



## **The Six Dynamics Shaping the Future of Fundraising**

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Good Morning. I really appreciate the opportunity to spend the next hour sharing some ideas with you about where our work as fundraisers is taking us. There's a lot going on out there and it's good from time to time to sit back and see if we can make sense of it.

But, before I start, I want to introduce you to two people in the audience. I'm not going to ask them to stand because they might be embarrassed. But, I want you to know a little bit about them.

One is a 57-year-old direct marketing manager who works for a health charity. She has been doing direct mail fundraising for most of her career, moving every 5 or 6 years from one organization to another. And, right now, she's sitting in her chair asking herself "Do I really have to figure out all of this Internet stuff before I retire?"

The other person I want to point out is a 26-year-old account executive at a New York-based online agency. He created his first website at 17, has mad skills when it comes to Flash animation, and he's sitting there saying "Oh my God, this guy is going to talk about direct mail and I could care less."

Together, these are the two most dangerous people in direct marketing today. Here's why. Neither one of them is up for the real challenge we all face.

For the next several years, our task is to navigate a path between a traditional fundraising system that is slowly losing its power – and an emerging fundraising future not yet fully formed.

It's heady stuff when you think about it. We get to practice our craft in a remarkable period of transition. And our actions will help shape a whole new era of fundraising.

But, along with that opportunity comes the challenge of living these next few years with one eye on how fundraising works today and one eye on how it's going to work tomorrow.

We have to move from a fundraising present that's not quite adequate to a fundraising future that's quite here -- without falling into the gap in between them.

Denying the future like that fifty-something direct marketing manager wants to do won't get us very far. But, neither will ignoring the present the way that twenty-something account exec does.

We've got to work simultaneously at two tasks. The first is working with incredible energy to keep direct mail as vibrant as we can for as long as we can.

Because here's the harsh reality. If we don't keep today's direct mail fundraising vibrant, it will stop supporting our organizations long before we have a viable alternative.

At the same time, of course, we have to deeply engage in shaping the future of fundraising – new channels, new attitudes, new habits of mind, new patterns of behavior.

We have to keep moving forward, never getting so far ahead of ourselves that we place a burden on an emerging fundraising paradigm that it can't yet carry.

It's going to be a fascinating journey.

We'll have to rely on our judgment, on our experience, and on one another. Clever blog posts from Seth Godin won't save us. Uninformed “Why can't we do what Obama's doing?” questions from our board members and CEOs won't guide us.

It's really up to us. So, let's talk this morning about how we pull this off.

Today, I want to talk about six dynamics and how they're changing the way we practice fundraising now and the way we will practice it in the future. Let's start by looking at one of the most intriguing fundraising stories of 2008. Regardless of our political preferences, as fundraising professionals, we have to be fascinated by the record-setting grassroots fundraising of Barack Obama's campaign.

Some of what Obama has achieved is unique to a history-making presidential campaign. Some of it foreshadows the future of fundraising in a broader sense.

But, one thing is for certain. The Obama campaign is demonstrating one of the most fundamental dynamics in the internet-fueled Era of Engagement: In the new era, it's not just about finding donors, it's about making yourself findable.

### **Era of Engagement Dynamics:**

#### **#1: Building lists isn't just about finding donors, it's about making yourself findable.**

The idea that fundraising starts with going out and finding donors is built right into our language. We have donor acquisition campaigns. We go prospecting for new donors and supporters. We think about how much money to devote to list building.

But, in the emerging era of engagement, it's possible – in the right circumstances – for people to find us. Barack Obama is in the right circumstances – big time. He has an attractive case for engagement in a high-profile, history-making campaign. And the demographics of his core political support match almost perfectly with the demographics of those most deeply engaged online.

The success of the Obama campaign is truly stunning. He is raising tens of millions of dollars every month. He has nearly 2 million donors and a list of online supporters that, by the end of this campaign, will almost certainly number in the 8 to 10 million range.

Let me give you a quick measure of what that means.

I'm going to draw my examples from the Democratic side of the political spectrum – not just because that's one of the fundraising arenas in which I work, but also because that's where – so far at least – grassroots fundraising has changed most dramatically.

