Annual Fund Inc.

EVOLUTION
The newsletter for annual giving professionals   Volume 1, Issue 1

MARCH, 2004   **FREE INTRODUCTORY ISSUE**

Introduction

So... how are we doing? With issue #1 having been put into almost 3,000 hands in February, AFI is off and running. To what end though is not only in our hands, but more importantly, yours.

Due to our experience in the annual fund arena, the "end" vision of being a resource for the profession is quite clear. How it manifests itself though, will evolve over time with the input of the professionals to whom we seek to be of service. This ten (10) issue-per-year subscription publication, our expanding resource website, our consulting expertise, and marketing services are all geared towards enhancing your annual giving program. Your feedback will shape the means to the end referenced above. I invite you to submit your comments, story ideas, and suggestions on-line at www.annualfundinc.com.

In this month's issue of Evolution, we are focusing on key infrastructure decisions of segmentation strategies, "best practice" funding models, the initial building blocks within a telefund incentives program, and independent school position responsibilities. Typically, the areas of On-line Giving, Telefund, Direct Mail, and Leadership Annual Giving will be addressed in every issue with the rest of the annual fund spectrum being covered on a revolving basis.

Next month's April '04 issue, marks the beginning of our subscription cycle with only the first two complimentary issues remaining available on-line. If you wish to subscribe to this inexpensive, yet valuable resource, you are invited to do so on-line at www.annualfundinc.com.

As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions on newsletter content and direction. Thank you and we hope that we can be a part of your continuing success.

Mike Westfall, Editor

Segmentation Strategies Pg 2

You are invited to submit your stories and subscriptions on-line at www.annualfundinc.com

Segmentation Strategies

Lybunts, sybunts, current, non-donors, future donors, generational, constituency group, general fund... how should you segment? It is a loaded question and one that can be quite difficult to discern.

Specialized Annual Funds

As a standard rule, the smaller the overall constituency group, the more general an annual fund can be. And, with larger institutions, there is a greater the need for specialized annual funds. Unique personalized segmented appeals based upon prospect affinity, however, are always your best bet.

An interesting marketing trend over the past decade has been the creation of global generalized annual funds. This is in spite of increased donor pressure to know where their money is being utilized. Many donors view annual funds as black holes or extra monies, unless they are properly marketed. For this reason, having a clear case and a well articulated message are paramount to the success of the annual fund effort.

Think about the various constituent groups for which we fundraise. Wouldn't these audiences be better served with specific marketed annual fund efforts on their behalf? Individual colleges/divisions: Work with the deans, principals and development officers to identify tangible benefits and needs of annual fund dollars within each college/division and then market the cases for support of these groups. The cases must be strong, compelling and quantifiable.

Parents: A commonly recognized constituency group, yet a challenge as to for what purpose funds are being generated. Ideally, the "annual" dollars raised should be targeted towards designations that have wide appeal for parents and impact the overall student experience. Student affairs programs are always popular options due to fulfilling both areas.

Faculty/Staff: A tough group, but it can be easier to fundraise from this group if the designations are relevant. While providing options to give back to the college/division, also offer program designations that directly benefit other staff such as scholarships, child development services, etc. Faculty and staff will be much more willing to contribute to areas that impact others, rather than support their employer.

Friends: The target prospects in this group are those who directly benefit from the institution's programs and presence. This is common with medicine programs, but also applicable within communities and other non-traditional populations,

Senior Students: Another tough group, but important, as these are the future donors for the person lucky enough to have your job down the road. Multiple designation options are paramount here. Too many senior programs pick one gift. As soon as the selection of designation focus is made, the majority of seniors are alienated as there is no "one size gift that fits all." We give our alumni options, but many times don't give our seniors options.

Advanced Degree: Do you use the same strategies for both undergraduate affiliated populations and those alumni whose only affiliation with the institution is an advanced degree? This audience does not have the same "warm/fuzzy" as an undergraduate. Your message, approach, signer, designations, and design elements must be unique.

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Segmentation Strategies

Lybunts, sybunts, yada, yada, yada...
With prospects now segmented based upon constituent groups, the next level of segmentation will be based upon when the last gift was made. The annual fund is meeting with development directors and throwing around the terms lybunts and sybunts. Unless the director's have an annual fund background, their eyes will typically glaze over at this point.

