Speaker 1: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome, welcome. Welcome to the webinar. Uh, my name's Nathan Hill and I'm so glad to be with you. Hopefully we can make the most of every moment of your time today. Uh, before we dive into anything, we're gonna give a couple minutes for everyone to be able to join. I know people are just probably getting done with lunch or getting out of a meeting and all that sort of stuff. So I want to give, uh, people a moment to get connected. And so while we're waiting, I would encourage you and invite you to open up the chat. So quick little chat button, your zoom toolbar, open that up and let me know, who are you? What's your name? What organization are you from or do you work for and where in the world are you zooming in from today? So again, who are you? What organization and where in the world are you zooming in from do that in the chat? I'll try to get us kicked off in there as well. And then we'll get started here in about a minute or two.

Speaker 1: I see Cassie from global impact in Denver, my friend NA here at the next, after HQ. I'm Nathan from next after. How about that? Yeah, feel free to use that chat. Let us know. We've got Tim Johnson with mission resource. Oh, now the chat's moving too fast. We've got Tim and he's from somewhere, but I can't find it anymore. Chat's moving too fast. Bedford, Texas. We've got Ben from ax for water in Vancouver. Great wide north. Welcome. Welcome Maureen from trendy Lutheran church in Duluth. We got lots of folks joining us today. Thank you so much again for being here. And again, hopefully we can make the most of every moment of your time, cuz we've got a really interesting and kind of, of different and nuanced topic today. We're gonna be talking about what nonprofits have been doing over the past few months in response to the ward in Ukraine, which is kind of a heavy topic.

Speaker 1: Uh, but we're gonna look at the data to see what organizations have been doing. We're gonna look at some experiments around what has worked and hasn't worked in the past related to responding to a crisis. And then we're gonna look at the end. At some specific case studies, a couple of organizations, what their approach was to messaging around the crisis in Ukraine and how they kind of got involved within their own context. So that's what you can expect before we dive in. There's a couple just announcements and housekeeping things. I wanna cover. Number one, many of you, I believe are already signed up to come to the nonprofit innovation and optimization summit the September, but many of you haven't gotten your ticket yet either. So I would encourage you to go today to ni summit.com. You see that link on your screen and learn more about the summit.

Speaker 1: You can save 500 bucks on your register with the code early bird. That code will not last forever. So make sure you get there quick to get your ticket and get registered because there's a bunch packed into the summit that you're not gonna wanna miss. It's two full days of innovative speakers. We bring in lots of folks from outside of the nonprofit world, outside of our, our like bubble of fundraising. We're trying to bring in for-profit thinkers and innovators who have ideas that can really help us collectively as nonprofit, marketers and fundraisers really move things forward in order to lead to greater results and ultimately then greater impact on your causes. There's a couple pre-conference workshops. We've got a post-conference workshop this year. There's a ton of parties and, and just like fun networking events built in to make sure that you have a good time and also connect with like-minded fundraisers and peers who can help you grow and innovate in this space.

Speaker 1: Nate, uh, just posted a link in the chat, uh, to get your tickets, if you wanna check that out. And we also have like 80 to 90% of our speakers, uh, booked at this point. So wanna share a couple of those with you. John came this past year and, and saw that his organization raised 35% more, uh, from their website during the year end season based on learnings that he took away from the Neo summit. So you don't wanna miss that. Here's a few speakers that you'll see. Number one, our good friend, Amy Harrison coming all the way from the UK to talk about copywriting. She's been a, almost every single Neo summit with the exception of this past year. Uh, so we're super grateful and excited to have her back. We've got Dana Snyder. Uh, my friend Dana, she's gonna talk all about social media marketing.

Speaker 1: We've got Marcus Collins. Who's gonna, um, talk to us about brand strategy and consumer behavior. Michael King is gonna talk all about SEO and content strategy, something that, uh, we're often pretty weak at in our space. So lots of opportunity there. And then we've got, he's not coming in person, unfortunately he's not doing in person events right now, but Seth Godin will be, uh, attending virtually to give his special message to you, to Neo summit attendees. So you won't wanna miss that. That's gonna be awesome. Uh, and then a bunch of other speakers as well. So again, learn more, check that out@nisummit.com, make sure Youn your ticket and join us. And then a couple things just about the webinar today. Number one, the most popular question we ever get about anything is is this recorded? Can I get a video? Can I get the slides kinda?