- \* In the 2000 presidential election, Al Gore and the Democratic Party had a small donor base – almost all direct mail-derived – of 500,000 people. That meant the Gore campaign was in direct marketing contact with about 1 out of every 100 of the people who eventually voted for him.
- \* By 2004, the success of Howard Dean and then John Kerry changed all that. Democrats in 2004 had a direct marketing base of some 3.5 million people. So they went from being in direct contact with 1 out of 100 Democratic voters to 1 out of every 17.
- \* In 2008, depending both on how big Obama builds his file and how high voter turnout goes in November, Obama will likely be in direct marketing contact with 1 out of every 6 of his eventual voters.

From 1 in 100 to 1 in 6 over just two elections.

You don't have to be a political strategist to imagine how profoundly that direct marketing shift alters the way presidential campaigns are waged.

**But, here's the most remarkable fact about Obama's success. He didn't go out and find those millions of supporters. They went out and found him.**

And that defines one of the most important shifts from today's fundraising to tomorrow's. We're moving from a system where success depends almost totally on our ability to find donors to one in which making yourself findable by donors is critically important.

It's not just happening in politics. Those of us who are engaged in international development and emergency relief saw exactly this same dynamic when the tsunamis hit and when Katrina happened. Literally millions of people reached out and – in a matter of days -- made first-time donations to organizations they had never before supported.

The Internet plays two overlapping, but distinct, roles here.

First, in situations where potential donors are highly motivated to act, they now can do so without prompting from the cause or organization they wish to support.

But, second – and just as important – the Internet all but eliminates the gap between the impulse to donate and the opportunity to act on that impulse. It used to be that, when an emergency hit, some of us would get an urgent direct mail appeal ten days later. Now, when a crisis happens, all of us have the opportunity to immediately go online and help.

Still, if you're not in the business of responding to international emergencies and you're not running for President, what does all of this mean?

How should it change the ways we work?

First, all of us have to think about making ourselves findable.

Let's imagine a person Googling to learn about the topics your organization works on. In tactical terms, there are three steps any organization can take to make itself findable:

- 1) You can use search engine optimization – a series of techniques for making it more likely that your name pops up high on the list when that search takes place.
- 2) You can invest in search word advertising to guide people doing relevant searches to your site.
- 3) Perhaps most important of all, you can make sure that the experience of a person coming to your site is one that draws the person in – turning a casual curiosity into a longer, more meaningful experience. There's little use in leading people to your site only to essentially drive them away when they get there.

But, this whole “people can find us” dynamic also has a big impact when we use direct mail and other techniques to go out and find them. Just think how much a potential donor's experience is changing.

It used to be that direct mail was the only game in town. It was the only real source of detailed information about the work a group was undertaking – and responding to a mailing was the only practical way to offer your financial support.

But now, people can tool around online looking for information. They can engage other people in conversations about your group and the quality of its work. And, if they want to support you, they can do it without ever writing a check, sealing an envelope, or finding a stamp.

It's only logical that direct mail communications whose style, length, substance, tone and time frame made sense before might not make sense any longer. A big part of keeping mail vibrant is keeping it connected to people's larger experiences.

**But, all of us – myself included – are too often creating direct mail packages and sending them out into a world that no longer exists.**

Except for the oldest generation of direct mail donors – a group I will discuss in more detail in a minute – we have to be aware that the Internet has deeply affected how people receive the direct mail we send out.

In fact, for most direct mail donors, the biggest impact of the Internet so far has not been to shift their giving from mail to online. It has been to shift the way in which they receive and react to direct mail communications within that medium.

If we want direct mail to remain vibrant over these coming years, we're going to have to ask ourselves some tough questions:

- Does it make any sense to write and design our direct mail as if we're mimicking personal correspondence when many of the people we're writing to have essentially no experience with writing or receiving personal letters?
- Is it smart to keep writing lengthy direct mail letters ignoring the possibility that emails and the whole online experience have redefined people's sense of appropriate length?
- What does it mean to create a timely direct mail message now that people learn and digest up-to-date information long before a direct mail letter can ever deliver it?

Confronting these kinds of questions and testing our way to the right answers is the only way we can keep direct mail as vibrant as it has to be for as long as it has to be. Continuing to practice it as if nothing has changed is tantamount to waiting around for direct mail to die. And that's the point I really want to get across today.

If we practice direct mail as if none of these changes we're talking about are taking place, it will quickly lose its power. But, if we keep innovating, updating, and re-examining everything we do, then mail can play the vibrant role we need it to play as we move forward.

And I'm not just talking about our creative approach to mail.

We need new list strategies, new analytical tools, new ways of combining mail with other channels to move donors up the ladder of commitment.

Here's one example. All of us are constantly in search of strong lists to mail inside our donor acquisition programs and we scour the universe for any sign of a hot new donor or subscriber list.

