



HOW TO CREATE A

NONPROFIT CONTENT STRATEGY & MARKETING CALENDAR

What is Content?

In terms of marketing, content is the core substance used to portray a topic through a variety of mediums or marketing channels.

Content can come in many forms such as video, graphics, and “copy” which is just the words that go into each marketing material.

Essentially, content is everything you produce for your nonprofit such as:

- emails
- fliers
- web pages
- social media
- videos
- etc.



Content Must Tie Into Overall Goals

Unfortunately, most nonprofits fall into the trap of throwing random pieces of content out there because of limited time and staff.

Having a content strategy for your nonprofit is crucial to the success of your marketing and overall goals. If a content strategy is not mapped out, then you cannot identify what is working and what isn't and you could end up spinning your wheels as you try to achieve your mission.

Therefore, a nonprofit's content strategy needs to tie into the overall goals.

If a content strategy is not mapped out, you can't identify what is and isn't working.

Many end up spinning their wheels this way when trying to content market.





Example:

Matching Goals to Content & Marketing

The Goal

If a nonprofit's goal is to increase donations by 20% this year, the person in charge of content and marketing needs to identify ways to assist in this goal.



Data Review

If the nonprofit has historical data, take a look at each marketing campaign from the past.



Did the direct mail campaign result in a lot of donations? How about an email campaign with an [easy online donation tool](#)?

Let's say the email marketing campaign resulted in 350 donations while the direct mail only brought in 50. Once you identify which marketing channels work best for the nonprofit, you can create a content strategy and set smaller marketing goals by medium to support the overall goal.

Subset Goal



In this example, email marketing has worked better so the nonprofit then sets a subset goal of increasing the number of emails in the database by X. Yes, X because you haven't done the research yet to figure out how many emails you need to reach the goal of increasing donations by 20%.

Other Variables



There are variables that may make it hard to specify how many emails you'll need to add to your database such as people who donate larger amounts of money and/or donate more frequently than others.

You'll need to complete the upcoming steps we will outline to come up with a comfortable number to set as the smaller marketing goal. If the nonprofit is brand new or you want to test out some new mediums, no worries, these steps will help everyone create a solid content strategy.



Steps to Create a Nonprofit Content Strategy

Step 01

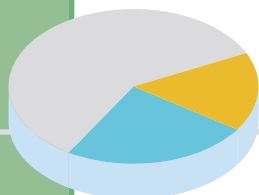
Research Similar Nonprofits & Audit Your Content


Researching is the first step in being able to set specific marketing goals and a content strategy. Research similar nonprofits in your sector and in your community to see what is performing well and what isn't.

Maybe you run a nonprofit that helps farm animals and there is a similar nonprofit two states over that is great on TikTok but struggling on LinkedIn. Take that research and use it as a guide to not put so much effort into a LinkedIn strategy (UG HINT - you don't have to do it ALL. Being successful at a few things is better than being mediocre at all the things).

Don't forget to research industry benchmarks for things like email click through rates and social media engagement rates - you can use these to help set goals as well!

Once you've researched outside your organization, look inward and start auditing your marketing mediums to have full insights into all of the current content.





Don't just look at what was published or released - check the cloud or computer storage for unused content pieces from former employees as well as yourself!

Make sure to also understand the [donor data](#) you have on past marketing campaigns.

Continuing with the goals example above, dig deep into the email campaign that received 350 donations - who was emailed for this campaign? Past donors or a new list? How many total emails did you send vs the 350 that took the time to click through and donate? What was the average donation?

Once you think through the answers, you can do some quick calculations to estimate you need to gather at least 1,143 new email addresses.

Research Findings Example:

35% of emails (350/1,000) donated \$25 on average.

20% increase of \$50,000 = \$10,000
\$10,000 / \$25 average donation = 400 donors
needed to reach goal

400 donors / .35 (rate of emails that donated)
= 1,143 new emails needed

Step 02

Identify Where Your Target Audience Is

Going along with the email vs direct mail example above, you should have a good understanding of who your target audience (aka a persona) is but you need to identify where they are most active and what types of content they prefer.

