Email Appeal Checklist

48% of donors prefer to receive updates and appeals via email. Use this checklist to create an email appeal that grabs their attention, inspires them to give, and makes it easy to donate.

Design Elements

- [ ] My appeal's design includes my organization's logo and colors
- [ ] Imagery in the email connects donors to their impact
    - [ ] BONUS: Imagery is people-centered (or character-centered)
- [ ] The font is high contrast and easy to read
- [ ] Buttons are easy to read and clearly labeled

Content

- [ ] My appeal comes from a specific person at my organization
    - [ ] BONUS: Their email address includes our organization's domain (ex: nonprofitname.org instead of gmail.com)
- [ ] My email includes both a subject line and preview text
- [ ] My subject line and preview text elicit positive emotions
    - [ ] BONUS: They also include a sense of urgency
    - [ ] BONUS: They also include the word "donate," "support," or another action verb
- [ ] The salutation addresses the donor by name
- [ ] Readers can quickly understand why and how I'm asking them to donate
- [ ] My appeal focuses on a people-centered story
- [ ] Readers understand how their gift will make a difference

Call to Action

- [ ] My appeal includes a clear, direct request to give
- [ ] I link to a specific donation form several times throughout the appeal
    - [ ] BONUS: There is a mix of link types, including text links, buttons, and hyperlinked images

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Experience

- [ ] My appeal's design elements load quickly
- [ ] My appeal is easy to read and interact with on mobile devices
    - [ ] BONUS: I've tested my appeal on both iOS and Android devices
- [ ] Images in my appeal include alt text
- [ ] Readers can quickly unsubscribe from emails via a link at the bottom of my appeal

Data-Backed Tips for More Engaging Emails

Many items on this checklist—like writing emotionally uplifting subject lines, using preview text, and including multiple links to the same donation form—are all based on research we cover in *The Nonprofit Email Report: Data-Backed Insights for Better Engagement.*

The report summarizes email performance from 1,495 nonprofits and includes tons of takeaways you can use to write and send effective emails.

Here's where you can read it online!

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