Speaker 1: I share it with other people. The answer is always yes. So around 5:00 PM central time today, we'll send you an email with a link to the recording and to slides into any resources we've mentioned today as well. Uh, so you can expect that later this evening, and then we are gonna do our best to have some time for questions as well. If you have a question as we're going through the webinar today, go to your zoom tool bar, hit that Q and a button and put your question in there. That's the best way for us to keep track of what questions are in there. What's been answered what hasn't. So put your questions in there and then any other ideas or conversation that you want to have throughout the webinar today, just put in the chat. We'll try to keep an eye on that. We may ask you to put some things in the chat and give us your perspective or opinion.

Speaker 1: Uh, so keep the chat up, keep the Q and a up. Uh, and then we're gonna dive into things here, a couple, just kind of thoughts and comments. Before I hand over to my friend B, to talk about the data behind what nonprofits have been doing, uh, related to Ukraine's really hard as marketers and as fundraisers, as communicators, to know how to respond when a crisis occurs, like where's the, of where I need to go get involved. And it's a mix of, you know, there's expectations from others on you as to what you should be responding to. And you're trying to tease that out and figure that out, but then there's also you internally as a, you know, a communicator and as a organization and as a brand, figuring out what's right for us to respond to, how do you do that in a meaningful way, in a genuine way, not come across as opportunistic or, uh, inauthentic, or just trying to capitalize on the, the, the next event that's uping.

Speaker 1: So it's really hard. It's really hard to kind of like thread the needle on that and get it right. And we do not have all the answers for you today, but we do have a lot of data to help give you some insights and ideas as to how to craft your plans when the next crisis occurs. Or maybe it's even just ongoing communication about the war in Ukraine right now, as that continues to be ongoing. So just kind of have that in your brain as we're going through. Again, we can't give you the ultimate solution, but we can give you some data and some insights to help you craft a strategy to hopefully do this well, the next time a crisis occurs. So from here, I wanna hand things over to B. So B come on in, she's been looking at a ton of data, uh, for a different research study and then has kind of taken this lens of to try to see what are nonprofits doing related to Ukraine. So B take it away.

Speaker 2: Hello everyone. I am B and before I dig into the data, I actually wanted to go about how this question even came about. And it really started off with a little bit of my background. So prior to coming to next, after where I work as the research associate, so I really just analyzed up and shared things with everyone else. Um, I was in the air force, uh, as an Intel analyst. And so when it came to like global issues and international crisis and stuff like that, those were things that were just like really near and dear to me, cuz that's what I analyzed. So not coming from the typical non-profit background and working into like the nitty gritty of sending emails and stuff like that. I was legitimately curious about, you know, like how do organizations actually respond to an international crisis when that occurs?

Speaker 2: So there I was dramatically thinking it was like late at nights and I was like, man, I, I really do just wonder like what do people respond? How do people send emails? Um, and like, how do we go about this? And you know, thankfully we have the data to actually look at that. So that's how this question came about the, how do nonprofits respond to an international crisis now? Of course, that is a, a very big question. You know, there's a lot of things that have happened, especially even in the past two years. So I decided to scope it down to the more recent event, which is the war in Ukraine. Now, in order to make this a little bit more approachable, I broke it down into four main questions. The first off, um, we previously donated to 140 organizations. So we were already receiving emails from them.

Speaker 2: We were actually doing a different research study. So it was like, well, you know, this is a great opportunity to see how those organizations, which were 140 organizations were communicating with us and who was actually responding to what was going on. And then the second question is what verticals were responding. Now, of course this might seem very obvious to some and you know, like the obvious ones also jumped out to me, but I was also curious to see if there were some outliers, some different verticals that don't typically respond to an international crisis of how they would go about it. And then the third question was how soon did organizations start responding? Especially was something where it seemed like we were kind of leading up to what was going on in Ukraine and Russia, but you know, not everyone is following the details of day to day, what was going on.

