

Project overview

The initial concept for the Christmas Campaign 2021 was initiated by Lucy Day (Gifts in Wills Marketing Manager) in June 2021, when looking at supporter journeys for in memory (in-mem) supporters.

A project team was convened to look at possible engagement options, and it was felt that a multi-media approach to a Christmas In-mem Giving campaign would be the most efficient way to dip our toe in the water with offering In Mem supporters a device to further remember their loved ones.

Further to this, in 2020, EAAA trialled a Christmas Campaign which focussed on the offering of Virtual Gifts at Christmas. This was alongside the ongoing Winter Raffle, which is drawn in early December, as well as Christmas Catalogue and merchandise that is available on the webshop.

The Community Fundraising team also developed their own, independent, Christmas activity for their direct supporters and volunteers.

Altogether, this resulted in lots of various asks around the same theme at the same time.

Project Objective

The object of the overall *Gift of Life* campaign was to develop an integrated campaign, to increase engagement and donations across a range of activities throughout the Engagement and Income team:

Winter Raffle

Providing a consistent and effective message from September 2021 which can act as a lead-in to the Christmas Campaign.

In-Mem

It is recognised that in-mem supporters are three times more likely to make a legacy pledge; the objective is therefore to engage with this cohort, giving them a positive supporter experience so that they remain connected to EAAA.

1. To engage with active EAAA in-mem supporters by offering them a way to remember a loved one at a poignant time of the year (direct mail (post and/or electronic)
2. To test if non EAAA supporters or lapsed EAAA in-mem supporters also respond (social media)

Christmas Appeal

Following the success of the PPE and Blood on Board appeals, EAAA have budgeted for a £50k campaign in December 2021. The Christmas Campaign Direct Marketing (DM) campaign and emails will act as the main avenue for this.

Online fundraising/engagement

As part of the appeal, we created a virtual Christmas Tree through the 'Visufund' platform, where people could also donate and leave a message to the crew, or in remembrance of a loved one.

Merchandise

We already have a link set-up via a QR code on Christmas cards that are sold, directed to www.eaaa.org.uk/Christmas, offering supporters to respond with a message for the crew. Having a solid brand/image will enable the virtual gifts and Christmas merchandise to be marketed online and in publications with a consistent theme.

Staff engagement

The development of the response mechanism and utilisation in Helimed House will be a chance to visually see the effect of the campaign and the support EAAA has.

Gift of Life appeal mailing

The *Gift of Life* appeal was centred around the main appeal mailing, this would provide us with an opportunity to segment the mailing, with a different message being sent to in-mem supporters, major donors and current warm supporters. The main focus of the appeal was engagement, encouraging supporters to write a message to the crew that would be hung on our Christmas trees across the three offices, or to write a message of remembrance for someone they have lost. Even though the main objective was engagement, a small monetary ask was also included as a test for an appeal at this time of year, as well as seeing the propensity of people to donate in memory of a loved one.

As an incentive for sending a donation back to the charity, along with a message, we created a purple star commemorative pin badge.

The mailing itself was sent to over 44,000 of our supporters, hoping for a response of around 2,000 donations totalling £50,000.

In the mailing, we split the artwork so that In-mem supporters received a pack with messaging around remembering a loved one at that time of year, with no patient story and focussed fully on their own story. It also had a very low monetary ask. The response star itself was also changed so that it was focussed on the person they wanted to remember.

The 'warm' supporters pack was focussed more around flying in the dark at that time of year, continuing our messaging from our previous 24/7 campaigns, and focussing on the crew and with a patient story related to the theme. The star in the 'warm' pack was asking for a message for the crew.

Both packs included a pre-printed freepost return envelope, again to encourage responses and not asking supporters to pay extra for their messages.

Examples of the pack artwork can be found [via this link](#)



Results

The results of the campaign were overwhelming. In total, we received 1,122 star messages back to the crew alongside 2,561 individual donations. We had thought we would receive a small average amount for donations, but received an average of £36.52, which came to a total of **£93,526.93**.

To respond to the large volumes of stars we received, we had a team of volunteers come into the Norwich base for two weeks to add strings to the stars and hang them on the Christmas Trees. They also typed up the messages that were left in-memory of others, and these have since been added to a message board on our website so that they can be found all year round: <https://www.eaaa.org.uk/message-board>

The campaign was such a success that we will be repeating it for 2022 and it will now become a regular part of our fundraising calendar.