But there may be an entirely new path to strong-performing lists that we're ignoring. The wealth of data we now have available on people's demographic characteristics and consumer behavior makes it possible to take a voter file or other broad list as a base and use modeling to pull out from that list the people most likely to respond to our offer.

That's the kind of innovation we would have invested a lot of time and energy in back when direct mail was all we had to rely on for building our lists.

But I worry that we tend to pursue that kind of innovation less vigorously now because of the notion that direct mail is on its last legs and internet salvation is just around the corner.

It could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Direct mail without new ideas about creative presentation, package formats, list sources and analytical tools will, of course, fail us.

That's why – conscious of how the Internet is changing the direct mail experience – we have to keep applying some of our best minds, best thinking, and hard to part with resources to developing the next generation of direct mail strategies, tactics and program designs.

## **Era of Engagement Dynamics:**

### **#2: The shift from a tight circle of donors to a looser circle of engagement.**

That brings me to the second big dynamic that is shaping this new Era of Engagement we're entering. And that's the shift from focusing on building a relatively tight circle of donors around our organizations to building a bigger, but also looser circle of engagement.

I like to tell people that direct marketing fundraising – for all of our sophisticated strategies, smart creative work, and clever tactics – really comes down to keeping two numbers in balance. It's all about how much it costs us to acquire a donor and how much value we can extract from that donor over time.

Literally everything we do is, at the end of the day, aimed at moving those two numbers in the right direction. In donor acquisition, we control our costs, try to bump up our average gifts, test for packages that can raise our percentage response all with the goal of lowering our cost per donor.

On the other side of the equation, we develop donor retention strategies, work at upgrading our donors, use monthly giving, donor cultivation techniques and so on – all aimed at extracting the highest possible value over time from the donor once we have acquired him or her.

Traditional direct mail has – for the most part – been based on a model that tolerates a high cost in exchange for high value. We pay a fair amount of money to get a donor on our list and, on average, we extract a pretty high income per donor over time. I might pay \$30 to acquire a donor, but I know that donor will likely be worth two or three times that over the next 24 months.

In other words, we build a tight circle of donors around our organizations with an expectation that – again, on average – those donors will be quite valuable to us over time.

That's a strikingly different approach than most smart online list building strategies. Online, we create a broad circle of engagement getting as many people to gather around our organization as we can – conscious of the fact that many of those connections will be loose ones and aware that the income per name acquired will be quite small compared to a direct mail file. So, while I paid \$30 for that direct mail donor, I might only pay \$3 or \$4 for that online name.

We're still dealing with those two unavoidable numbers – the cost of acquiring a name and the lifetime value. But, we're solving the equation in a very different way – paying less to acquire a name and expecting less “value” per name in return.

Of course, it's not just about the cost of acquisition. One of the key differences here is that there is very little expense involved in staying in touch with an online supporter compared to the expense of staying connected with a direct mail one.

Remember those millions of names we talked about that are gathering around Barack Obama's campaign? Well, here's something else to remember – the single biggest cohort on that list will be people who signed up and never took another action.

Obviously, the Obama campaign doesn't want that to be so. But, they can be stunningly successful with it being so because a) they haven't paid some enormous cost per name to build the list and b) they're not paying an enormous amount to stay in touch with all those inactive people.

There's one more way of looking at this whole "circle of engagement" question that I always find useful.

It's about the distinction between what we might call an organization's natural base of support and its technologically achievable one.

Say you're a local food bank in a medium-sized city with an adult population of 750,000 and you have a direct mail list of 2,000 donors. Is that because there are only 2,000 people in your city who would be willing to financially support your work?

Of course not. It's because – given the available lists, skills and resources – you've only been able to efficiently identify 2,000 people from a natural base of support that is many times larger than that.

The power of the Internet is that it holds the potential to unlock another huge chunk of your natural base of support.

Or, put it back in the context of presidential politics. I told you that Al Gore and the Democratic Party had a direct marketing base of 500,000 names and Barack Obama could conceivably end up with one of 10 million names.

That's not because 20 times as many people are willing to step forward for Obama compared to those who did so for Gore. It's because of the two dynamics we talked about.

Al Gore had to go find each of those 500,000 people and recruit them. Barack Obama had to make himself findable by people looking for him. And Al Gore had to build a tight circle of productive donors around his campaign. Barack Obama has the opportunity to create a much broader circle of engagement around his campaign.

So, what does all this mean for those of us in this room?