That isn't the only issue with using this terminology that is common within the annual fund field. While "lybunt" (last year but unfortunately not this) is useful and telling, you need to think about the term "sybunt" (some year but unfortunately not this). If segments utilize this definition there will be donors in the prospect pool that have lapsed two years, four years, and even twenty years. Does it make sense to solicit them all in the same manner with the same scripts, direct mail text, and ask amounts?

By redefining the prior giving criteria the annual fund will be able to solve the donors vs. dollars focus query, by focusing on both. See the chart below for example.

The segments are based on the timeframe of the gift. This type of segmentation allows for more personalized ask amounts that are more realistic and more likely to be made, hence driving up results. As an educational caveat, if development officers are told that their prospects are split into five segments, A - E, they will intuitively and rightfully discern that "A" prospects are the best prospects.

For additional information on segmentation ideas specific to direct mail, please see page ##.

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Redefining the Prior Giving Criteria

Donor Type	Definition	Ask Strategy
A	Donor within past year	Aggressive Upgrade: 2x; 1.5x; 1.1x; last
B	1-3 Years Lapsed	Average Upgrade: 1.5x; 1.1x; last
C	3-5 Years Lapsed	Renewal: 1x; 3/4x; 1/2x
D	5-plus Years Lapsed	Renewal: 3/4x; 1/2x; $50
E	Non/Future Donors	Participation: $50/Yr of Grad

New AFI On-line Resource

Our website, www.annualfundinc.com, is growing. We are building a robust resource tool for annual giving professionals. Our web team is actively working to make the site one that is content based, with substance winning out over style (though we do want to make it a close race!).

One step towards this end, is the creation of a job postings page specifically targeting annual giving professionals. Whether the position available is a director, assistant director, or telefund related, AFI wants to be an additional forum to attract candidates to your institution. And to help get this feature off to a good start, AFI will post your job listings at no charge through September 2004.

The link noting annual fund job postings on www.annualfundinc.com is currently registering on over 7,000 search engine pages per month. A sample search for "Annual Giving Jobs" on Google(tm) turns up an advertisement marketing this employment-posting feature of Annual Fund Inc.

Contact AFI at 877-AFI-INC7 or via email at AFI@annualfundinc.com for additional information on posting annual fund opportunities within your institution.

Developing an Incentives Program

An incentives program within the Telefund program can greatly enhance caller recruiting and increase caller retention. If your Telefund budget is like most though, there is little in the budget for the purchase of incentives for student callers, nor the professional staff time to secure donated incentives. The lion's share of the budget is designated to wage support; however, there is much that can be done to garner incentives.

Let's focus first on those incentives that will take minimal effort, in most cases just a phone call and/or a meeting.

Institution Licensing Office
Contact the individual responsible for coordinating the licensing process of the institution's logo. This office is responsible for approving external requests to use the institution's logo on merchandise. In most cases, vendors will provide samples to garner approval from your institution. It is these samples that you will want to request be forwarded to your office on a periodic basis. Obviously, the larger the institution, the more samples that will be sent. Keep in mind that most of the samples received will reflect other well-known institutions. This is fine, as it is still a freebie that the callers will appreciate. Sample items can include: clocks, wall art, clothing, and other novelty items.

Bookstores
Set up a meeting with the general manager of the institution's and/or community's bookstore. Seek the donation of general items. In many cases your office will receive discontinued merchandise that isn't moving in the retail sector. The bookstore can then work with their tax advisors to "write-off" the donation to your Telefund.

That takes care of the usual suspects that will require minimal effort. The next level requires much more effort. The prospects now move to golf courses, fast food restaurants, hotels, service stations, sporting event promoters, record stores, video rental stores, and hair stylists. Identify your target vendors by noting advertisers in your institution's newspaper, yellow pages, football program, and also by simply driving within a several mile radius of the institution.

The first challenge to overcome is staffing to oversee the process. While professional staff will ultimately be responsible, the majority of the work should be completed by a Student Incentives Manager. The primary duties of this student are to coordinate and oversee direct mail, telemarketing and personal solicitation of area businesses and vendors for gifts in support of the institution; and to supervise student promotional representatives. The majority of work takes place in the summer months through the use of Promotional Representatives that are asked to come in during day hours to contact area businesses and vendors. Specific scripts are prepared and utilized.

