Nonprofit Tech Circle: Email Appeals

NEON ONE

PCI Compliance
Support
SSO
NEON Fundraise
NEON CRM
NEON Pay
NEON ONE Academy

Housekeeping 🧹

1. **Ask questions.** This should be as useful as possible for you and for your organization, so please use the Q&A box!

2. **Please talk to me!** I love seeing what you have to say during the session. Use the chat box to talk to me and each other.

3. **Yes, we are recording this webinar!** You'll receive an email tomorrow containing a link to this session, the slides, and a transcript. It'll also include links to some helpful resources!

Who Am I?

- 11+ years in the nonprofit tech industry
- Passionate about understanding what donors want from the nonprofits they support (and what orgs can do about it)
- Writer, speaker, and marketer with Neon One

How Comfortable Are You With Creating Email Appeals?

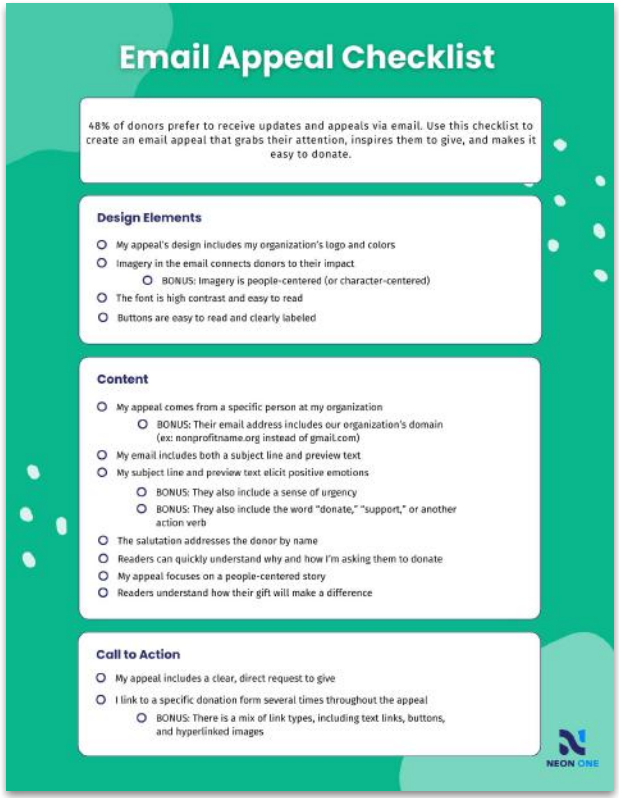
How comfy are you with creating email appeals?

I could do it all day

It’s not my favorite

This Checklist Will Help

This QR code will take you to the download; I'll also drop a link in the chat.

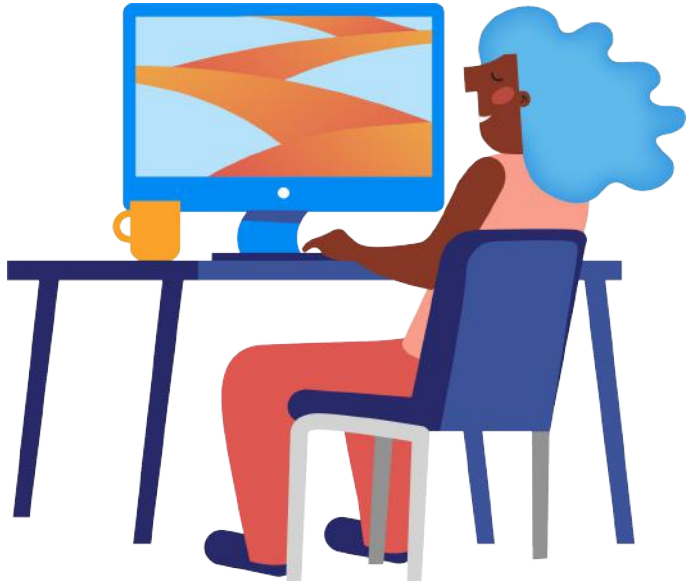


Your Email Appeals Are a Big Deal

Your emails are important!