It means we should all think about the gap between our natural base of support and the one we've been able to build – and we have to keep asking ourselves if we're missing opportunities to narrow that gap.

But, it also means we have to be flexible and nimble enough to hold different – and somewhat contradictory – list-building models in our heads. We don't have to choose between building that tight circle of donors or that broader circle of supporters. We can do both – as long as we keep straight who we're talking to and why.

The bottom line is we have to be able to move around inside a much more complex fundraising system than the one many of us grew up in.

And that brings me to the third dynamic shaping the future of fundraising

**Era of Engagement Dynamics:**  
**#3: Within the circle of engagement, people move fluidly  
back and forth across channels  
and up and down in their level of engagement**

You know that circle of engagement we've been talking about? There's a lot going on inside of it. People are moving from one channel to another. That direct mail donor you recruited in June just decided he's doing all his year-end giving online in 2008.

Turns out the online donor who came to you unannounced during an emergency only gives through the mail when it's not an emergency.

The person who signed your online petition would become a monthly donor if only you had thought to call her up and ask.

And just to make it a little more complex – lots of folks are gathering information on one channel and acting on another.

There's the direct mail donors who don't write a check until they look you up using Charity Navigator's online tool. And then there are the folks who got your mail appeal and decided it was easier to hop online to make the gift.

And people aren't just moving back and forth across channels. They're moving up and down in their level of engagement as well.

The good news is there's more and more information available on how people are acting and reacting. The bad news is most of us don't yet have the tools to track the complex movement of people across channels.

It is taking database firms and E-CRMs an unforgivably long time to simply integrate online and offline data so that we have the basic data set we need. And our sense of file segmentation has, quite honestly, failed to keep up with reality.

The truth: Our donors and supporters move much more fluidly across channels than we do. And we've got to close that gap.

I serve as the creative director of my firm and spend a great deal of my time working on messaging and copywriting. So, I'm naturally inclined to see a strategic problem from the creative angle first.

But, I have to tell you that I think the most exciting opportunities and the most urgent needs in fundraising today are in the area of analytics and program design that flows from that analysis.

The strongest direct marketing programs of the next few years are going to be the ones that learn to harness the wealth of data we have available to us and use it in a compelling way to guide the planning and execution of their programs.

As people move around inside that circle of engagement, we've got to get a lot better not only at tracing their movement, but at guiding it in directions that lead to stronger relationships.

Especially online, it's certainly not because we're lacking the data. From web analytics to email metrics, we've got a wealth of information available. But, we don't yet have all the tools or – just as important -- habits of mind to make actionable use of all that information and that's especially true when we're talking about cross-channel movement.

Let me give you one example that we'll all be grappling with over the next few months – year-end giving.

I think it's fair to say most of us have seen movement – even among confirmed direct mail donors – towards more online year-end giving. So, we're conscious of this interplay

But, really good analysis could refine our strategies in important ways.

- \* How heavily should we promote online giving inside our year-end mail appeals – and how much, if at all, does it detract from producing mail responses?
- \* Are there some parts of our file where this cross-channel promotion works and others where it is counter-productive?
- \* Can we use the online channel at year-end to upgrade people's gifts since most evidence is that an individual makes a larger donation online than he or she does through the mail?
- \* How much of the seemingly unprompted year-end traffic to our website really driven by email or direct mail appeals?

Detailed analysis ought to be informing and guiding the answers to these kinds of strategies. And cross-channel movement should be embedded in all of our longer-term analytical tools as well. For example, it's much more informative to produce a lifetime value report that breaks down subsequent value by the channel on which it was produced.

I don't want to just know that a cohort of donors produced \$100 per donor over the course of a year. I'd like to know that \$60 of that came through the mail, \$30 online and \$10 over the phone.

The more our analytic tools can tell us how and why people move around inside that circle of engagement, the better we'll be able to guide that movement in directions favorable to our fundraising.

That brings me to one of the big influences on how people move around and that's generational values and behavior patterns.

### **Era of Engagement Dynamics:**

#### **#4: The generational and technological shift from obligation to excitement**

So far, we've talked a lot about technological changes and their impact on the future of fundraising. But, the sparks really start to fly when shifts in generational values and technology intersect and reinforce one another. And that's exactly what's happening now.

One way to describe it is as a shift from gifts of obligation to gifts of excitement.

In a classic direct mail program of 5 or 10 years ago, routine gifts of obligation formed the foundation of a fundraising program and what we might call gifts of excitement were the “icing on the cake.”