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Telefund Pledge Fulfillment Strategies

The student callers did their job well and secured hundreds, perhaps thousands, of pledges. Will they be fulfilled? Yes, between 70% - 90% of the time. What can be done to increase the fulfillment rate?

1. Set a threshold for which pledges are verified by a student calling manager during the initial phone call. This will combat falsified pledges and allows the donor to hear "thank you" from another student.

2. Take your water bill from home and compare it to the pledge acknowledgment form your annual giving office sends the day after securing the pledge commitment. Do they look similar? The pledge acknowledgment should not look like a bill. Some quick pointers on enhancing the look of the pledge acknowledgment piece.

   a. Develop a standard pledge acknowledgment letterhead with pictures of students & a prominent thank you message.

   b. Personalize the letter text noting gift amount and designation. This re-emphasizes stewardship of their donation.

   c. Have the caller's first name (no last name!) and anticipated graduation year noted as the signatory. This further personalizes the exchange. Whoever processes your pledges can sign the caller's first name prior to sending.

   d. Include a postage paid envelope for low-fulfillment audiences and/or non-donors.

3. Offer an inexpensive premium (see luggage tag article in previous issue at www.annualfundinc.com) to steward a fulfilled gift.

4. Send a pledge thank you postcard to the donor several days after the pledge acknowledgment is mailed.

5. Create timely monthly pledge reminders that are attractive and personalized. Include postage paid envelopes.

6. Develop a system to identify/monitor chronic "non-fulfillers". Exclude them from calling. This will increase the fulfillment rate, while marginally cutting costs.

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Independent School Corner

"Jack of all trades, master of none," so the old adage goes. In many cases within the independent school community, this can ring true. However, strength of infrastructure can overcome the lack of staff power. Infrastructure processes and practices are best if they promote efficiency, i.e. not reinventing the wheel every time.

Let's look at a sample global job description for the independent school development professional with a break down of "infrastructure" strategies in Bold Italics.

Sample Job Description
The director of development, reporting to the head of the school, is responsible for the following:

- To devise and manage a program designed to attract the maximum gift support possible to the institution. This program will include annual fund solicitation; planned giving programs; corporate and foundation proposals; and planning for major capital gifts.

Infrastructure Strategy Items Include: Calendar centered around global activities within each area noted; Marketing materials that are connected thematically and visually with a shelf-life of at least 2 - 3 years; templates for gift card designs, planned giving agreements, and corporate/foundation proposals; Educational materials in each of the areas noted, so that other internal staff can "talk the talk" rather than forward all requests to you.

- To help develop and coordinate all aspects of the major gifts campaign.

Infrastructure Strategy Items Include: Agreed upon case of support consisting of the "why", "when", "where", and "how much"; Marketing materials in support of case; Solicitation tracking templates that reflect progress towards gift for each prospect; Recognition & Stewardship policies/procedures in place and on a set calendar; Key staff trained and ready to go on a visit at a moments notice.

- To keep the head of school and Development Committee informed on a weekly basis of the fund-raising activities of this office.

Infrastructure Strategy Items Include: Reporting templates that compare year to date comparisons, and progress to goal with a standardized delivery method whether via email or memo; Establish easy to understand reporting for committees, that reports from the global to the specific utilizing consistent graphs and charts.

- To develop a plan to increase alumni and parental support of, and involvement in, the institution.

Infrastructure Strategy Items Include: Annual retreat with leadership to plan for upcoming year, i.e. get away from the school and brainstorm; Establish volunteer structure in support of efforts, empowering them to assist in planning process; Establish pillar "annual" events in support of involvement whether it is attendance or investment.

- To create a coordinated publications and printing program which will most effectively communicate with our various constituencies (including the alumni magazine);

Infrastructure Strategy Items Include: Brand marketing materials utilized to create a 2 - 3 year shelf life; Collect "impact" stories that can be easily disseminated when needed; Every couple of years, hire a photographer to add photographs to a photo library to be utilized as needed; Create "educational" advertising templates that communicate the importance of giving, importance of matching gifts, ability to contribute on-line, benefits of gifts of securities, and planned giving opportunities.

