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National University

Communications 625

**MEMO**

**To: Maxi, Executive Director**

**From: Aly Mejia, Student**

**Date: February 1, 2015**

**Re: Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County**

Market research and analysis show that Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County has an increasing need for canned food and monetary donations. With so many people living below the poverty line and unsure where their next meal is coming from, Second Harvest becomes the main source of food for many of these families.

In order to increase the amount of donations, Second Harvest needs to work on creating a long and lasting relationship with its stakeholders. In Orange County, there are more than 400,000 people who don’t know where their next meal will come from. With the right tools, strategies and objectives, Second Harvest can target its necessary publics to increase donations. With the increase in donations, Second Harvest will be able to provide for mood to its current families and aim towards its mission of ending hunger in Orange County.

**Executive Summary**

Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County was founded in 1983 with a mission to end hunger in Orange County. A recent study found that “277,000 people in Orange County need the help of Second Harvest and its community partners to feed themselves and their families. Many in the community are too often are confronted with choices between paying for food and paying for other essentials” (*feedoc.org*).The medium family income for Orange County stands at approximately $74,000 with 1 in 5 kids living in poverty. Second Harvest provides food services to children, adults, seniors, the unemployed, homeless, working poor and single parents. With the donations received, Second Harvest is able to feed more than 200,000 people per month. Second Harvest relies on receiving donations to fund its programs from grants and corporate and private ownership. In order to remain a successful organization, Second Harvest is seeking assistance from its primary stakeholders such as employees, board members, private donors and new publics ages 25+ years who are willing to make an impact for the organization. Through the right channels, such as community leaders, grocery store managers and social media, Second Harvest can increase its canned food and monetary donations and strive towards its core mission of ending hunger in Orange County.

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**Introduction**

Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County is a member of Feeding America. Since its founding in 1983, Second Harvest has created a mission to eliminate hunger in Orange County. The food banks clients are generally those who fall below the poverty level and struggle to provide an adequate meal for their family. Second Harvest offers numerous food programs for seniors, children and those in emergency situations. With the economic downturn and cost of living in Orange County, poverty levels are at an all-time high. Roughly 80% of client households are food insecure (*feedoc.org*). As the largest food bank in Orange County, Second Harvest prides itself on creating partnerships with various grocery stores, other nonprofits and individual donations to provide food and services for the less fortunate.

**Background**

* Feeding America is a nonprofit organization based in Chicago, Illinois that caters to low-income families and those in need of food.
* With a vision beginning in 1960, Feeding America works with a large network of food banks nationwide in the fight to end hunger.
* Feeding America operates by maintaining a strong relationship with its stakeholders such as private donors and large grocery companies like Kroger, Walmart and Sam’s Club.
* Stakeholders donate produce and other food items to hundreds of food banks throughout the United States.
* Feeding America strives its best to provide food services to its partnering food banks.
* Feeding America has numerous food banks throughout the country.

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* “Feeding America provides food assistance to an estimated 46.5 million people annually, including 12 million children and 7 million seniors.”
* “Based on annual income, 72 percent of all Feeding America client households live at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level.”
* Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, California is a food bank supported by Feeding America.
* Second Harvest operates in Irvine, California and has been providing services to the Orange County area since 1983.
* In Orange County alone, “there are nearly 400,000 people who don’t know where their next meal will come from” (*feedoc.org*).
* Second Harvest is able to alleviate hunger to more than 240,000 people each month.

**Situation Analysis**

In order for Second Harvest to provide services to those in need, they rely primarily on donations, grants, fundraising, education and food drives to support their on-going efforts to end hunger. Second Harvest partners with more than “340 member charities, feeding approximately 200,000 individuals each month. Those served include the working poor, children, seniors on fixed incomes, single parents, the disabled, the homeless and individuals experiencing medical emergencies or recent job layoffs (*feedoc.org*).” As stated above, food sources include local grocery store and supermarket chains, food manufactures, restaurants and private individuals. With the majority of food sources relying on local stakeholders, there is no guarantee that the Orange County families in need will continue to receive services to relieve their hunger. In Orange County, 1 in 5 kids live in poverty, 35% of families go hungry at times and 50% of

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children rely on school food programs to avert hunger (*capoc.org*). With the cost of living being high in Orange County, the needs become greater. Second Harvest strives on partnering with large grocery store chains, local companies and private donors to be successful. In order to continue its efforts in reducing hunger in Orange County, Second Harvest needs to configure more ways to target its private donors and educate more Orange County residents in order to continue being prosperous.