By gifts of obligation I mean donations that aren’t sparked by an immediate provocation to act, but rather by a general sense of goodwill towards an organization. The donor isn’t giving because she knows that, at this very moment, there’s a “can’t wait” need that has to be addressed.

The gift is a broader and less specific act of endorsement of the full body of an organization’s work and mission.

Over time, the balance has shifted between obligation and excitement. The gifts of obligation have tended to recede, making gifts of excitement – donations sparked by and dependent on an immediate and compelling case – far more central to a program’s success.

Some of this shift is driven by technology. People just have more opportunities to make gifts of excitement, so they naturally gravitate towards them – the same way they always would have if they had the opportunity.

But, generational values are also at play. Think about direct mail donors over the age of 65 – a huge portion of most direct mail-based programs – as the rough equivalent of what Tom Brokaw calls “the greatest generation.” They’re people raised on a sense of duty. It is embedded in their genetic code.

Technologically speaking, these 65-plus direct mail donors are the last generation of Direct Mail Diehards. Half of them aren’t online at all and a good portion of the half that are online are there for very limited check my stocks, email my grandchildren purposes.

There’s no multi-channel strategy available for dealing with these folks. But there is a big risk that as the center of gravity inside a direct marketing program gravitates towards the online channel, the direct mail conversation with DM Diehards will become less robust.

Indeed, letting our relationships with these donors fall through the cracks as we turn our attention to younger audiences and new fundraising possibilities is one of the biggest risks we face. And, it’s a risk aggravated by this simple fact: We’ve all got Baby Boomers and Internet-savvy twenty-somethings on our staffs. But, most direct marketing programs don’t have any representatives of this DM Diehard generation, meaning we have to put some extra effort into keeping attuned to them.

Bump down a generation and you meet the Baby Boomers who are now roughly between the ages of 45 and 65. Obligation isn’t their thing. Relevance is. So, “you have a responsibility to do this” appeals don’t really connect with them. But, they will make donations on causes they believe in without necessarily needing the spur of a “big moment.”

Technologically – as in so many other ways – the Boomers are stuck in the middle. They’re still reachable by mail, but also available online. However, in contrast to younger Internet-immersed audiences, they are comfort-zone users of the Internet – active online, but only within a safety net that doesn’t trigger their technology limitations.

Jump down another generation and we find those Internet-immersed folks. They've grown up online and live there quite comfortably. And they're the ones who are breaking the traditional life cycle of a donor. In other words, these folks are never going to evolve into the technological habits and philanthropic values of their parents.

Duty? Forget it. Relevance? To a degree. But, the real watchword for these donors is excitement. They are used to having the world at their fingertips and to reacting in the moment to whatever is in front of them. And that defines their giving style.

They can act with incredible passion in a high impact moment. But, when things cool down, expect them to pull back until another big moment comes along.

Obviously, our direct marketing appeals would be a more effective if we targeted them by generation – invoking duty, relevance and excitement each in its appropriate place.

It's not always an easy task. Sometimes, we're not certain about the age makeup of our audiences. Other times, file size and cost considerations get in the way.

So, instinctively, most programs let variations by channel serve as an approximation for generational differences. When we write a direct mail letter, we assume we're writing to the DM Diehards and hope our message won't be too far off target for Baby Boomers.

When we write an email or design an online campaign, we aim for some mid-point between comfort zone online Boomers and younger Internet-immersed audiences.

The evidence so far is that splitting the difference in the mail works a lot better than doing the same thing online. In some ways, Baby Boomers who choose to connect through the mail rather than online are "old before their time" parallels to the DM Diehards. That makes them fairly comfortable with messages that speak most directly to the older audience.

The real challenge on the direct mail side is the one I've mentioned already. We have to make sure that direct mail efforts don't take a back seat to online ones in terms of energy and emotional investment. A direct mail conversation that is vibrant and energetic will probably speak effectively to both Boomers and 65-plus donors. One that is not thought through or invested in will speak to neither.

Online, it's a different story and I think we've got to be a lot more careful. An online campaign directed at the Internet-immersed audience can easily and quickly drive online Boomers out of their cherished comfort zone. And, by contrast, an online campaign that speaks to the limited online repertoire of the Baby Boomers can seem lame and muted to younger, more Internet-savvy audiences.

But, no matter what channel we're operating on – we have to make certain that we're lining up with the dominating value of the generation we're targeting – from duty to relevance to excitement. Here, we can learn a great deal by watching the work and methods of commercial direct marketers.