- To serve as staff support for the Development Committee of the Board of Trustees, the Parents' Association and the Alumni Association;

Infrastructure Strategy Items Include: Clear group mandate, volunteer roles, and job descriptions; A meeting schedule that is realistic and manageable.

- To oversee processing of all gift income for the purpose of providing receipts and the maintaining of giving records of donors to the school.

Infrastructure Strategy Items Include: Clearly defined audit trail, practice, and procedure; Template acknowledgement forms and processes; Standardized reporting.

- To develop and lead a professional and volunteer staff to carry out the activities of this office.

Infrastructure Strategy Items Include: Clearly defined job descriptions; Defined expected outcomes; Defined "big picture" vision; Reward mechanisms in place

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Job Description Bulleted Elements Source: National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), Morgan Park Academy (IL), ISACS Administrative Services Committee.

Annual Fund Charge-back/Funding Models

Does your annual fund budget come directly from a central budget? Then you are fortunate and do not need to read further. However, if your program is like the majority of annual fund operations that must "charge-back" those served, please continue reading.

Chances are that the charge-back policy is the biggest point of contention of those served. The old adage, "it takes money to make money," can be lost on many, and unfortunately the most expensive dollar raised is the annual fund dollar. The key is to make this "necessary evil," one that is more palatable.

Basic Program Assumptions

- Total Annual Fund Budget: $100,000
- Total Solicitable Alumni Base: 100,000
- Total Annual Fund Revenue: $1,000,000

1. Charge per Contact: The contact rate charge is based upon percentage of contacts via your calling program. Utilizing the program assumptions above, if the contact rate is 50%; the charge-back fee would be $2.00 per contact in order to garner the $100,000 budget. While this seems quite simple and straight forward there are three (3) primary challenges:

a. It is becoming increasingly difficult to contact prospects via the phone. If possible, monitor the average attempts per prospect. You will notice this figure creeping up. If you have the resources to increase attempts, you will be able to maintain current contact levels, thus maintaining budget revenue. If not, however, the contact percentage will decrease and so too will your budget revenue. This will lead to an increase in the per-contact charge, which will lead to more angst from those served.

b. Another factor is the lack of quality data. Monitor the quantity of numbers that are retrieved from the main database that are actually wrong numbers or disconnects. Obviously, these are numbers that can not be contacted and will represent 15% - 25% of the total calling prospect audience. This too will cause the contact percentage to decrease.

c. Timing is a big concern as well. The charge-back occurs after calling, most often at or near the end of the fiscal year. This is problematic due to the annual fund not receiving funding throughout the year, and the constituent groups are either overcharged or undercharged their budgeted amounts as there is no means to guarantee a specific number of contacts.

2. Charge per Prospect: The charge per prospect is a flat fee multiplied by the number of prospects. If there are 100,000 prospects and the budget calls for $100,000, the charge per prospect would be $1.00. This is a more consistent method, and it addresses two (2) of the three (3) challenges above. Ability/inability to contact the prospect won't impact the budget, and the timing is much better with billing being completed at the beginning of the fiscal year. While a better method than charging per contact, there is still one primary challenge:

a. The lack of quality data is once again an issue. Monitor the quantity of numbers that are not retrieved from the main database due to being coded as inactive. Obviously, these are numbers that can not be contacted and will represent 15% - 25% of the total calling audience. This will reduce the beginning prospect counts, thus lowering the total budget revenue generated, lead to an increase in cost per prospect charged, and ultimately, more contention from those served.

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Building an E-Relationship—Securing E-Mail Addresses

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The previous issue of AFI focused on the need for establishing e-relationships instead of focusing on e-philanthropy. The first step on this journey, like all within the annual fund, is data accumulation.

As the use of e-technology advances, a key statistic to know is what percentage of your alumni/friends have active e-mail addresses on file? Just as you know the figures for valid addresses and valid phone numbers off the top of your head, so too will this statistic become ever important. The challenge, of course, is how to go about garnering email addresses.

1. Alumni/Constituent Directory: Completed sporadically or in set intervals, this survey tool can provide the biggest influx of new data, particularly e-mail contact information. Shortly after a recent directory project, an institution with a constituent population of 160,000 garnered more than 60,000 new e-mail addresses.

