. So I'd, if you run that experiment, uh, to see what results you get, uh, and let's maybe see if there's one more question, cause we're right at two 10, I want to be a good steward of everyone's time here. Um, anything that stand, excuse me, stands up.

Riley ([01:10:03](#)):

Um, I'm just trying to SIF through them here. There's a lot of great questions. So it's hard to like take them out of the

Nathan ([01:10:08](#)):

Weeds, right? No, I feel, I feel the same. Uh, there was a question about timing. Oh, here's a good question. Cuz this comes up often. Let's talk Chad, about this one, this one's from Erica. Uh, she says, do you recommend suppressing giving Tuesday donors from your E yearend emails with solicitations? If so, do you have any experience about ask those? Who've already donated to forward to a friend as an additional way to drive new donations? I don't have any specific results to share around the forward to a friend. I think that's a, that's a great, uh, concept and a great idea. I'd love, love for you to test it out and see what, see what can happen from it. Um, I would typically, if somebody gives that at, uh, on giving Tuesday, I would not suppress 'em from all the rest of your communication throughout the rest of the season.

Nathan ([01:10:51](#)):

Maybe you give 'em a break for a minute and give 'em a break for a week, but we often see that people give multiple times throughout the year end season, especially committed donors. So I would not remove them from all solicitations. Maybe give 'em a break for a week, but keep sending them cultivation for sure. This cultivating emails that you send out throughout the season, keep them on that list because it's helping them see the impact of the gift that they've given. And then add 'em back in, in a week to the solicitation emails you're sending and you might actually see them give again additionally, and kind of going back to what I said, uh, previously you can have an additional link in your email, near the footer for someone to basically say I've already given, uh, or I'm not giving during year end now without having them a and subscribe.

Nathan ([01:11:33](#)):

They can basically opt out of emails now, and then you can pick things back up in January. So again, give them a break for a minute and then add 'em back in. Don't exclude them from your final push. And I think that's where we'll wrap up today. I know there's some other questions coming in through the chat and maybe a few more in the Q and a. If you've got additional questions, you'd love to get some thoughts and feedback on, on two things. I'd encourage you to do one. You can email me Nathan next af.com. And I will try my best, try my best to get back to you in a reasonable time. Uh, but number two, you can also, uh, if you are a member, you can jump into the slack channel and get some feedback from the community. And if you're not a member, you can go sign up for a free membership, jump into the slack channel, post your question there and get some feedback from, um, other fundraisers, just like you trying to figure out how to grow. Thank you so much, everyone. These are always a, a, a blast, uh, and I'm so excited and, and grateful that you gave us some time, uh, during a very busy season, I'm grateful that you're putting the effort in to try to see results grow so that you can grow generosity or grateful for you. We are rooting for you throughout the rest of the season, and we'd love to be a resource for you. So go get 'em best of luck. Hope you have the best year end you've ever had. I will see you next time.