**SWOT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| STRENGTHS   * Largest food bank in Orange County * Well known * Strong Partnerships with grocery stores * Hardworking staff and board of directors * Partner of Feeding America | OPPORTUNITIES   * Generate more donations through fundraising efforts * Many education institutions/places where Second Harvest can educate the county on poverty * Apply for more grants * More partnerships with other organizations and local nonprofits |
| WEAKNESSES   * High poverty level * Lots of people, not enough food * Not well-known in the area * Not utilizing all of its resources/marketing efforts * Limited cash flow and funds available | **THREATS**   * More economic downturn * Current high paying individuals stop donating * Other nonprofits people can donate to * Loose the amount of current free services * Not enough food to provide * Limited space to store food |

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**Core Problem/Opportunity**

With the economic downturn, Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County has experienced a growth in demand for goods and services and needs to seek out more partnerships and donations to continue its efforts to eliminate hunger in Orange County.

**Goal**

The Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County’s goal is to eliminate hunger in Orange County, California by being able to provide more food services to those in need through the help of its stakeholders.

**Objectives**

* Contact stakeholders such as employees, donors and volunteers to come together and generate canned food and other monetary donations
* Increase the number of food donations each month
* Contact more local grocery stores (create a strong and lasting relationship) where they can donate more produce, canned food and other goods and services
* Keep donors informed by creating 1 newsletter each month letting them know how they can contribute/help reduce hunger in Orange County
* Maintain a strong relationship with primary stakeholders where they aide their own campaign (example: Canned food drive at their current employer)
* Obtain $1,000 each month in cash/check donations from new donors or those who haven’t donated in 2+ years

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**Key Publics**

Stakeholders ages 25+ years who have the means to either volunteer or donate (money or canned goods) to Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County.

1. Currently there are more than 3,000,000 people living in Orange County, California. Population wise, Orange County is the third largest county in the state of California. From the 2013 census data, 13.5% of Orange County residents live in poverty and the median age for residents is 36.6 years old and the median household income is $74,163. More than 80% of the Orange County population ages 25 years and older have graduated college and 36% have received their bachelor’s degree or received some sort of higher education. Orange County’s population is primarily divided into three different racial groups: Caucasian, Hispanic and Asian. Many people in Orange County enjoy leisurely activities such as vacationing, outdoor sports and activities and attending sporting games.
2. There are a handful of reasons why people donate to charities and nonprofit organizations and according to social psychologists, the reasoning’s are for public benefit and private benefit. “We help because we perceive the benefit of our actions as accruing to others” (*evasvillage.org*). Psychologist call it public benefit because the public (e.g., the needy in Orange County) benefit from the donation. “However, we don’t perceive ourselves as gaining any benefit from helping others; we have altruistic as opposed to personal motives for helping.” A private benefit is when donors help others because they see themselves as benefitting in some way. A majority of the donations given to Second Harvest Food Bank were given through private donations. Donors in the area have a self-interest because of the tangible benefits they can get from it such as attending special

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events, discounted tickets and special recognition. Ultimately, people give to feel good about themselves while supporting a cause they care about.

1. The Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County caters to 400,000 needy people. These people don’t know where their next meal is coming from and rely on Second Harvest to assist them. In order for Second Harvest to continue providing their services, it is crucial to maintain a strong relationship with its stakeholders. Second Harvest’s current relationship with its stakeholders allows people to donate online, by phone, in person or by mail or volunteer. The number of ways to donate makes it easy for people to contact and help the organization. Second Harvest allows stakeholders to give monthly, help plan an event or just volunteer their services when they can.
2. Third-party influential are important because they can help deliver tactical information to its key publics. Feeding America is the U.S. hunger relief charity that partners with all other food banks in the nation. Feeding America assists other organizations by supporting their services for seniors, kids and those suffering from an unexpected or natural disaster. Feeding America provides key publics with national and local statistics to help influence their partner’s donors.
3. The key publics of Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County will help to eliminate hunger in the county. With the county’s high standing poverty level, the food bank can use all the help it can get. People donate to this organization because they have a sentimental tie to it and because the way it makes them feel. With the stakeholders, this will allow Second Harvest to increase the amounts of donations received each month, inform them about the continuous need in the area and help generate more monthly funds.