2. On-line Community/Institution Main Web Page: Though we will examine on-line web strategies in future issues, chances are your institution has a constituent presence on the web. Is there an information form that can be submitted with contact information? The answer should be yes and it should include an e-mail address query.

3. Net-letter/Telefund Partnership: Does the institution offer a monthly net-letter to interested constituencies? If not, this should be developed. If so, this is a great tool to use within the Telefund to offer "something" for nothing. During the rapport building portion of the phone call, callers should ask the prospect if they would be interested in receiving the institution's "net-letter" on a monthly basis in order to stay abreast of what is happening. When the prospect replies positively, the caller garners the e-mail address. Second to the directory, this method will generate the largest number of e-mail addresses.

4. Luggage-Tag Program: Like the stewardship qualities of the net-letter, and covered in our previous issue (available on-line at www.annualfundinc.com), the luggage-tag program provides e-mail addresses from prospects when they send in their business cards to be laminated with an institution's luggage card. This simple method can generate large quantities of e-mail addresses.

5. Free Screensavers & Cursors: Send a postcard to the entire constituent population offering a free screensaver and/or cursors that are unique to the institution. When the prospect goes on-line to garner the freebie, they are asked to provide their latest contact information.

6. Gift Form Formatting: We know... a no-brainer. But, make sure that the gift form materials request e-mail information from prospects. Look into offering the Net-letter on the gift form as well.

7. Data Research Vendors: Around for quite awhile in the areas of address and phone number research, these vendors are now treading into the e-mail research arena. This is good news for annual fund professionals and will provide a valuable resource. The evaluation of the success of this new option will be assessed over time, but will hopefully be promising.

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Direct Mail Ask Strategies

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An organization you've supported in the past solicits you for a donation. You obviously get to pick the amount from their gift card. The choices provided are:

❑ $500 ❑ $250 ❑ $100 ❑ $50.

Which one do you pick? Human nature dictates that most will choose $50, the lowest noted amount. Now, let's assume that your last gift was $100. And, the choices provided are:

❑ $200 ❑ $150 ❑ $110 ❑ Other _____

Which one did you pick this time? Hopefully you picked the $150 or $200. But, if you went with human nature and picked the lowest amount, it is still a 10% upgrade that is the ultimate goal in donor retention.

Personalizing ask-amounts within the direct mail program is quite easy. Within the direct mail data output, make sure that the last gift amount is pulled for each prospect. Utilizing Microsoft Excel, or a similar product, create four (4) columns next to the last gift amount.

- Column 1: Input equation of 2 multiplied by last gift amount
- Column 2: Input equation of 1.5 multiplied by last gift amount
- Column 3: Input equation of 1.1 multiplied by last gift amount
- Column 4: Input "Other _____"

The following are very important steps as now it is time to do some clean up of the ask amounts.

- Set previous gift amount columns to round up to nearest $10
- Sort previous gift amount columns in descending order
- Hand-edit high ask amounts due to prospects' most recent gift amount being too large for an annual appeal, most likely a major gift, by copying and pasting a set gift range ask amount for this high group with a threshold
- Sort previous gift amount columns in ascending order
- Hand-edit low ask amounts due to prospects' most recent small gift amount, normally gifts of under $50, by copying and pasting a set gift range ask amount for this group

Now the data is ready to go with the lowest ask amount for the vast majority of prospects being at least a 10% increase/upgrade.

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Incentives Program *Continued from page 4*

Businesses will support your program for two reasons: tax benefits and advertising opportunities. On the tax-front, only receipt for the description of the item received without assigning a value to the item. The business will assign the value working in concert with their tax advisor. In the advertising arena, you can provide access to students (within your calling center) and to institution advertising venues. Tier your recognition levels by retail value of items contributed. Example uses of group advertisements recognizing support of the program:

Sample Advertising Packages

$750 plus—Football Program, Campus Student Paper, Local Town/City Paper, Telefund Web Page Recognition/Link, Certificate of Appreciation

$500 - $749— Football Program, Campus Student Paper OR Local Town/City Paper, Telefund Web Page Recognition/Link, Certificate of Appreciation

$250 - $499—Campus Student Paper OR Local Town/City Paper, Telefund Web Page Recognition/Link, Certificate of Appreciation

$50 - $249—Certificate of Appreciation, Telefund Web Page Recognition

With the foundation established, we turn now to the solicitation process. A new program requires the first step to be education. Utilize a simple pre-approach direct mail piece that addresses five objectives:

1. Overview of program
2. Description of benefits
3. Request for donation
4. Sets expectation for follow-up phone call
5. Provide copy of sample advertisement

Hopefully the solicited vendors will send in their certificates or donations. This will happen more frequently with renewals once the program is established over a number of years. A brief telefund campaign, utilizing the promotional representatives, is then undertaken. Scripts are tailored to complete four objectives:

1. Description of program
2. Acknowledgment of past giving
3. Advertisement options
4. Set-up incentive pick-up time

Once an agreement is reached, develop a tracking sheet that can be utilized as an agreement. Items to be noted within the agreement include:

- Names of all parties involved
- Total donor assigned value of gift
- Payment period of gift
- Number of incentives
- Advertisement package level
- Any Other Conditions Specified by Donor

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Charge-back Models *Continued from page 7*

3. Charge % of Revenue Generated: With this method of charge-back, the annual fund will "eat what they kill." Again, based on the program assumptions above, the charge-back percentage would be 10% of any fulfilled dollars generated and due to the annual fund thus translating into $100,000 for the annual fund budget. The biggest positive is realized within the constituent groups served as annual fund expenses are no longer a budgeted expense. This is especially appealing in these times of decreasing state support.

While a realistic expectation in the sense of $.10 on the dollar is within the industry threshold, it can be a difficult concept for donors to appreciate. In fact, many institutions will assess a fee upwards of 40% on annual fund generated income. Unlike the non-profit world, where administrative costs are more accepted, donors to higher education have an expectation that 100% of their gift will go to support their designation. And, this can lead to a number of issues.

a. Major gift officers and constituent staff sabotage the centralized annual fund for their group's benefit. Donors will be educated to give directly to the constituent group, rather than through the annual fund program, thus avoiding the "tax." This may help the constituent group in the short term, but will harm the institution's foundation of integrity in the long term.

b. Donor outrage (particularly if the fee is over 20%) will happen more often. This will lead to many letters attempting to educate donors, who will, by the way, still refuse to give.

c. Down economic times will impact fulfilled gifts, which will in turn impact revenue, leading to fewer resources for the annual fund.

The best method, other than an external non charge-back source, of course, is #2 Charging by Prospect. The one caveat, though, is to stay on top of the data. If the annual fund can't pull them, it can't bill for them. Major advantages of charging by prospect include:

- Provides consistent cost base as prospect counts should only increase subtly every year.

- When new costly initiatives are introduced, the costs can be easily spread across the entire constituent group spectrum. For example, an increase of $25,000 in the annual giving budget would increase the cost per prospect in the initial scenario by $.25. Hopefully, realized income would make up for the increase, thus everyone wins.

- The billing process is much easier, as it completed at the beginning of the fiscal year based upon prospect counts as of day one.

Another novel approach is no charge-back at all, but rather a four-month hold back. Some institutions place all secured development dollars into an account that is used to invest in a 3-month CD. At CD maturity, the revenue generated is funneled to the development budget, with 100% of the principal going to the designation of the donor's choice. This is a great win-win alternative to the methods above if the institution has savvy accountant and investment staff.

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Incentives Program

Continued from page 10

The next vital step is in the area of stewardship. It begins with the first personal pick-up, with the incentive manager taking the time to build rapport with the donor. The obligatory thank you letter is next, followed several months later by a holiday greeting card completing the process. The latter begins to pave the way for the upcoming summer renewal appeal.

The best time to lay the foundation for establishing this program, which is to kick off in the summer, is now. Start now to develop materials and procedures utilizing an activity calendar. Future issues of AFI will focus on how to use the secured incentives. Until then, good luck!

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Survey of the Month

Each month AFI will place a survey question on this page that will serve as a peer barometer of climate, practice or strategy. The results of these polls can be used to point out that your program is performing better than peers, in the same boat as peers, or if the third possibility, not shared with your leadership at all!

Submit your answer to the question below to survey@annualfundinc.com. Global results will be posted in the next month's issue (March). Individual answers will be kept confidential. Thank you.

This months question:
As of January 1st, half way point for most, are your annual giving results up, down, or the same? Please note:

Donors/Dollars: Up / Down / Same   % Change

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