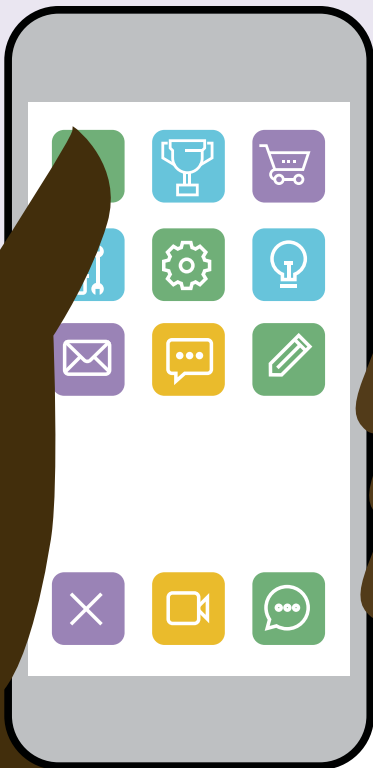
Marketing Channels: (aka Mediums)

- Email
- Direct Mail
- Social Media
- Website
(includes blogs)
- Digital Ads
- Billboards
- Radio
- Television
- In-Person Events
- Press Releases
- Search
(aka Google Ads)
- Podcasts
- Webinars

Types of Content:

- Written
- Video
- Pictures
- Graphics
- Audio

You can identify these by looking at your target audience's demographics, past interactions, and research from similar nonprofit organizations. If the target persona is an adult aged 18-25 with an income over \$50K and likes farm animals, you would probably find that the types of content this person prefers are videos, pictures, and graphics over just audio or written form.





Step 03 Map Out Content by Month & Channel

Now that you've identified where your target audience is and how they prefer to be communicated to, it's time to put it together with your research and map out the content strategy.

First, compile all of the main campaigns your nonprofit runs - things like annual walks, volunteer days, pledge campaigns, and events. Then, think of the different themes, "national days of," and holidays that relate to your cause (I.E. National Pig Day was March 1, 2022).

Next, use this [handy marketing strategy calendar](#) created to help you start mapping out your content by channels and months.

Marketing Strategy Calendar

A helpful and brief calendar format for your nonprofit to use. While you cannot edit this document directly, you can save and edit a copy of this in your own Google Sheets or download it as a Microsoft Excel document for personalization and documentation. From everyone at UncommonGood, we wish you the best in your nonprofit endeavors! Should you ever want help, feel free to reach out or stop by to visit us at www.douncommongood.com

Company
Goal:

B2C
Marketing
Goal

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:
Direct Mail												
Flyers												
Blogs												
Organic Social												
Emails												
Events												
Paid Search												
Paid Social												
Display Ads												

Company Goal: Increase donations by 20% for 2023

B2C Marketing Goal	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	Theme: Winter Safety	Theme:	Theme: Barn Clean Out Day (25th)	Theme:	Theme:	Theme:	Theme: "Adopt" An Animal	Theme:	Theme:	Theme: Pumpkin Drive	Theme:	Theme:
Direct Mail							Adoption Campaign				Giving Tuesday	
Flyers			Volunteer Sign Up				Adoption Campaign			Partner with local stores to collect pumpkins		
1 per month	Blogs	10 Tips for Farm Animals in the Winter	Meet the Animals: Horses		Meet the Animals: Cows				Meet the Animals: Roosters			
Gain 500 new followers by end of year	Organic Social		National Pig Day (1st)	Post pictures from Barn Clean Out Day			Adoption Campaign			Pumpkin Drive reminders		
Increase CTA click rate by 25%	Emails	Blog Share	Volunteer Sign Up Request			3 Vegan Meal Recipes	Adoption Campaign			Pumpkin Drive reminders	Giving Tuesday	
Increase attendance by 10%	Events		Farmers Market Tabling Every Thursday Night							Partner with local stores to collect pumpkins		
	Paid Search	Brand & Nonbrand Awareness	Brand & Nonbrand Awareness	Brand & Nonbrand Awareness								
Collect 300 emails	Paid Social	Facebook Ads Soliciting Donations	Facebook Ads Soliciting Donations	Facebook Ads Soliciting Donations								
	Display Ads	Banner Display Ads	Banner Display Ads	Banner Display Ads								

This marketing strategy calendar is filled in with some sample ideas for our continuous farm animal rescue example to give you an idea of how to get started. Simply save a copy of the document onto your own Google Drive or download it to your computer (Go to file → "Make a Copy" or "Download"). Then feel free to add, delete, or rearrange as needed.