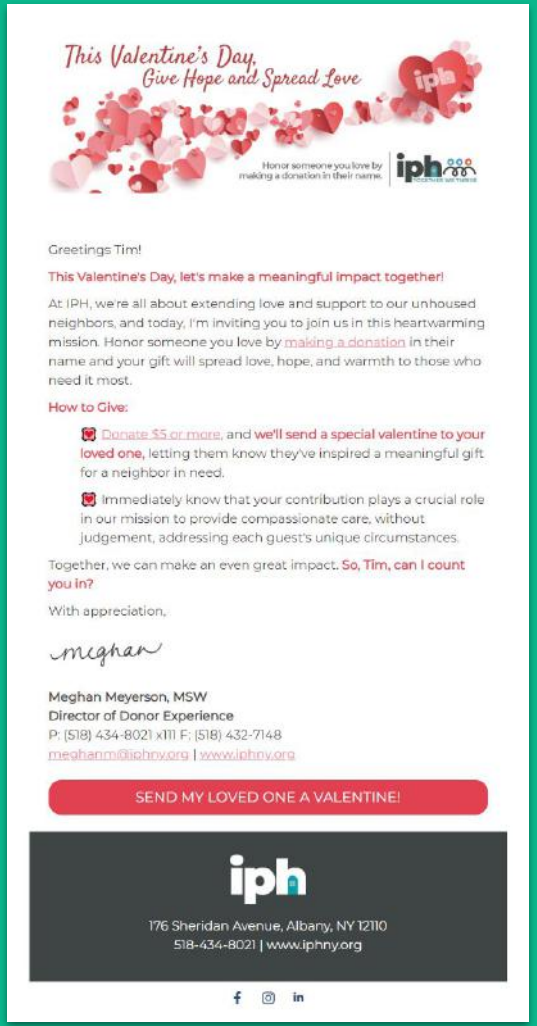
- **48% of donors** cite email as their preferred method for receiving nonprofit updates and appeals
- That's followed by direct mail (21%), social media (17%), texting (8%), and phone calls (2%)

Your supporters are looking for your messages and appeals!



Email Appeal Design Elements

Today's example email comes from IPH, a New York nonprofit that serves people experiencing homelessness with year-round and seasonal emergency shelters, a housing program, and community-based programs.

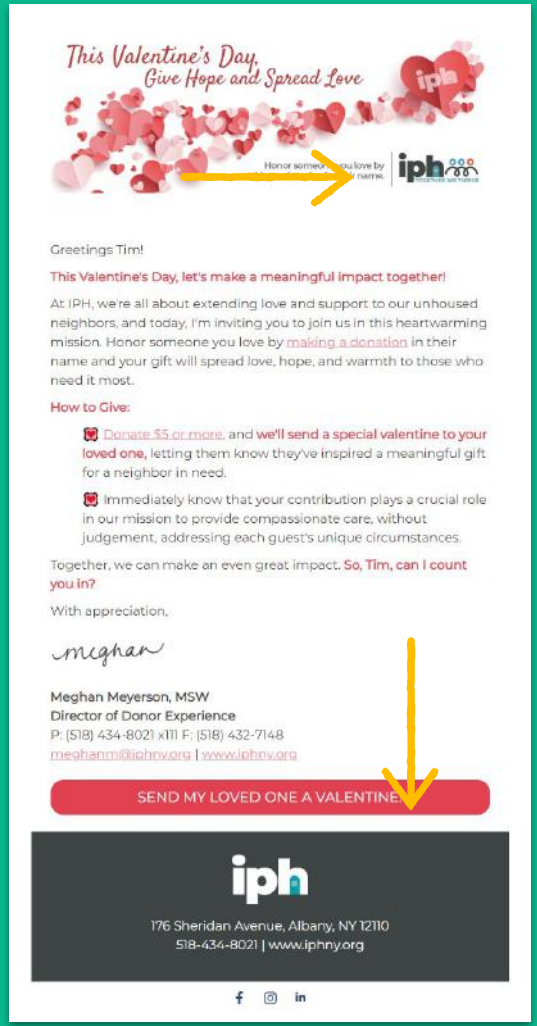


When people open your email, they should recognize you.

