

Fundraising

MAGAZINE



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in this ISSUE...



features

10 how green is your fundraising?
A look at what charities are doing to tackle the climate crisis

14 victim of your own success
The success of International Animal Rescue's campaign projects forced it to rethink fundraising

16 online evolution
How giving platforms are adapting to better serve the market

20 go ape
Durrell Wildlife Trust's gorilla sculpture trail raises £1.1m for Jersey Zoo

regulars

04 view from the top

05 news round-up

07 insight
Alzheimer's Research UK's #JustDanceMemories

22 conversation
Zoe's Place Baby Hospice's new head of fundraising

24 how to...
create a culture of thanking

26 new voices
Action Against Hunger's Calum Coker

27 meet the funder
Aviva Community Fund

28 portfolio

30 agent provocateur
Charities must lead on tackling climate change or lose donors, says Chiara Cadei

Fundraising



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THIS MONTH'S CAMPAIGN: #JUSTDANCEMEMORIES

Director of supporter-led fundraising at Alzheimer's Research UK **LUCY SQUANCE** explains how the charity partnered with the creator of Just Dance to drive its social media fundraiser

What form did the campaign take?

Towards the end of last year, Alzheimer's Research UK (ARUK) and Ubisoft, the creator and publisher of Just Dance, came together to celebrate the game's 10th anniversary, creating #JustDanceMemories – a social media campaign designed to empower the public to support dementia research.

We created an emotive film to lead the campaign, featuring one of our supporters who has a heart-warming connection to dance and dementia. We leveraged Ubisoft's and our social media channels to ask people to share the campaign film or their own dance memories using the campaign's hashtag. Each time someone shared the film or used the hashtag over a six-week period, Ubisoft donated £1 to ARUK. This was initially capped at £30,000, but after an incredible response within the first few days, this was doubled to £60,000.

What agencies were involved?

There was a fantastic working relationship between the teams at Ubisoft and ARUK. Across the two organisations, we benefited from a vast range of expertise and skillsets – meaning we were able to develop and deliver the majority of campaign elements between the two teams. This included generating a social media plan and producing assets, writing and pitching press releases, securing the support of celebrities and influencers, building a dedicated webpage and creating new fundraising materials.

The only external agency we used was Explosive Alan, a creative video studio Ubisoft has worked with previously. We handled the film shoot, but we called in Explosive Alan to edit it and bring it to life. We developed a joint brief with Ubisoft and we were both involved in the feedback stages, ensuring we both had final say on the end product.

What channels did you use to promote the campaign?

The main channels we used were Ubisoft's and our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter channels. To help drive this, we secured the



support of celebrities and influencers, including actor Simon Pegg, *Countdown* co-host Rachel Riley, *Emmerdale* actress Charley Webb, and singer Gary Lightbody, among others. This strategy proved to be incredibly beneficial, as we reached more than 77 million on social and there were more than 696,700 views of the film.

We also targeted national, trade and regional media with PR activity. This was hugely successful, with the story being covered across print, online and broadcast media, including the *Metro*, *Hello* and *BBC Breakfast North East and Cumbria*.

We also reached out to existing supporters and the Just Dance community by including news of the campaign in our mailings and in the game itself.

What fundraiser support was linked to the campaign?

We wanted to give people the chance to be able to play the game and support the cause at the same time. So we developed a bespoke DIY fundraising pack, with ideas on how supporters can incorporate fundraising with the game. This included holding a Just Dance party and asking for donations for people to take part, putting on a dance show and selling tickets, or holding a music quiz.

Those raising money through Just Dance events also had the chance to win a Nintendo Switch and a copy of the latest game, Just Dance 2020.

What was the target market?

Our target audience was very broad because dance is something that's important to all generations and, with more than half of us knowing someone affected by dementia, it's a cause that will resonate with many.

What was the promotional budget?

We didn't have a promotional budget for the social media campaign. We were confident that we would be able to achieve our objectives and hit our income target through organic social media activity.

As we didn't have any budget, all of the donations were profit for the charity. Outside the video production, which Ubisoft paid for, the only outgoing was staff time.