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**Primary Message**

Many people in the community are too often confronted with choices between paying for food and paying for other essentials. Donating to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County can help eliminate hunger in Orange County.

**Secondary Messages**

* One of the crucial issues in the community is those who don’t have enough money to feed their families. While many people have access to Second Harvest, the goal is to be able to have an abundance, to help reduce hunger.
* “In Orange County, nearly half of public school kids rely on reduced or free school lunches for their major source of nutrition. That’s 222,000 kids who may well be going to bed hungry on weekends and during summer vacation.” When kids grow up in poverty, they have improper nutrition, poorer health and are more likely to become obese. “Teens from low-income families are 3 times more likely to be obese, and 33.3% of all children in Orange County are already overweight. These kids have increased risk of diabetes, sleep apnea, asthma, cardiovascular disease, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure, plus the emotional effects of poor self-image, social stigmatization and isolation that can undermine their progress in school and life” (*feedoc.org*).

**Target Audience**

In order to reach the target audience (stakeholders 25+ years old who have the means to either volunteer or donate canned foods or money) for the Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, a specific strategy must be implemented. The first being that the Second Harvest Food Bank would like to see an increase in canned goods and cash donations. To achieve this goal

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while steering the target audience, the Second Harvest Food Bank will partner with its local chain grocery stores such as Vons, Stater Bros., and Albertsons by setting up a coin canisters and popup canned food drop offs at these major grocery stores in the Orange County region.

**Strategies**

The County of Orange is one of the most populated counties in the state of California. Currently, there are more than 12.5 million households in the county according to the census data. Many of these households have a median income of $75,000. In 2007 it was reported that there were 530 grocery stores in Orange County. The stakeholders that would donate are those who have the extra means to go on vacation, enjoy the extra luxuries such as being able to attend sporting events, shopping on a regular basis and entertainment activities. The stakeholders have a relatively high paying job and see donating as an opportunity to change someone’s life. The stakeholders are motivated by recognition and have a sense of belongingness, ultimately they want to set a good image for themselves/their company. Partnering with the local grocery stores and setting up coin canisters and popup canned food drop offs will appeal to the public because it’s convenient and a lot of times when people make small purchases at the store, they pay cash. The remaining loose change received from their purchase can be easily dispensed in the coin canister. In the right retail setting and location in Orange County, this method can raise thousands of dollars.

The second strategy that will appeal to the target audience is a popup canned food drive. This canned food drive can also be seen as a “canned food drive tour.” The concept of this it to make sure that all regions in the county are targeted and informed about the poverty that is taking place in their own backyard. The popup canned food drives will take place at grocery stores and

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provide shoppers with information about Second Harvest Food Bank. Setting up the primary location at the grocery stores ensures that all publics are met because grocery stores are a universal place in which we all shop, we need food to survive. When people are informed about the organization prior to entering the grocery store, they are more likely to purchase additional canned food items to donate. At the time of donation, Second Harvest Food Bank can get the donors contact information and keep them informed of current and future events.

**Channels**

* Community Leaders
* Store Managers
* Social Media

The target audience for Second Harvest Food Bank is those ages 25+ years old who have the means to donate. In today’s society, many people are influenced by their local community leaders whether it be their bosses, mayor or president of the Neighborhood Watch. Community leaders have the essential means to encourage other people to donate. Community leaders are seen as influential people who possess personal and professional skills in order to achieve success. Store managers of the grocery stores are crucial because they already have a relationship with their consumers and employees and can help encourage consumers to donate while educating them about the needs of the community. Social media is crucial because it can help grow the organization and increase donations and it is a popular way in which people communicate.

**Alternative Channels**

* Profitable Companies/Organizations
* Parents

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* Local Universities/Colleges
* Sporting/Entertaining Events
* Food and Household Retailers

Parents, companies, universities and sporting events are great ways to inform the community about Second Harvest Food Banks’ mission to end hunger. By telling sentimental stories, they will resonate with the potential donors. According to researchers from the University of Pennsylvania, “if organizations want to raise money for a charitable cause, it is far better to appeal to the heart than to the head. Feelings, not analytical thinking, drives decisions.”