That means using:

- **Your logo**
- **Your brand colors**

If you create a special appeal like this one, switching up some elements is okay! Just make sure people know it's coming from you.



People love pictures! Help donors connect with the people you serve by choosing photos that are **people*-centered**.

*It doesn't always have to be a person—animals and even anthropomorphized characters count, too!

People love pictures! Help donors connect with the people you serve by choosing photos that are **people-centered**.

There's always room to experiment! IPH did a great job with this hero image. It's:

- **Campaign-specific**
- **On brand**
- **Impact-centered**

It’s also important that your appeal is easy to read! That means using:

- **Simple fonts**
- **High-contrast fonts**
- **Fonts that are large enough**

This also applies to the fonts you use on your call-to-action buttons (more in a minute)!

This text is easy to read!

This text is much harder to read

This text is also much harder to read

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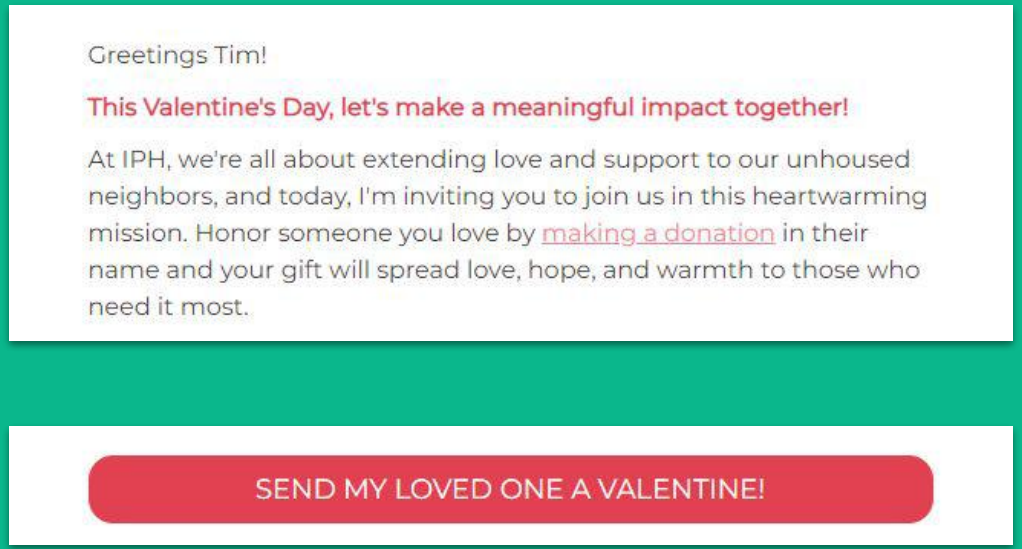