Please offer some insight into the creative process behind the initiative:

Lots of us have precious memories linked to music and dancing and these are memories we want to protect. We also know that these activities provoke a positive response from our audiences on social media, following the engagement we have had with previous content that features music and dance.

The film featuring our supporters – a daughter and her mother, who is in the late stages of dementia – helped to emotionally engage our supporters. It captures the way dancing and Just Dance connects them, showing how much happiness it brings.

What makes this campaign different from any other?

This was the first time ARUK has launched a fundraising campaign of this size that relied solely on social media engagement. While this was uncharted territory for us, we were confident that film was powerful enough to draw people in and inspire them to get involved. Thanks to our partnership with Ubisoft, we now have a much greater knowledge to ensure the success of a campaign such as this.

Sum up this campaign in three words:

Heart-warming. Inclusive. Empowering. ■

VICTIM OF YOUR OWN SUCCESS

Campaign projects at International Animal Rescue have repeatedly exceeded expectations. This has proved challenging for fundraising, says TOM MUMFORD

Fundraising teams can often get hung up on the negatives: What if it goes wrong? What if people don't respond? This is understandable. After all, we have targets to hit and beneficiaries to help. However, what we tend to forget to ask is whether

our successes than we have from our failures. The success of these projects have had varying levels of impact on the fundraising team, but more recently we have had to invest in diversifying our digital offering just to keep up.

“We chose a platform for ease-of-use, not for scalability; it quickly became apparent that the website couldn't keep up with demand”

or not we are ready for success. What happens if it does extremely well? Can we upscale to keep up with demand? Are we able to maximise our fundraising if it goes viral? These questions are vital when planning a campaign.

At International Animal Rescue, we celebrated our 30th birthday in 2019, and over the years we have learnt more practical lessons from

Tickling is Torture

In 2015, we launched our Tickling is Torture campaign, arguably our most successful digital campaign to date. The aim was to expose the plight of the slow loris (pictured left) – a small primate native to south-east Asia which is often a victim of the illegal pet trade.

For maximum impact, we targeted viral videos of lorises being forced to perform – holding umbrellas, wearing clothes and being forcibly tickled which can be very stressful for them. We created a counter video revealing the distressing journey from being captured in the wild to being sold as pets. We then asked people to pledge not to encourage the trade by commenting favourably on or promoting videos that showed captive lorises. We directed them to a petition on our micro-site, which was built on cloud-based web development platform Wix. The video went viral and the campaign quickly followed suit. To date, we have had just under one million pledges and the video

has been viewed over 150 million times. Before our campaign the comments sections of these viral videos were generally about how cute the lorises were, more than likely fuelling the trade. Now they exclusively highlight the cruelty.

However, this success came with challenges. When we created the micro-site, we chose a platform for ease-of-use, not for scalability; it quickly became apparent that the website couldn't keep up with demand. The pledge list quickly grew too large to export. As a result, we have only been able to keep up communications with a small fraction of those supporters who pledged, and consequently lost out on fundraising opportunities.

Since then all of our pledge or petition campaigns have been done on dedicated third-party platforms such as change.org, where the sole function is petitions and they are able to handle much larger list sizes.

Winning projects

When the projects you support succeed, it has an effect on the whole organisation. In particular, you need to think about how you structure future campaigns and how that will affect fundraising.

In 2009, along with our partners Wildlife SOS and Free the Bears, we ended the 400-year-old trade of dancing bears in India. Sloth bears (opposite top) were caught in the wild, horribly mutilated and then forced to dance at the end of a rope. The thinking behind the campaign was to drive change and put an end to a barbaric practice, but it has had a knock-on impact for fundraising. Suddenly, the messaging is no longer



“help us rescue this bear”, but rather “help us care for this bear”. This is a weaker and less urgent ask, but funds still need to be raised as there are now 600 bears to feed. Our strategy has had to adapt accordingly.

More recently, our teams in Indonesia have started to see their outreach and education work around the plight of orangutans bear fruit. The number of orangutans rescued and slow lorises seized has decreased year-on-year. They have done so well in fact that last year it caught us on the back foot. Our digital fundraising team had become too comfortable, depending on a steady stream of emotive and powerful rescue stories. When they didn't arrive, we simply weren't ready with an alternative. The result was that our digital fundraising underperformed in 2019. An amazing fourth quarter helped us clamber back to 1 per cent growth, but this was poor compared with previous years when we had seen an average of more than 20 per cent growth.