**Era of Engagement Dynamics:**  
**#5: What happens today in commercial direct marketing**  
**will happen tomorrow in non-profit fundraising**

Throughout all the evolutions of direct marketing, there has always been one constant.

Trends, techniques and breakthroughs that happen first in the commercial world eventually find their way to the world of nonprofits. The movement seldom flows in the other direction.

That's for a simple reason: Commercial marketers simply have more data, resources and experience from which to extract the most important lessons. So, while my firm doesn't have a single commercial client, I devour information about what is happening in commercial direct marketing.

Especially in the fast-moving world of Internet-influenced marketing, I urge you to do the same. And, if you're looking for a place to start, I'll give you one. There's a wonderful book out by a couple of people from Forrester Research, one of the leading firms tracking online marketing. The book is called **Groundswell** and it captures a lot of what's going on right now.

Suffice it to say, there's much we can learn about how to build lists and generate excitement by watching commercial marketers and what they do:

- Want to know how to market to Baby Boomers online? Watch Steve Jobs and the people at Apple. They are absolutely masterful at creating and marketing products that speak to my generation's interest in being modern and up-to-date. But, they take enormous care not to push us Baby Boomers out of our comfort zone when it comes to actually using technology.
- Want to know how to track and analyze the behavior of people as they move across channels, look at the tools and strategies that commercial marketers have already developed. They're years ahead of us.
- Wondering how much your year-end direct mail is influencing your year-end online giving and vice-versa? Look at the work that catalog marketers are doing as they trace the interplay between the mailed catalog and the online order.
- Want to understand how user-generated content can create interest and excitement far beyond the narrow audience of people who actually create and upload a video, study Major League Baseball's masterful video submission contest for the chance to sing "Take Me Out to The Ballgame" at the All-Star Game.

I could give you a lot more examples, but you get my point. We're in a fast-moving marketing climate where new trends and developments appear on a regular basis. And, looking outside of the narrow world of nonprofit fundraising to the broader direct marketing community is really essential.

### **Era of Engagement Dynamics:**

#### **#6: The increased urgency of having an easily-expressed, emotionally powerful identity**

I spoke earlier about the importance of being findable and we discussed some tactical ways to help guide people online to your organization. But, let's state the obvious here. The best way to be findable isn't to be at the top of the list when someone Googles your cause. It's to be at the top of someone's mind when they think about your cause.

For years, my firm OMP has asked this question in donor surveys: When you think about (fill in the blank), what's the first organization that comes to mind?

If I say "What's the first organization you think of when I say protecting animals?" and half the people answering say ASPCA, then the ASPCA has a huge leg up on other animal protection organizations that aren't as top of mind.

And that doesn't just apply to big national causes. If I'm a local food bank in Seattle, I want to be top of mind when people in that city think about feeding the homeless. If I'm a women's shelter in Austin, I want to be top of mind when people in that part of Texas think about stopping domestic violence.

That's why every piece of communication we do on behalf of our organizations has two key functions. First, it has to be engaging and compelling in its own right. Second, it has to reinforce and deepen the recipient's understanding of the organization's core narrative.

Nothing about the emerging fundraising environment changes the importance of brand. But, it does change the function of brand.

Back when gifts of obligation were the rule of the day, having a strong brand was your ticket to creating and holding on to a strong relationship with a loyal supporter. In the era of engagement dynamics we've been discussing today, a strong brand is about doing that when you can. But, it's also about maintaining a kind of background presence so that, when moments of excitement occur around your work, people know where to turn.

In a fundraising world where people are increasingly reaching out and creating their own portfolio of organizations to support, that kind of awareness of your organization becomes critically important.

### **Conclusion**

Hopefully, in the time we've had together today, I've been able to draw a portrait of the emerging fundraising world in which you and I will live over these next few years.

It's a world where tight circle of direct mail support around our organizations are enhanced by broader, but looser, circles of engagement.

It's a world where different channels play evolving roles both as points of entry into the circle – and as ways of extracting financial support out of that circle.

It's a world commercial direct marketing offers guideposts for nonprofits, where people move fluidly across channels and where our analytical tools and program designs move right along with them.

It's a world where different generational styles play out, where obligation gives way to excitement, and where the strength of our brands matters in new ways.

But, most important of all, it's a world we get to shape every day by the way we think about, organize and execute our fundraising efforts.

I'm looking forward to that opportunity – and I hope you are as well.