Speaker 2: So how soon were organizations able to pivot their communications to what was going on? And then the last one is what types of emails were we actually getting? Were they cultivating us still? Were they just asking for donations or, you know, what exactly was the messaging in those? So that's the forming questions that we're gonna answer throughout. Um, this talk here now, how I actually went about this. So as I mentioned previously, we donated 240 organizations. So we used those same organizations and we tracked what those communications look like. And then from there, I only focused on emails that focused on Ukraine. So if their message was focused on Ukraine, those are the ones that I looked at, not just like mentioning it somewhere in the body of the email, somewhere hidden in there, but their messaging was focused on that. And then the third one me as the donor, as the person reading the email, did it look like a cultivation email or a solicitation email? And this is what we learned. So starting off with that first question from 140 organizations, how many do you guys think actually responded at least during the study. See if we have any, any guesses out there?

Speaker 2: Any takers? No. Alright, well I'll give you guys the answer. Ooh. Okay. Wait, I gave you guys the answer. I'm sorry. I didn't give you guys enough time. You guys were close. Well, Riley, Riley, thanks Riley. She was the closest one to 30. Um, so out of the hundred and 40 organizations, 28 organizations communicated with us and we're talking about from February 21st, all the way to April 8th. So we're looking at a seven week window in between that time we got 162, uh, emails. So we'll actually dig more into that. So overall 20% of the nonprofits that we donated to sent us and responded to what was going on in Ukraine. So let's talk about some of the verticals that responded to us. We'll break it down over here. We have, uh, nine verticals on the bottom and I'm actually gonna start off by showing you guys, these were the verticals that we donated to during the study, right?

Speaker 2: So the ones in blue are the ones we donated to and then the ones in yellow, those are the organizations that responded to Ukraine, or at least we got communications regarding Ukraine. So I'll, before we break more into each vertical, I actually wanted to point out that 40% of the organizations that we donated to were either international or faith based. So a majority of them were, you know, skewed that. So it's gonna skew a little bit of the data as well, which is why 88% of the organizations we heard from were from either international or faith based, which also makes sense too, based off of the circumstances. Those are the verticals that we would expect to hear from now when we break it down by vertical. So 52% of the organizations we donated to, uh, were, uh, we actually, you know, heard something from regarding Ukraine, faith based, 40% public policy and advocacy.

Speaker 2: We heard 18% of those organizations that we donated to human services. There was one we'll actually dig into that one later on education. I was curious to see if they would, you know, talk about any academics or anything that regarding what was going on. We heard nothing from which is okay. Um, health based organizations we heard from one environment, wildlife and arts and culture. We did not hear from at least during that seven week period. So not to take away from anything, but at least during that period, we did not receive any emails from them. So again, 88% of those nonprofits were either faith based or international, uh, based organizations. So I don't know if that's a surprise for you guys, but you know, really wasn't a surprise for me either. But what about some of those outliers that I kind of alluded to earlier on?

Speaker 2: Right? So those human service organization that was actually from the USO and their communications actually started once. Um, there was an announcement that you, that us military would be deployed to Poland in support of what was going on over there. So their emails were regarding signing this card in support of the troops, you know, showing them our support and all that. So that's kind of like what their role was in this response. Now the one that I thought it was really interesting was March of dimes. This was the health based organization. Um, so if you're not familiar with the March of dimes organization, there they've been around for a long time. Um, they are an advocacy group for women and children's health. So really interesting to see how they took this approach. And the reason why I really wanted to focus on this one is because their approach is really different.

Speaker 2: So starting off of a little bit of a close up here of what their email, uh, call to action was, and looking at some of the words here. So you see here at marches, dimes is committed to fighting for the help of every family and the crisis. Ukraine is facing families daily. We need your support to ensure much supplies are needed. And we work with, and this is the key part here. We work with our partners to distribute them to areas of greatest needs. I'm like, okay, this is, this is very interesting. They're acting as like the, the mediator, the in between, you know, to, to bring awareness to what was going on, but acknowledging that they're going to be providing their support to other organizations. So when you click on the help now and you go into their page, uh, it goes more into detail about what their involvement is here.

Speaker 2: So this is here, uh, working with vetted organizations who are delivering supplies to Ukraine, trusted grassroots NGOs in the region, really, you know, pointing out that they are working with organizations that have been vetted that have actual involvement to what's going on over there. And then, you know, the question is, well, if I wanted to just donate money, what is that? You know, what is I as a donor? What can I do and explicitly say here that they cannot accept money to, to help, um, the situation in Ukraine. And if you do wanna send money, please send it to the organization if you're choosing. Um, and, and I thought that was really interesting cuz I'm like, that's just very honest. So I don't know about y'all, but as a donor, I really appreciated the honesty, right? They, as an organization used it as a platform to bring awareness, they knew what they are capable of doing what their mission is.