“We have found that what you gain in Facebook's usability, you lose in its personalisation”

Adapting to the new social norm

Despite these challenges, an aspect of our digital product that has seen significant growth recently is our social media fundraising. This has gone from strength to strength, particularly the income generated through Facebook Donate and Facebook Fundraisers. From 2018 to 2019, income from Facebook grew by 50 per cent and the number of people setting up fundraisers grew from 485 to 1,218.

Although welcome of course, this growth put significant strain on our social media team: we like to thank each individual fundraiser and where possible the individual donors, and at times it was difficult to keep up.

In addition, the unexpected and rapid success of this new income stream meant a supporter journey was not fully developed, leading to poor donor care. We have found that what you gain in Facebook's usability, you lose in its personalisation. It's very difficult to talk to your supporters on a one-on-one basis.

However, in terms of simply taking donations, it is second to none.

For a long time, social media has been a tool to push people elsewhere, such as donating on a website, signing a petition or joining a mailing list. But over the last couple of years social media channels have emerged as leading fundraising platforms in their own right. Facebook has made it exceptionally easy for its users to donate. If their card details are stored, it takes just two clicks. No matter how seamless your website's checkout is, it isn't going to beat two clicks – so why try?

Moving forward

This year, we will be taking our campaigns into our own hands. We can't sit back and wait for new content to arrive. We have to find new and creative ways to use our existing content.

At the end of last year, we ran a successful fundraising campaign with



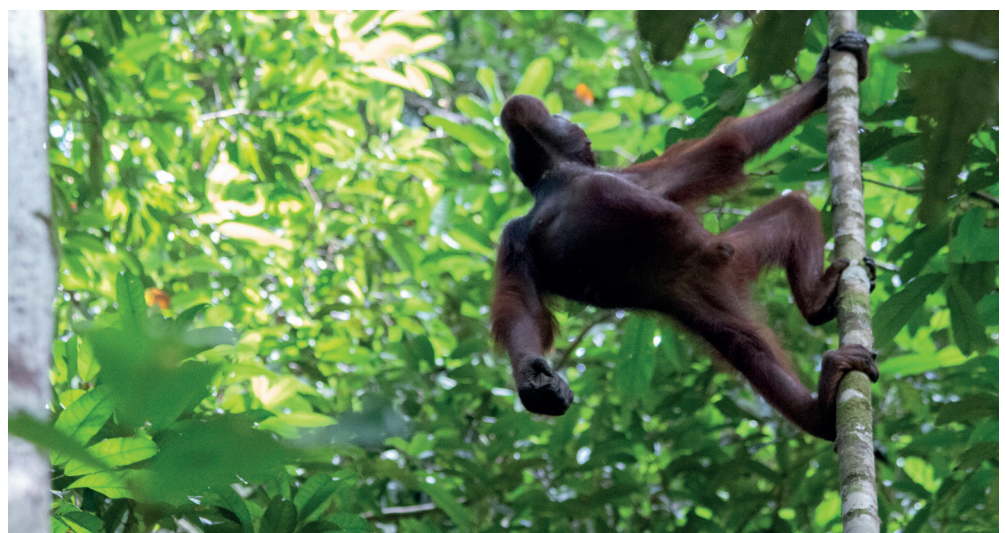
and the campaign ended up raising more than £45,000 by the end of the week. An amazing success by any metric, but especially so because it exclusively used existing content.