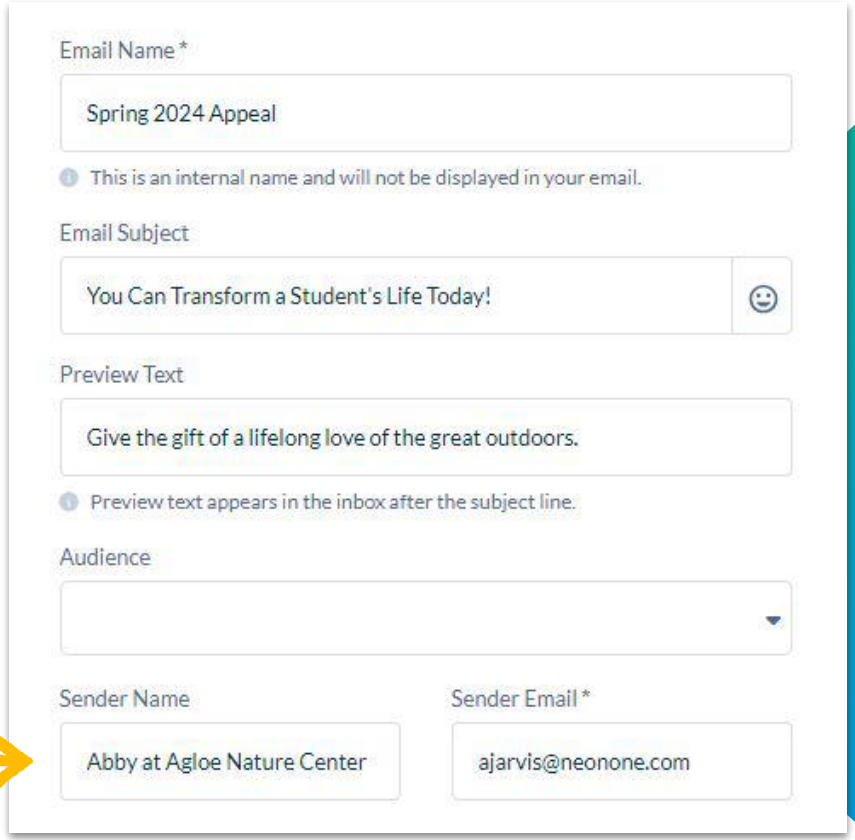
Content Tips for Email Appeals

Tip #1: Sender Name

Use a real person's name and email address as the sender.

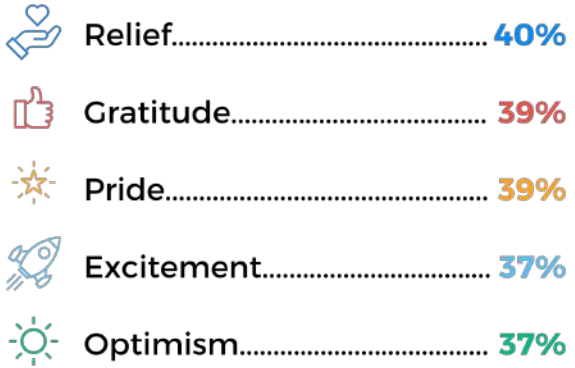
Whose email would you be more likely to open?

- Abby at Neon One
  (ajarvis@neonone.com)
- no-reply
  (no-reply@neonone.com)



Tip #2: Catch Their Eye

An AI analysis reveals that email subject lines that convey positive feelings perform better than those with neutral or negative sentiments.



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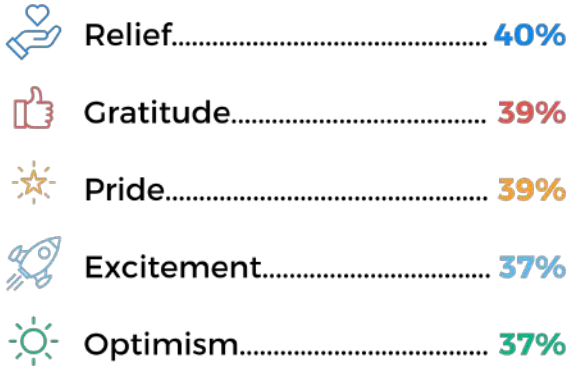
Emails that contained preview text had:

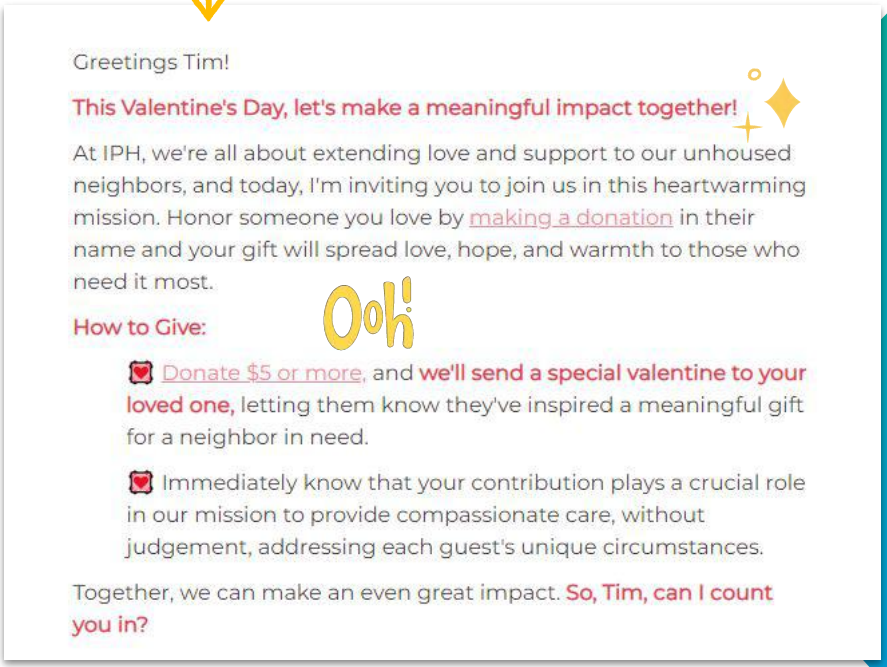
- Higher open rates (+2.26%)
- Slightly lower CTR (-0.59%)
- Higher fundraising totals (+53.85%)