**Tactics**

* Provide information on Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County
* Set up pop up donation events at various grocery stores in the county
* Print informative packets (how the organization started, statistics in Orange County, heartfelt stories, how the donation helps) and donation envelopes for cash donations to distribute at the pop up donation events
* Work with cashiers and store managers at the grocery stores to establish talk tracks to motivate people to donate their loose change to the coin canister

**Segmented Audience**

The segmented audience for this organization will be 25-35 year olds. This age group is important because they are considered a young audience and still determining which organizations to be involved with. Also, this is the segmented audience so thus, if they can’t afford to contribute cash wise, they can certainly donate canned food items throughout the year. People in this audience are just starting a family or have fairly young children. They are active and visit the grocery store about 2-3 times per week. You can find this audience on social media, attending sporting events, enjoying the outdoors and valuing education and enriching the lives of their children and community. This audience still falls in the median household range of $75,000.

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**Channels**

* iPhone/Android application
* Government entities

The main channel for this age group is the iPhone/Android application. With technology becoming more and more advanced, people want to have easy access to anything and everything. When this target audience becomes informed about the organization, an app. can make it easier for people to choose from donating a canned food item or a cash donation. This mobile food app. will allow people to allocate donations of items most in need by Second Harvest Food Bank. This app. will allow people to make more specific donations with easy access.

**Alternative Channels**

* Electronic Newsletters
* School Districts
* Public Schools
* Workplace

Newsletters are a great tool to get donors attention but they need to be effective. According to the Nielsen Norman Group, “newsletters feel personal because they arrive in users’ inboxes, and users have an ongoing relationship with them…The positive aspect of this emotional relationship is that newsletters can create much more of a bond between users and a company than a website can.” The newsletter needs to be informative and enlighten its audience about events, important dates, organizational news and personal interests. The newsletters also need to be brief and reliable and should inform the donors of ways the organization has helped the community with their donors continued efforts. Electronic newsletters are a great alternative channel because in a recent study, it was found that “cell phone users check their phone 150x/day.”

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**Tactics**

* Create a newsletter and establish the key audience
* Have Second Harvest Food Bank create a newsletter and establish quarterly dates that it will be sent out
* Have inspirational/motivating stories in each newsletter to encourage donors

**Objectives/Evaluation**

* Contact stakeholders to come together and generate canned food and other monetary donations

-In the beginning of the year, contact 25 stakeholders via social media, mailings or phone calls to commit to donating at least 10 cans per month which will generate 250 new donations per month.

* Increase the number of food donations each month

-Convert 20 people per month through FaceBoook and Twitter to donate canned food on a quarterly basis

-Records kept of private donations

* Contact more local grocery stores (create a strong and lasting relationship) where they can donate more produce, canned food and other goods and services

-Contact the top 10 performing grocery stores in the Orange County area and get them to commit to a monthly donation

* Keep donors informed by creating 1 newsletter each month letting them know how they can contribute/help reduce hunger in Orange County

-Ask the community what they want to see in the newsletters

-Create online surveys to measure the success of the newsletters and ask stakeholders what interests them

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* Maintain a strong relationship with primary stakeholders where they aide their own campaign (example: Canned food drive at their current employer)

-Create 20 large donations boxes to distribute to stakeholders

-Records kept of corporate donations

* Obtain $1,000 each month in cash/check donations from new donors or those who haven’t donated in 2+ years

-Use online giving websites (monitor the monthly amount)

-Encourage check/cash donations sent straight to the organization

**Conclusion**

The Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County’s mission is to end hunger in Orange County. Currently there are a handful of people struggling to put food on the table for their families. Many don’t know where their next meal will be coming from and rely on Second Harvest to provide their family with the means to eat. Though Second Harvest has the ability to feed more than 240,000 people each month, the need for food keeps growing. Donations made to Second Harvest helps provide food pantries, soup kitchen, shelters and after-school programs. People who seek assistance from Second Harvest come for all different types of backgrounds. In order to lend a community voice to the organization and help it continue to grow, stakeholders and community members must help end the hunger in Orange County. With the right strategies, objectives and marketing tools, the Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County has the means to provide for more and more people each month.

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