At all times we will be keeping the lessons of our successes in mind and there are questions you can ask to do the same. Have you picked a platform that can upscale? Can you continue to communicate with those who engage? Is there a third-party platform that can help? Are you future-proofed? These are all things to consider in case your campaigning outperforms expectations. ■

this in mind. For Orangutan Caring Week, we reused existing content and focused on a different topic each day – rescues, education, releases and so on – with the aim of raising £20,000. This is the amount it costs to run our orangutan rehabilitation centre for one week. The range of topics, tight deadline and tangible target appealed to our supporters



Tom Mumford is the digital officer at International Animal Rescue
[f internationalanimalrescue](https://www.facebook.com/internationalanimalrescue)



MUNA CHAUHAN

“With corporates, it is not all about what you can get from them; it is about giving them what they want in return”



Muna Chauhan, recently appointed head of fundraising at Coventry-based Zoe’s Place Baby Hospice, tells **STEPHEN COTTERILL** how she is applying her expertise in corporate stewardship to drive income growth

You were a corporate fundraiser at Zoe’s Place for eight years prior to taking up your current role. How has fundraising grown in that time?

When I first joined, the hospice was only open three days a week and it was raising just under £300,000 a year. Income at that time was very much community driven, with very little corporate support. So right from the start, I defined the direction in which I wanted to take the organisation and set out a strategy whereby we could monetise corporate support.

The other strand we developed was in events and challenge fundraising, and combining those with corporate partnerships. In 2013, I took our first group trekking in the Himalayas and raised around £60,000. It was an area of fundraising the hospice hadn’t touched previously. Following that we developed more events including a half marathon and a Coventry to Paris bike ride, which raised £72,000 last year.

In 2015, we set up a business group involving some of the key players in various businesses in the region. We set them a remit to raise £80,000-

90,000 a year. They help us with our charity ball, and organise golf days, Christmas events and a fashion show, among other things. They continue to hit their income target year in year out. In the last tax year, our target for corporate partnerships was £198,000 – we actually raised £248,000. So that stream is now built into the budget and is still growing year on year.

We also run a “Strictly Ballroom” dancing event, which contributes around £70,000-100,000 net profit each year.

All these contribute to the overall income. We raised our first £1m in

2015 and over the last three years income has remained steady at just over £1.2m.

How do you drive acquisitions and engage supporters?

As fundraisers we don't really get involved in the running of the hospice, but we meet the parents in the corridors and at events. You get to talking to them and it is incredible to hear about their experiences.

From a fundraising point of view, their stories are extremely powerful. We use case studies and testimonials in all our donor engagement programmes, creating visual content and getting families, nurses and support workers to talk about what they do and the impact the hospice has on those we help. We are in the middle of producing content based on a day in the life of a parent who has lost their child – these kind of stories are incredibly powerful.

Even in our funding proposals, we include real-life case studies. When you can explain things from the parents' angle, it absolutely captivates any audience. Speaking to corporates and major donors or at networking events about the work we do and how it affects families' lives really moves people. If you can get a parent to go and talk to supporters about their experience, it is even more powerful.

We have to take that emotion and passion and turn them into fundraising. It is testament to the impact of these stories that I have only ever lost two corporate pitches in the eight years I have worked here.

What are the key strands to your corporate stewardship?

We have a lot of success in turning one-year charity partnerships into longer-term relationships. We do that by maintaining a high level of communication and by making sure that we are providing them with what they want from the partnership. With corporates, it is not all about what you can get from them; it is about giving them what they want in return. Through our media partnership with the local press, we can get corporate

fundraising efforts out into the public arena. Businesses love that. Yes, we are massaging their egos but that's fine, because at the end of the day, the results are fantastic for everyone.

“Brexit is happening, but it has to be business as usual as far as we are concerned. We have a duty of care to the families”

Consequently, we have great relationships with our corporate supporters. Triton Showers, for example, has been with us for three years, and the Wasps rugby team has been with us for four. It is about going above and beyond. Having that attitude is very important to developing those relationships and driving them forward.

You have set a target to grow income this year by £200,000. How will you achieve this?

We have expanded the team to seven full-time staff and one part-time, and we have set a target of doing at least 12 challenge events a year. This year we are adding a Scafell Pike challenge and a canal walk.

However, our biggest focus this year is on volunteering. By the end of 2020 we want to have 100 active volunteers who can attend our events, take part in our fundraisers and help have impact on our income.

Corporates will still continue to be our top performers and we are hoping to increase the amount of sponsorship for our events. Another key focus this year is on winning unrestricted grants. Our bid writer has already brought in £37,000. We may not hit the £200,000 target this year, but we are getting there.