Tip #2: Build a Connection

While you're writing the body of your email appeal, focus on building a connection with your reader. You can do this by:

- Using their **name**
- Telling a **compelling story** and/or
- Communicating **why they should donate** and **what they will accomplish** when they do



Nail Your Call to Action

01

Include a Call to Action

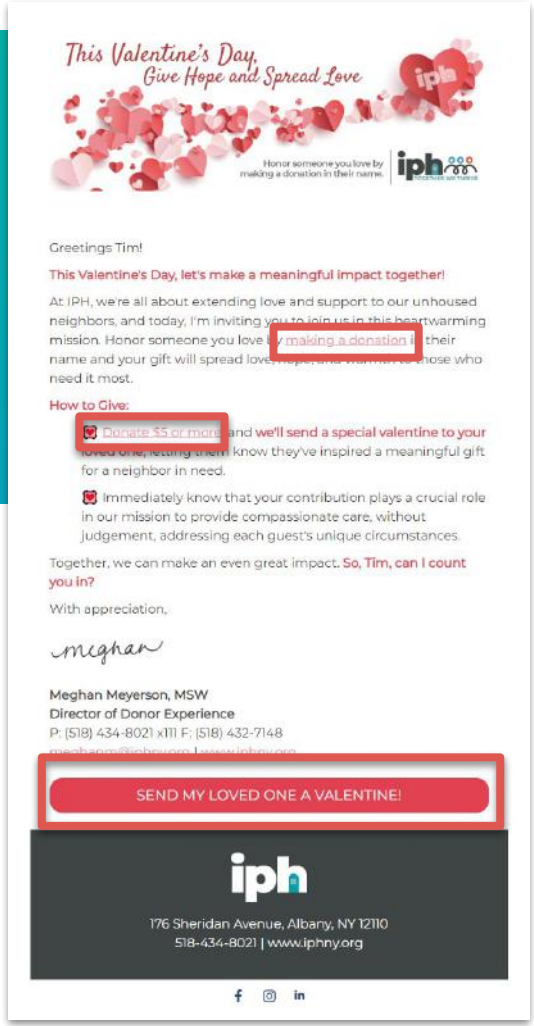
Don’t beat around the bush!

Ask people clearly and directly to give. Be as specific as you can.

02

Link to a Donation Form

In our research, we found that the sweet spot was six individual links to a single donation form.



Give Donors a Great Experience

Make Sure Your Appeal...

Loads quickly and displays properly

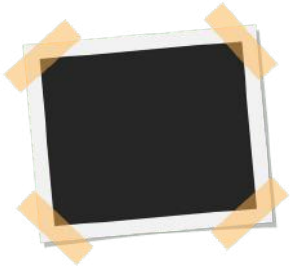
If things load slowly or don’t appear correctly, try compressing your images, removing custom fonts, and eliminating extraneous design elements.

Works on mobile devices

Test your email appeal (including the links!) on desktop and mobile devices. Bonus if you check it on both iOS and Android phones.

Make Sure Your Appeal...

Includes alt text for any images



Using alt text for your images is an important part of making your appeal accessible to people using screen readers.

Includes an unsubscribe link

Make it easy for people to unsubscribe from your emails. And don't sweat your unsubscribe rate!

Questions?