

Avenues for Hope Campaign

Idaho Housing and Finance Association

Communications: Special Event Marketing

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Avenues for Hope campaign

Every year, Idaho Housing and Finance and its nonprofit entity, the Home Partnership Foundation, shine a light on nonprofit organizations throughout the state that combat homelessness. This year, our Avenues for Hope fundraiser took a big leap forward on a small budget thanks to an ambitious and innovative awareness campaign executed by our in-house marketing team.

Since 2011, [Avenues for Hope](#) has raised \$9.5 million for nonprofits in Idaho that provide critical housing and supportive services. For many nonprofits, the money raised in three weeks every December represents a significant portion of their yearly operating budgets and bolsters their philanthropic networks, which they often struggle to develop on their own.

Campaign achieves measurable results

In 2021, Avenues for Hope raised more than \$2.5 million, the second year in a row we crossed that threshold. The number of participating nonprofits increased 13 percent to 88, which is significant in a small state like Idaho. The number of new and out-of-state donors grew dramatically, as well, increasing by 58%. To put our fundraising efforts in context: Another major campaign in the state raised \$3.6 million this year, but had more than seven times as many participating nonprofits.

Engages targeted audiences

Avenues for Hopes success was due in part to an ambitious online outreach effort in the months preceding the campaign that helped build awareness and broaden our audience.

A [College Football Home-Field Advantage](#) contest, which encouraged Facebook users to like and comment on Avenues for Hope posts, allowed us to engage with potential and existing donors as well as nonprofits multiple times a week. Avenues for Hope Facebook followers predicted the score for one of Idaho's college football teams. Winners received a \$50 gift card, as well as a \$50 donation to the housing-related organization of their choice. These posts promoted the value of housing security and provided information about the critical role the nonprofit organizations play.

The result: Our Facebook audience grew by 23 percent before the start of the campaign and our page was viewed by almost 62,000 unique users. The payoff was a 36 percent increase in donors who came through Facebook.

To further bolster our outreach efforts, we hosted our first-ever online kickoff event to get participating nonprofits, potential donors and sponsors and the media excited about the campaign. By making the event virtual, we were able to include many nonprofits and donors who live outside the Boise area and who would be unable to attend in person. To get people excited, we first worked with our participating nonprofits to train them on how to market themselves and the campaign. This training helped them get the word out to their supporters about the kickoff event and the campaign itself. We also enlisted mayors from around the state, who demonstrated their support of the campaign and the value of supporting housing organizations.

Benefits outweigh costs/effective use of resources

Despite being a statewide campaign during the busy holiday season, Avenues for Hope required a small investment to market. We leaned heavily into our social media presence, marketing updates on Facebook for our followers. Social media was a place where we could release videos, like our campaign kickoff one, to a broader audience and get more mileage out of it. Tapping into the local media in cities around Idaho also helped us earn coverage of the campaign without spending any money.

The only real expense for this campaign was a luncheon to celebrate the hard work of the participating nonprofits and to encourage potential sponsors. To help market the event, we brought in a motivational speaker. We believe this decision paid off with attendance at the luncheon roughly double what it had been in years past. The speaker also allowed us to inspire corporate and individual contributions. For those who could not attend in person, we again tapped into our webcasting experience to broadcast the event on our Facebook and YouTube channels.

By taking advantage of the resources Idaho Housing had on hand, we pulled off a successful Avenues for Hope campaign. All of the marketing and event planning was handled by our six person communications team. The branding for the campaign was created in-house, as was the toolkit for nonprofits that includes graphics, posters, flyers, and sample messaging for emails and social media posts. These tools helped nonprofits get the word out to their networks, helping bring in donors that may not have been aware of Idaho Housing's role in the campaign.

Campaign is replicable

What makes this campaign so replicable is that it costs very little and can be handled by a small team. As mentioned above, our communications team of six pulled off the entire campaign with little spent outside of our normal budget. That's because we leaned on the tools we already use every day to help promote it. Our Digital Engagement Coordinator tapped into our growing social media presence to get the word out about the campaign and promoting ways to donate. Our in-house experience with live internet streaming also enabled us to host a campaign kickoff event. As part of that event, our team was able to tap leaders from around the state to throw their support behind the campaign.

Achieve strategic objectives

Our goal every year with Avenues for Hope is to help more people and organizations by raising more money. This year, we were successful in broadening support for the annual fundraiser on a number of fronts. Our community outreach efforts ahead of the campaign won over a local lending institution, which contributed \$100,000 as a top-tier sponsor, which helped us award more than \$50,000 in additional prize funding. Our stronger online presence helped us bring in \$100,000 more in online gifts than ever before, in part thanks to the higher number of new and out of state donors.

Equally important is that Avenues for Hope campaign brings heightened awareness and increased private funding to help fund homelessness services and affordable housing options throughout Idaho. Moving forward, we will build on the successes we experienced during this 2021 campaign and raise the bar for ourselves in 2022, all while promoting these critical nonprofits and the vital services they provide.

Visual Aids

Avenues for Hope College Football Home-Field Advantage online ad



Watch the video [here](#)

Social Media posts:

You can see how these posts animate on our [Avenues for Hope](#) Facebook page

 **Avenues for Hope**
December 9, 2021 · 🌐

#AvenuesforHope is live! Early birds, where you at?! Each organization that receives at least 12 unique gifts between 8 a.m. and noon (MT) gets a \$500 prize! Let's get that worm!

Donate here: Avenuesforhope.org



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2 Comments 11 Shares

 Like

 Comment

 Share



Avenues for Hope
December 29, 2021 · 🌐



Surprise! Who's happier than a camel on a Wednesday? Our 'Hump Day Heroes' prize winners!
This \$500 prize is available to each organization that can bring in one \$1,000 (or larger) donation between 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. MT today! (Dec. 29th.) A 50% match, not bad for a Wednesday! (One prize per organization.)
Learn more here: Avenuesforhope.org... See more



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3 Comments 8 Shares

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Avenues for Hope

December 21, 2021 · 🌐



This holiday season, give the gift that will last forever: the gift of giving. Sit down together and donate to a non-profit that does meaningful work in your community. Plant the seed for a lifetime of giving to those in need.

Want to give the gift of giving? Visit: avenuesforhope.org/info/ecards

Don't forget: this is the last weekend to earn our 'Weekend Warrior' prize. Sunday would be a pretty good time to 'donate together' if you want to increase the impact of your dona... See more



[AVENUESFORHOPE.ORG](https://avenuesforhope.org)

Avenues for Hope

Learn more



Avenues for Hope
December 17, 2021 · 🌐



It's Day Five of Gift Matchness - get ONE \$500 donation, get an additional \$500 match.

Donate here: www.avenuesforhope.org

Thanks again to one our generous sponsors, [Zions Bank](#), for making this week possible. And another thank you to all of our generous donors for supporting the campaign.... See more



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2 Shares

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Avenues for Hope

December 21, 2021 · 🌐



Surprise! Tomorrow is Wednesday Friend-sy - a special chance to win \$100 for the organization you support! Here's how it works:

Two random winners will be drawn every half hour for prizes of \$100 each to the organization they support. Prizes will be awarded from gifts received on Wednesday, Dec. 22 between 10 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. (MST).

Drawings will be done about every 30 minutes. Only online gifts of \$25 or more from unique donors will be eligible - so if you've already do... See more



#AVENUESFORHOPE



👍 3

1 Comment 5 Shares

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