Your 10th anniversary is in 2021. What fundraising activity are you planning around this milestone?

Because of the way our tax year works, we will actually start the anniversary fundraising programme this summer, hosting our annual ball at Coventry cathedral and holding a “Strictly Bollywood” event, which should raise £40,000-50,000.

We are also looking at using the open space in the city centre to host

an international food festival and perhaps a table football tournament to get some of the high-street banks and retailers involved. Last time we ran a tournament like that we raised £30,000 and it was a fantastic way

to engage the community.

Our patron, Lady Daventry, is looking to host a dinner reception at her residence for high net worth individuals to kick off the anniversary celebrations and that should raise £40,000-50,000.

Where else do you see income growth coming from?

We are in our second year of running a wills month, and we have been getting some great interaction with supporters. We raised £3,000 in donations from it so far and have had two legacies left to us already.

We launched our lottery at the end of last year with the help of our ambassador, TV chef Gregg Wallace, and we are hoping that will be a new and growing income stream for us.

What are the challenges facing fundraising in 2020?

I know there will be some huge implications for companies, organisations and even some charities when we leave the EU, but my thinking around this has always been that there are still so many people and companies who are going to want to keep supporting charity and helping communities. We have to stay focused on that. Brexit is happening, we know this, but it has to be business as usual as far as we are concerned.

We are answerable to our trustees and we have a duty of care to the families. We have to remain focused on that in our work. That is why our team is hellbent on increasing our revenue and coming up with new, innovative ways to raise funds.

There will always be tough economic circumstances from time to time. If we think too much about that then we will lose focus on the job we have to do. ■

FUND

AVIVA COMMUNITY FUND

VAL CIPRIANI talks to insurance company Aviva about changes to its fund supporting innovation in small and local charities

The Aviva Community Fund was set up by the insurance company in 2010 with the aim of supporting small and local charities.

This year, Aviva is introducing a series of changes to how the fund works. It will be awarding £250,000 per quarter to a range of small charity projects, totalling £1m over the year. Applications will be accepted quarterly instead of annually and will not have to fit into pre-established categories or grant amounts. Projects will have to include an element of novelty. The focus is on forward-thinking charities, which are fundraising for projects that develop a new approach, product or technology, pilot a new scheme, implement a new initiative, or expand existing services to a new area.

UK-based charities with an annual turnover under £1m can aim to raise any sum up to £50,000 for projects relating to one of two core funding areas: community resilience, and financial capability and inclusion. Yorkshire-based charity Harrogate School of English is one

of the groups that has benefited in the past, having received funding for its Tea and Talk initiative (pictured). Support from the fund enabled the school to hire space and resources to teach English to Syrian refugees in a friendly and informal atmosphere.

This year the Aviva Community Fund is also partnering with online platform Crowdfunder to allow projects to raise funds from the general public in order to reach their target amount. Each of Aviva's 16,000 employees will receive £60 in an "Employee Wallet", which they can donate to projects of their choice. If a project reaches the target amount by the end of the quarter, thanks to donations from Aviva employees and the general public, the charity can withdraw the funds. Otherwise, the project gets rolled over to the next quarter. Aviva feels that moving to a crowdfunding model, where it "empowers" employees to distribute the funding, is fairer.

Participating charities can also access Aviva's knowledge library, and coaching and volunteering by Aviva employees, who

receive 21 hours of paid leave a year to volunteer with charities. Topics that charities can get advice on include risk management and networking, as well as templates and useful documents to build their capabilities in a range of areas.

The new approach was tested before the roll-out. Nantwich-based charity Inner Trust took part in the trial and raised more than £7,700 for a new project involving music workshops for patients with dementia and Alzheimer's.

Jude Brooks, UK head of corporate social responsibility at Aviva, says: "We believe the small charities that make the most impact are the ones given the opportunity to innovate and test new ideas. That is why we are focusing not only on facilitating funding for small charities with genuinely forward-thinking ideas, but also sharing knowledge from Aviva's people and building the capabilities of causes through training and coaching. Our ambition is to enable causes to become self-sustaining over the long term." ■



£250k

distributed each quarter

£60

given to each employee to donate

£50k

maximum funding per charity