



Rules of engagement

You get the best lists you can, come up with a beautiful fundraising proposition and the creative execution is fantastic.

Then it bombs.

There are now so many charities using direct mail to recruit donors that it's hardly surprising the prospects out there are getting more discriminating. The only way nowadays to stand head and shoulders above the other heartrending appeals on the doormat is to ask for something other than money.

We've all witnessed the success (on paper at least) of the ubiquitous survey pack, where prospects are asked a series of in depth questions:

Did you know 98% of the UK population suffer at some point in their lives? YES/NO. Do you consider suffering to be a GOOD THING/BAD THING? Should more money be available to stop suffering? YES/NO. Would you like to give a donation to the work of the Anti-Suffering League? YES (but I will be a high attrition risk)/NO (because I'm incredibly mean).

This is the tenth advert in a series of 16. You can view the others online at www.whitewater.biz

But there is another way.

Engage with people by asking them to make a simple action. A campaigning organisation could ask the recipient to sign a postcard to be sent to a politician. Or it could ask people to write a message of support to one of the beneficiaries of the charity.

It's a different way of engaging but, to be successful, the reader needs to feel that she will make a difference to someone, or the cause.

Once people have engaged with you in this way – once they have a pen in their hand and they're using it to help your organisation – the odds are that they'll be happy to give you a donation while they're at it.

It works in the same way as the survey, but it engages people in a much deeper way, so attrition rates are lower. And, particularly for campaigning organisations, it's the perfect way to express your brand.

If you've got a proposition that people will get angry about, asking for £2 a month won't be enough to engage them – they'll want to scream and shout to their elected representative. Give them the means to do this and they'll be happy to give money too.

**Like to know more?
Engage with me.**

Nick

**Nick Couldry
Creative Director**

nick@whitewater.biz
020 7482 1350

a window into
whitewater