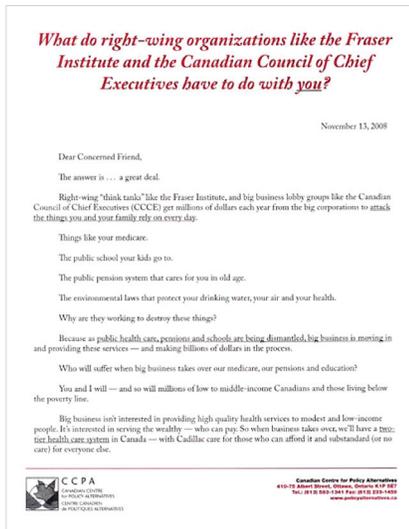


Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Donor Engagement



CCPA
Acquisition Appeal
2009

The Client



CCPA
CANADIAN CENTRE
for POLICY ALTERNATIVES
CENTRE CANADIEN
de POLITIQUES ALTERNATIVES

The Challenge

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) is Canada's leading independent progressive research institute concerned with issues of public policy as it relates to social and economic justice. It offers analysis and policy ideas to the media, general public, social justice and labour organizations, academia and government. The CCPA does not accept any corporate funding.

The Solution

The client hired Stratcom in 1997 to help build an individual donor/member base for its work. The Centre had approximately 200 members at that time but no actual fundraising program. The objective was to build a significant base of regular donors/members who could lend ongoing financial support to the Centre and sustain its work into the future. We developed a creative mail package that has engaged significant numbers of donors over time. With various fine-tuning and updates to keep it timely, this package has brought in over 12,000 new donors. Through sustained efforts to acquire new donors, we have helped the client to increase their member support base from 200 to 15,000 members and increase monthly revenues from \$0 to over \$650,000 per year. Today, over one-third of all CCPA supporters are monthly donors.

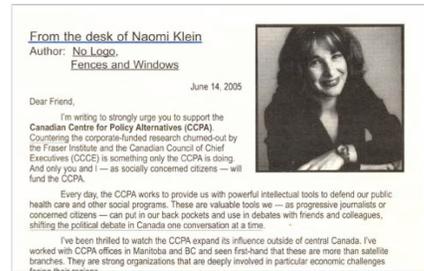
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Donor Engagement

The Development Process – How We Worked with the Client:

The initial challenge for Stratcom was to create a direct mail package that would be understood by, and engage, a wide audience about the Centre’s highly academic public policy research work — work which does not easily lend itself to direct mail content. We had a series of de-briefing meetings with the client and reviewed their work, as well as their positioning in the political landscape. We decided that pitting the Centre squarely against their right-wing counterparts (who are extremely well-funded by the corporate sector) would work best. We developed various membership levels which offered different sets of Centre’s publications as “benefits” and targeted lists with a high rate of ‘readers’ who would be interested in these kinds of benefits. While we have tested many packages over the years, and have enhanced that initial package through testing over the years, the initial marketing concept still serves as the control package to this day. We started with a small test prospect mailing of 10,000 pieces in June 1997 which had a response rate of 2.5% and average gift of \$78. We refined the list strategy based on these results, and cautiously increased the prospect quantity to 20,000.

The Results

The response rate rose to a phenomenal 5% with an average gift of \$73, and over the next three years remained between 3–5% until the introduction of the privacy legislation in 2001. Since then, their list universe was markedly reduced in size which impacted results; still, the response rate has remained a solid 1.5% since then with 120,000 pieces per year. Over the years we have also helped the CCPA conduct its mailings in-house, provided communications audits, developed print advertising and gradually built an integrated mail and phone fundraising program which Stratcom now manages for them with excellent results.



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