Note - on the first tab labeled "YEAR Strategy," "Marketing Goal" is for the marketing goals that will help a nonprofit reach its overall goal from "Company Goals". You should now be able to make an educated, reasonable goal for each channel that would help with the overall goal of the nonprofit.



The second tab, "Monthly Focus," is more of the standard content calendar or social media calendar you see out there.

Many tools like Pardot and Hootsuite have them built into their platforms, but could be limited to only what that platform is used for (I.E. Hootsuite only preschedules social media so you won't be able to note the day that the press release needs to be sent out or when your first email is scheduled to send).



July 2022

Content Focus:						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					Post Flyers at Partner Sites	
					Fireworks + Animals Graphic	
3	4 4th of July	5	6	7 World Chocolate Day	8	9
		Adopt An Animal	Quote from last year's participant	PSA- Chocolate isn't good for animals	Adopt an Animal Spotlight	
		Featured Animals For Adoption	How to Adopt Online			
		LIVE: w/an adoptor				
		Adopt An Animal Initiative				
10	11	12 Cow Appreciation Day	13	14	15 I Love Horses Day	16
Adopt an Animal Spotlight	Story: Cost of 1 Horse	Featured Animals For Adoption		Vegan Recipes	Facts about Horses	
	Cost of 1 Horse			Adopt an Animal Spotlight		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Instagram	Facebook	Featured Animals For Adoption	Cost of 1 Cow	LIVE: w/an adoptor	Where Your Adoption Money Goes	
			Story: Cost of 1 Cow		Last Chance	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Adopt an Animal Spotlight	Featured Animals For Adoption		Vegan Recipes	Instagram	Facebook
		Blog Share				
31						Email TikTok Instagram Email Press Release
						Facebook Blog Flyers Direct Mail Events

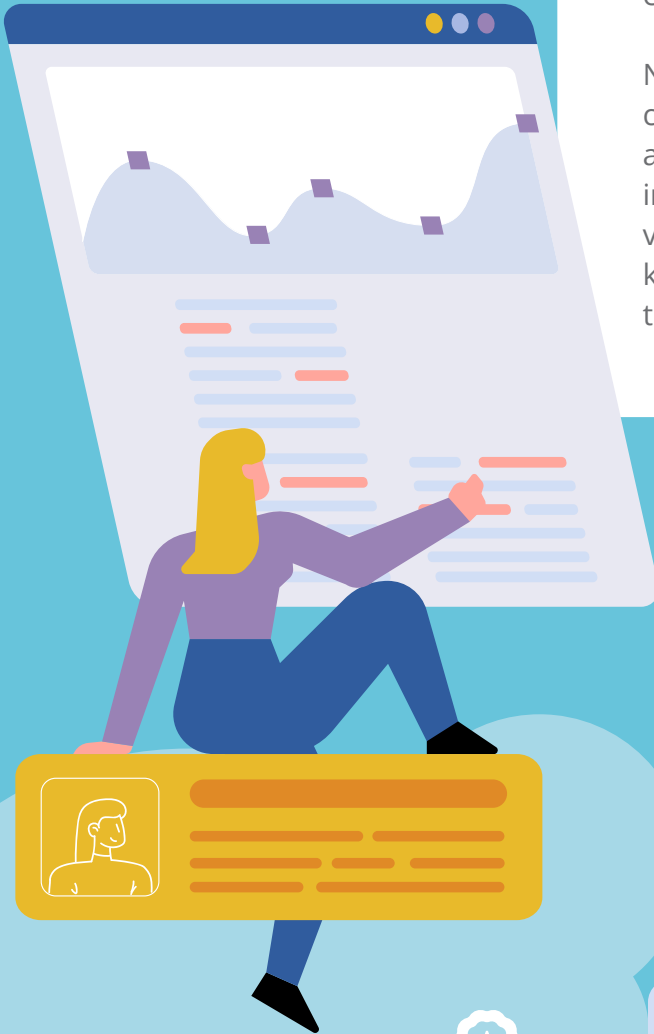
Topic/Event	Platform	Post Caption	#Hashtags	@Mentions	Links	Date	Graphic	Progress
Facts About Horses	Facebook	Did you know that horses eat between fifteen to twenty pounds of hay per day?	#ottahay #hayforhorses #HorseRescueTeam	@HaySurplus	www.hayisforhorses.com	7/15/22	Stacks of hay, horse with bugged out eyes	Copy approved
Horse Gala	Email	Join us for the Ultimate Cowgirl Gathering! Sept 4, 2022 at 6pm	#cowgirlglam #HorseRescueTeam	@HotelBrown	www.eventbrite.com/event/9217845#123	04/01/22	High end country chic	Pending approval for hotel



The third tab entitled “Content Planning,” is where you can actually create the copy and keep track of every single piece of content by day, with multiple items per day having their own line.

