

Chapter 10

Big Measurement Lessons from a Small
Budget Campaign: Case Study
Shonali Burke



Lack of budget is one of the most frequently cited reasons for abysmal PR measurement (or the complete lack thereof). But if a nonprofit can do it on zero-to-no budget, that stops being an excuse.

I give you Oxfam America's (OA) International Women's Day (IWD) campaign.

The charge

We were asked to provide digital support for the campaign; specifically, to engage bloggers with the goal of raising awareness for the campaign and the work that OA does to empower women around the globe.

Since OA already has a robust social media presence, our task was not to add to its social media plan, but to supplement it via blogger outreach. In other words, good old-fashioned PR, but in a 21st century setting.

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Why I ACT FAST
I did not realize how much I am part of something bigger than myself in my own little state of Wisconsin.
— Rebecca Stevens, CHANGE Leader, St. Norbert College

Action = Results
\$21,981,000
Total amount Oxfam America supporters donated for Haiti earthquake relief, which helped Oxfam deliver essential aid to more than 440,000 people

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52,085 people like Oxfam America.
Diana Nancy Geoff

THE ISSUE
Whether they're coming together to fight climate change, or starting their own businesses through savings and lending groups, women often lead on the solutions that help people overcome poverty.
All of us—women and men alike—can help by supporting women's efforts to claim their legal rights, live free from violence, earn a decent income, get an education, grow food for their families, and make their voices heard in their communities and beyond.

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Equality for women
Oxfam works through local partner

Celebrate International Women's Day
Celebrate women who make a difference
In many countries, International Women's Day is an occasion to honor and praise women for their accomplishments. This **International Women's Day—March 8, 2012**—help Oxfam America celebrate women who are making a difference in the fight against hunger and poverty.

Organize your own event
Host an International Women's Day award ceremony
Know a woman who's making a difference in your community? Honor her with Oxfam's award. [Get started here.](#)
» See all events

Take action online

And our timeframe? Just a month, from start to finish.

The objectives

Since every good campaign begins with the end in sight, our discussions led us to agree on our objective: to pitch and secure posts featuring or highlighting the 2012 IWD campaign, that specifically asked readers to:

- send an OA 2012 IWD eCard,
- present OA's downloadable 2012 IWD award to a woman who had inspired them, or
- write their own blog post to promote IWD 2012.

Or, of course, any combination of the above.

The end-goal was to secure as many new constituents to OA's eCommunity as possible, since these are the people OA can activate when advocacy is needed.

And as they opted in (hopefully) to be communicated to by the organization, OA would be able to convert them to evangelists for OA's work and donors to the organization.

What's measurable?

Here is where it wasn't easy to begin with. The eCard initiative was new for 2012, so there wasn't a benchmark, say for 2011, to set goals against. The downloadable award was also completely new (that we created for OA, based on a printable version OA had already created) – same problem.

But here's what we did know: based on a similar initiative in 2011, where OA asked people to upload photos to a photobook, the organization secured 261 new members to its eCommunity.



And in 2011, there were seven blog posts on the campaign that had been tracked.

So I figured at least a 25% increase on both fronts – the eCommunity front, as well as the post front – would be a reasonable goal to set.

The big lesson here, of course, is that when you don't have a benchmark, it's really tough to set measurable objectives. And it takes time to look at the data you have, even if they're limited, to figure those out. So start doing this as soon as you can.

The background work and outreach

Any good campaign is grounded in research, so that's where we began.

OA already knew that women, particularly urban women, are an important audience for them. Then there was the fact that the actions we hoped people would take were digital actions.

Using a variety of resources and a lot of sweat equity, we created outreach lists of “mommy bloggers,” women in the tech and entrepreneur community, influencers in the area of nonprofit/social good, social media influencers, and some general outlets that popular with the social media crowd and women in general (e.g. Mashable). We netted out at about 245 outlets on our target list.

We also did a lot of background work to create:

- A one-pager of talking points, adapted from a broader social media messaging document OA had created for the campaign, to be provided to bloggers on request;
- A more detailed informational document for bloggers, that included links to photo and video resources;
- A sample post for bloggers, that included anchor text, which was included in #2 above.

And then we pitched.

The results

We secured 42 blog posts from a range of outlets, including Mashable, Mom Bloggers for Social Good, Beth’s Blog, Tootzypop and Spin Sucks; this was a significant increase over the 2011 online coverage (7 posts... so that’s, what, 600%?). According to OA, these contributed to nearly 3 million social brand impressions on March 8th, a “record for Oxfam America” (their words).



Almost 2,000 (1,194) senders sent slightly over 2,000 (2,044) eCards to more than 5,000 (5,515) recipients.

The eAward was downloaded approximately 1,000 times between March 7 and March 10.

And the big one: OA secured 752 new constituents to its eCommunity via the eCards. Comparing that to 261 for 2011, that’s a 288% increase.

Because we asked OA to keep us posted on what was happening on the back-end, we learned that:

The top 28 traffic sources (defined as driving five or more visits) to OA’s eCards page included 14 of the 42 blog posts we secured; so blog placements, many of which included the anchor text we had included in our pitches and the sample post, were a significant driver of traffic to that page

There was a strong correlation between the publishing of the blog posts and search traffic via keywords such as “international women’s day ecards,” “women’s day ecard,” and so on.

There’s nothing fancy about this measurement, and it was done on no budget at all – but it showed results not just in terms of outputs, but outcomes... which is ultimately what we must be working towards.

And if Oxfam America could do it... so can you.

Shonali Burke's Top 3 Measurement Tips

- ✓ Agree on measurable objectives (to say increase awareness is not an objective)
- ✓ Agree on measuring criteria and methodology (budget does not always allow for a research company to research a campaign and the impact). And remember to measure all platforms.
- ✓ ROI – the impact of on the target audience vs the spend on the campaign. (ROI is not about the sales or the impact on the bottom line it is about the reputation, the target audience perceptions / media perception changes and influences)



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