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Maximizing Your End-of-Year Giving in the Final Stretch

Giving Tuesday & Year End | What do we know...

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The Opportunity in Front of You

Here's the beautiful reality: Your donors are ready to give right now.

THE TIMING

- **30% of annual giving happens in December** - This IS the season
- **10-12% happens in the last 3 days of the year** - Dec 29-31 are critical
- **Giving Tuesday (Dec 3):** $3.1B raised in 2023, growing 10-15% yearly
- **December 31st:** The single biggest giving day of the year



The Opportunity in Front of You

WHAT CHANGES IN YOUR FAVOR

- Average gifts are **20-25% higher** than rest of year
- Email open rates **spike 20-30%** - donors are actually looking for you
- **64% of donors** say year-end appeals influence where they give
- **31% of donors** make their largest gift of the year in December



The Opportunity in Front of You

WHAT ACTUALLY WORKS

- **Matching gifts** increase donations by 2-3x (even $5K-10K works!)
- **Personal outreach** converts 5-10x better than mass email
- **ONE compelling story** beats statistics every time
- **Multi-channel approach** (email + text + phone + social) raises 3-5x more



You're not pushing uphill - you're catching a wave that's already building.

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Rethinking Year-End Success

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What Are We Really Measuring?

If your year-end campaign is wildly successful, what would success look like beyond dollars?

Examples:

- 100 new donors added to your base
- 20 new volunteers who became donors
- 3 community partners amplifying your message
- Higher email engagement or followers

The 4 R's of Year-End Success

1. **Revenue:** Gifts and pledges closed
2. **Relationships:** Donors personally thanked or called
3. **Reach:** People newly exposed to your story
4. **Retention:** % of returning donors



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Tactics

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Build Awareness

1. Leverage board and ambassadors for organic reach
2. Ask supporters to repost “Why I Give” stories
3. Co-host a simple livestream or partner with a local business



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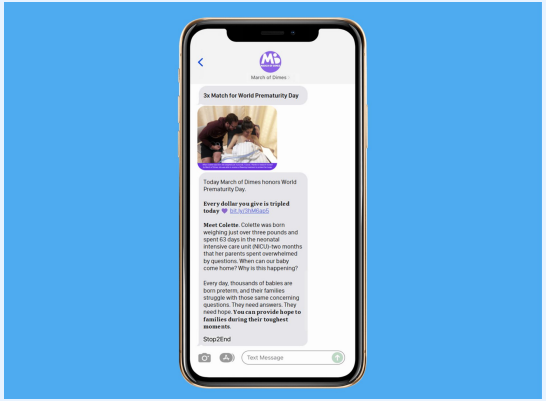
Text Message Power

- **The Strategy**: Update timing
  - **Who to text**: Your top 20-50 donors
  - **When**: November 10-20 (10-20 days from now, BEFORE Giving Tuesday)
  - **What**: Personal gratitude, no ask



Reactivate Lapsed Donors

- **STEP 1**: Pull the list by November 2 (this weekend!)
- **STEP 2**: Segment the list by November 4 (Monday)
- **STEP 3**: Make outreach November 4-15 (before Giving Tuesday prep gets crazy)
- **GOAL**: Personal outreach to 50-100 lapsed donors in the next 2 weeks



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The Matching Gift Multiplier

- **When to secure it**: THIS WEEK (November 1-8)
  - You need this locked in by November 10 at the latest
  - Gives you time to build messaging around it
  - Allows matcher to feel invested before launch



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Major Donor Personal Outreach

- **Timeline**:
  - **Week 1 (Nov 1-8)**: Identify list
  - **Week 2-3 (Nov 11-22)**: Schedule conversations (before Thanksgiving)
  - **Week 4-7 (Nov 25-Dec 20)**: Conduct meetings/calls
  - **Final week (Dec 21-31)**: Follow-up & close



Your Game Plan for the Next 33 Days

WEEK 1 (Nov 1-8): SETUP

- Secure matching gift ($5K+ creates urgency)
- Pull lapsed donor list (gave 2022-2023, not 2024)
- Identify your ONE compelling story for Giving Tuesday
- Test your donate button on mobile

WEEK 2 (Nov 11-15): WARM-UP

- Send warm-up email (gratitude + story, NO big ask yet)
- Text your top 20-50 donors personally (just to say thank you)
- Make calls to lapsed donors (personal invitation back)
- Write all Giving Tuesday content (email, social, video)

WEEK 3 (Nov 18-22): FINALIZE

- Create Giving Tuesday graphics and schedule posts
- Brief board/staff with toolkit (so they can share)
- Schedule your 3 Giving Tuesday emails (7am, 12pm, 7pm)
- Plan real-time updates ("We're 50% to goal!")