Speaker 2: Um, but they didn't shy away from like providing support. What they decided to do is just bring awareness to those organizations that do have direct involvement to what's going on. So I thought that was a very interesting thing, especially as we talk about and Nathan, we'll talk about this later on as well is, you know, as an organization, how do you, you know, do you choose to support? Not because you don't believe it or not, but like, you know, as your mission, you want you to stay true to your donors and true to who you are and what you stand for and not just, you know, try to make things in an opportunistic way. So I really appreciate that they were honest about their involvement. So now let's now dig into how soon did organizations respond. So there's that seven week period that I was alluding to earlier, starting off on actually February 21st, all the way to April 7th.

Speaker 2: And just to kind of get you all familiar with what you're seeing, cuz I know data can be very overwhelming charts and like movements and stuff like that. But um, the shaded orange areas, which are the weekday. So Monday through Friday and in the white areas are just gonna be the weekends. Um, and then the numbers that you see in between each one of those blocks represent the average number of emails sent in those weeks. So I hope you enjoy this animation that took me way too long to actually do. Um, but this is the number of emails that we sent. And so before we continue on, I wanted to start off from the very beginning all the way, February 21st. So key, uh, key things to remember here. So Russia invaded Ukraine on the 24th of February. Um, so that's what is going to explain that first increase in the number of emails that we started to receive, right?

Speaker 2: So you're probably wondering like what were we receiving beforehand if Russia hasn't invaded anything yet? Um, but it were actually emails from faith-based organizations who were requesting prayers in response to the precarious situation that was going on over there, right? Like if you're a follow in the news, things were leading up to that moment. And uh, faith-based organizations that we donated to, we were sending emails and asking, uh, donors and readers to, to pray and to keep those, uh, those in thoughts, you know, prior to the invasion happening. So now we're gonna look into other key areas here. Um, if you remember, I mentioned the, the, the white areas, those are the weekends. So those significant drafts there were on Sundays. We did not receive any communications there thought that was very interesting.

Speaker 2: Now let's talk about the types of me emails that we received cultivation versus solicitation. So again, we're looking at, uh, the seven week period there. I know it's gonna be a lot of like numbers and things being shown over here, but the blue, these are the cultivation emails that we received. Now, if you remember, February 24th was the day that Russia invaded Ukraine. And that's when we started to receive solicitation emails. So I was like, well, you know, that it, it was really interesting to see that we were still receiving cultivation emails, but I was like, okay, what does the tone sound like from solicitation emails? Like how are people asking for money? How are people messaging what's going on? Cause I'm sure like for many people we're just trying to figure out what, how we can help and how we can provide, um, donations or what, whatnot to what was going on.

Speaker 2: So me personally, this is how I imagine a solicitation email sounding like, right. Especially after a crisis and you're like, we need money, do whatever you can and whatnot. So I was, this is what I was imagining, just like urgent everything and sent all the money you can. Um, but I was actually surprised to see the cultivation emails that we received the next day. So February 25th and we received them, these are just examples from some of the organizations here. Um, but the first thing that came, you know, like really stood out to me was like there very personal tone. Um, no like these organizations weren't as shocked as everyone else were like, listen, we just found out about this. We wanna help. We're trying to figure out based off of what we know for many of these organizations, which are international, like humanitarian type, they had folks in Ukraine as well or in the area around it.

Speaker 2: So they were personally affected as well. And they're trying to bring in, you know, like stories about, Hey, we have people over there as well. We're trying to get updates and we wanna bring you along as well as, you know, not just as a donor, but as someone who cares, we wanna update you guys as well, what's going on. So I really appreciated that, that there was still cultivation happening, you know? And it was like a really honest, like realistic. Like we're just trying to figure this out as well. And I think everyone was also on that same page.

Speaker 2: So I know that I showed you guys already what the cultivation versus the solicitation breakdown was, but how many of you think we received more solicitation emails or cultivation put in there in the chat if you think we received either more cultivation or more solicitation emails. All right. We're seeing a couple here. Loretta solicitation, Katie solicitation cultivation from Hannah. Tim says cultivation. Okay. Sound like a 50 50 split right now. Cultivation. Okay. Okay. Well I'll give you guys the answer. Are you guys ready? It was a 50 50. And that was like really surprising. You know, like again, you're thinking as, as a donor, you know, like when a crisis happens, you're expecting to be bombarded with a bunch of emails and you're like, I don't know what's going on, but we actually received a 50 50 split between cultivation solicitation, but that does change depending on the vertical we're talking about again, this is overall.