The beauty of an all encompassing, online content strategy and calendar is that it is always accessible to your team and easily editable due to the everchanging world of nonprofits.

Nonprofit staff can have multiple roles, so using a cloud-based document to edit together in real time allows you to divide and conquer based on who’s in charge of which campaigns, as well as engage volunteers and board members who might have a knack for video editing or blogging. Which leads us to the next step.



Step 04

Assign Content Creation to Team

All nonprofits vary in terms of size and skill of staff members.

If your nonprofit doesn't have a dedicated marketing team member (or even if it does), assign content creation to the entire team based on knowledge and skillsets. Once you have the basic structure in place and know what the main highlights are for each month or quarter, gather the team together and assign specific tasks.

There are plenty of ways to divvy content creation up, so choose what works best for you, but remember to make sure to have an assigned editor that checks for spelling and a consistent tone of voice.

Need a tool to help with content creation?

UncommonGood's Design Studio has hundreds of thousands of ready-made, editable templates and high-resolution photos right at your fingertips.



The Three Rs of Content Creation

Keep in mind that you don't have to always create new content - you can repromote, refresh, and repurpose content you've created in the past!



Repromote

Did you write a blog last year about a topic that is popular again? Take the link and post it on your social media channels or blast it out in an email.



Refresh

Notice that the nonprofits' paid social ads experienced a dip in performance? Refresh the ads with updated photos or a simple copy change to peak people's interest again.



Repurpose

Did the most recent Facebook Live Q&A session receive some thought provoking questions that you think others should know the answers to? Grab some quotes and pop them into a social media graphic or write a blog about them.



Analyze Results

Once you get the content strategy in motion, you need to figure out a consistent time to track the results of each piece of content so that you can adjust the strategy as time goes on.

Best practices are to always test a specific channel (and vendor if you are doing paid ads) for at least 3 months.

That means if you run a paid social campaign on Facebook, you need to give it three full months before making a decision to cancel the ad or tweak it. This is also when you should compare against the industry benchmarks you researched on a monthly basis.

However, please take them with a grain of salt as most benchmark companies group all the nonprofits together when in reality a small farm animal rescue with fewer but highly engaged social media followers will perform differently than a large blood bank nonprofit with thousands of followers who are not engaged.

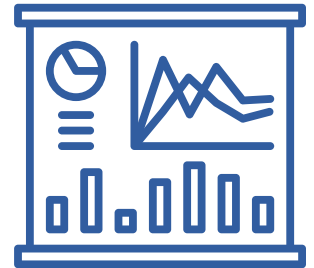
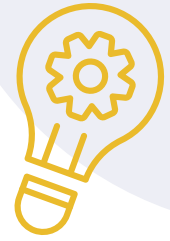
Best practices are to always test a specific channel (and vendor if you are doing paid ads) for at least 3 months.



Reality Check

As you know, the world of nonprofits is always changing, so be ready to adjust your strategy and tweak your content calendar as you go! Don't be afraid to reshare relevant third-party content such as news articles relating to your cause or a picture that a volunteer tagged you in if you need to fill a gap - just don't make it a habit.

Remember, it's better to take the time to plan things out on a monthly or quarterly basis and be able to move things around than be scrambling at the last minute to produce some content or go a week without anything.



About Us

UncommonGood is a cloud-based software solution that helps nonprofits do more good every day by eliminating inefficiencies and providing nonprofits with modern technology.

UncommonGood was founded on the idea that nonprofit organizations should have access to the same high-quality tools and resources as for-profit companies, without having to spend half their budget on them.

By providing an all-inclusive platform for nonprofits to manage their operations, marketing, and fundraising efforts, UncommonGood enables nonprofits to focus more on what matters, doing good.