DEC 3-31: THE STRETCH

- Three-email sequence: Thanksgiving gratitude (Nov 26) → Mid-Dec impact story (Dec 10-15) → Final appeal (Dec 28-30)
- Major donor personal outreach ($1,000+ deserve phone calls)
- **Dec 31 plan:** Hour-by-hour strategy (this is THE biggest day!)

3 Moves to Maximize Year-End Gifts

Momentum Email Series: 3-part cadence

- *Before* Giving Tuesday → Inspire
- *During* → Urge action
- *After* → Celebrate & invite recurring giving

Matching Gifts & Challenges:

- Leverage urgency (“your gift doubles now”)
- Public goal trackers boost engagement

Gratitude Systems:

- Send personalized thank-you within 48 hours
- Feature donor impact in year-end stories



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The Continuity Plan

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After the Gift: The Donor Journey

Awareness → First Gift → Acknowledgment →

Connection → Retention

3 Ways to Build Continuity

1. **Donor Reflection Email (Early January):** Share outcomes + invite donors to complete a short survey (“What inspired your gift?”).

2. **Impact Story in February:** Report what their gift made possible.

3. **Soft Ask in March:** Invite recurring giving or volunteer engagement.



Board + Staff Roles in Retention

Encourage micro-actions:

- Board members write 3 thank-you notes each
- Staff create 1-minute impact videos
- Executive Director sends 5 personalized “you made this possible” emails



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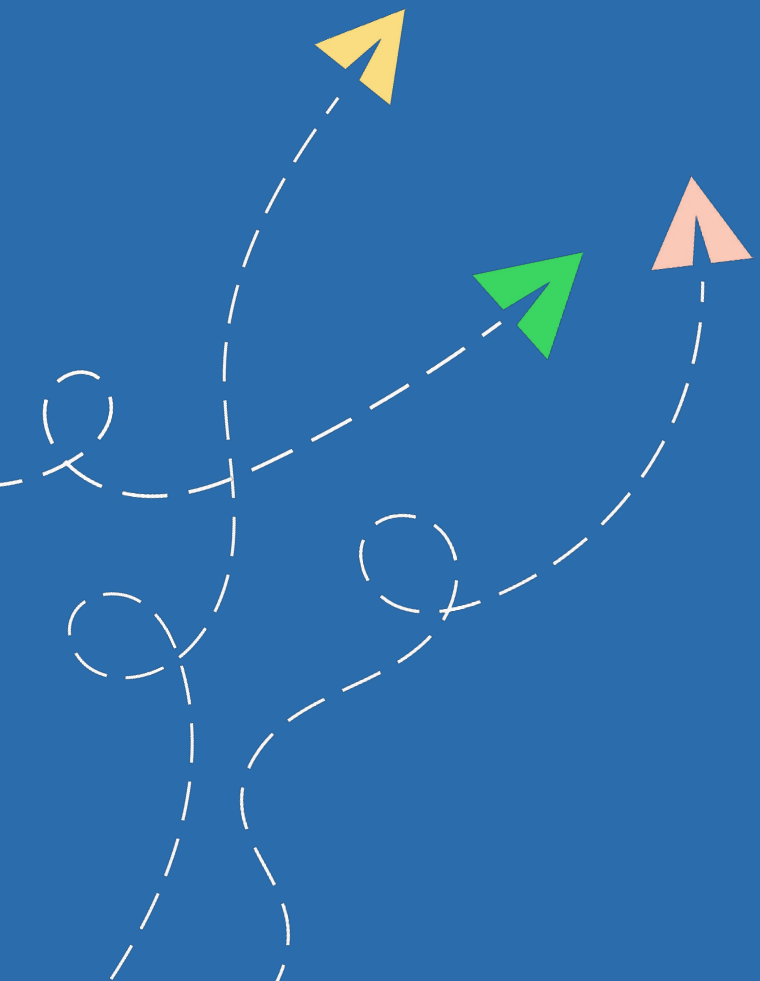
The Connection Map

A. **Who** do we need to connect with (current, lapsed, potential donors)?

B. **How** can we meaningfully reach them (story, event, note, call)?

C. **When** will we do it (pre-Giving Tuesday, mid-Dec, post-gift)?





Resources

- Understanding the Donor Journey
- Donor Stewardship Calendar
- Donor Thank-You Templates
- Stewardship Matrix Template
- Nonprofit Reports Comparison Table
- Common Stewardship Mistakes to Avoid
- Donor Stewardship Checklist

Q&A

Thank you!