

WHO supporter segmentation reveals untapped fundraising potential

Background:

This major international charity has recently launched a new five-year fundraising strategy, built around a new perspective on their supporter base. They wanted to view supporters in a more rounded way, going beyond the common descriptions of active cash giver, lapsed regular giver or raffle player, instead seeking a deeper understanding of their supporter base including:

- Who's giving, and to what?
- Where's the potential value?
- Who are the priority audiences?
- What existing offers need modification?
- What new offers do we need to develop?
- Are the channels we use the best ones?

Wood for Trees' WHO analysis enables the charity to place the supporter right at the heart of the overall marketing programme, focusing on targets for general supporter messaging, community engagement, education programmes and much more.

Problem:

The charity recognised that in order to acquire this understanding they would need a fresh, 'outward-in' view of their supporters. Having already worked with Wood for Trees for a number of years we were ideally placed to help.

Experience has shown us that the 'same old' standard profiling approaches tend to highlight the same old supporters. This charity wanted to extend their view well beyond those familiar horizons to recognise those potential supporters that they were not currently engaging with, as well as the smaller groups of deeply engaged supporters who might not be visible amongst the overriding dominance of the 'common, typical supporter'. A different, 'non-typical' approach was needed – but time and resources were limited.

Solution:

For this reason, initial discussions discarded a lengthy bespoke segmentation project. Instead, the charity favoured the pioneering 'WHO reporting' technique that Wood for Trees had developed to enhance existing market segmentations. Building on a recent Mosaic segmentation as our starting point, we used a range of internal and external data sources to expand the description of each geo-demographic profile. This included identifying current penetration and value for each group; crucially, it also showed how they currently



engaged with the charity including elements such as channels used, products bought and length of tenure. We estimated the size and value of the **potential** audience within each segment, along with their place on a strategic landscape, using research data on propensity to give to different causes.

The final brushstrokes in these segment descriptions were provided by integrating rich lifestyle and demographic data on attitudes to giving, media consumption and hobbies and interests.

Result:

The charity refocused fundraising budgets, ensuring that recruitment and retention strategies were focused on the right audience segments. For example, recruitment channels were fine-tuned to target donors with highest ROI and LTV.

In addition, new untapped audiences were discovered where existing penetration was low but potential high. In collaboration with this charity's creative agency we identified three key audiences which had particular interest and potential, and offered ideas and strategies on how to engage them. These included existing audience segments who needed further incentives to engage fully, as well as lapsed audiences who had previously engaged but were not currently being talked to because of changes in the channels and messages being used. They have extended both their programme and their reach to ensure that they are now engaging with these vital – and previously unrecognised – audiences.

Conclusion:

A senior executive said: "We were thrilled with the insight which the audience profiling project gave us – and especially thrilled when Wood for Trees were able to clearly identify gaps in our work which will allow us reach even more people. As always, the Wood for Trees team focus on delivering objectives and helping us realise transformative outcomes and this project certainly delivered on that."