Speaker 2: So the, the, the actual breakdown is going to be different depending on the organization, but by vertical, we saw that faith-based organizations tend to cultivate their donors more. So, which that was great. You know, as, as I alluded to earlier, we were talking about those emails, requesting prayers and letting people know like, Hey, we're all in this together. We're trying to figure out how to help our brothers and sisters abroad and everything. So that was a, you know, that was a lot of their messaging when it came to their cultivation emails now, international humanitarian type emails, kind of different little, uh, you know, pretty much the opposite. Two out of three other emails were solicitation emails. So we tend to be, you know, they tend to ask for more money and they weren't really many cultivation emails. Again, this journey is very different for each specific organization, but as a whole, that's what we saw from this time.

Speaker 2: Now what about mail? So interestingly enough, we did get mail and we got mail from one organization, which get ready when you see this image is gonna be very, uh, aggressive. I believe. So we get this in the mailbox and I'm like, this is, you see urgent, you see red letter. And you're like, is this the IRS? Like, is this like, are they asking me to extend my car warranty? Like I was scared when I saw this, I did not know what to expect. Um, but this is actually from ox van, which is an international humanitarian, uh, disaster relief organization based out of the UK. So that was, uh, one letter that we got on four April and they respond as an international organization. They respond to crisis around the world and they made sure to, you know, put that in their, in their letter here, you see here, you know, in the top part, it says daily reports, document, devastating loss of life, unimaginable suffering stemming from humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, horn of Africa, Syria, Yemen in other countries.

Speaker 2: So they were highlighting that, you know, obviously there's a crisis happening in Ukraine, but we can't forget about everything else. That's, that's going on around the world as well. And so again, looking at how organizations respond, you know, without forgetting what their core mission is and reminding their donors, like they're still involved and they're still helping around the world. But at this moment, we also want to highlight what's going on in Ukraine. <affirmative> so what is going on now? So if you've been following the news, it's it it's been three months since the invasion. And, um, like the situation itself hasn't gotten much better, right? Like Russia has really started their second phase of what's going on in Ukraine. Uh, and this also comes to show too, that organizations are continuing to, to wanna find ways to support. So since the end of this analysis, which ended on April 8th, we've received 120 emails.

Speaker 2: So in one month we have received 120 emails was actually more emails than we received during the first portion of this analysis that I showed you guys. And that actually includes from organizations that we didn't hear from in that first portion either. So organizations are still wanting to, to help, but not only that, but people are still wanting to continue to find ways to support. So according to this Google monthly insights for the monthly of April, um, and like keyword that are being searched on Google, people are still looking for ways to, and they're using terms such as how can I help donations, Ukraine and that's for the month of April. And that's probably gonna continue on to the month of may cuz things really hasn't changed as much. So, you know, we're all just trying to figure out how we can help and what we can do. And you know, that's one key thing is we see that this is still a continuing crisis. Like how can we as organizations? How do we remain relevant in what's going on? Cause it's not too late to help, but how do we become relevant without being disingenuous about our mission and also stepping away from, you know, why our donors give us, um, or support us. So that's why I'm going to now pass it on back to Nathan. He's gonna give us more insights about that.

Speaker 1: Thanks so much B um, super cool, super interesting data. Hopefully y'all thought, uh, the same thing. Uh, it's really interesting to see how people respond to crises like these. Uh, and as B saying, you know, as there's continuing response and lots of organizations are maybe starting to get into the mix now figuring out how should we be responding, especially as it's an ongoing crisis, uh, there then becomes this question of like, okay, I wanna be involved. I wanna do something. I wanna say something. How do you go present any type of fundraising ask then in, in the midst of all this, uh, at, at next, after our mission is to decode what works in fundraising and make what we learn as accessible to you as possible to nonprofits, to fundraisers, to nonprofit, marketers and, and communicators. Uh, and typically our process for decoding, what works.

Speaker 1: It starts with this research that bees just gone through, what are nonprofits actually doing, you know, out in the marketplace, out in the world to try to increase giving, um, and connect with donors, inspires generosity, but then secondly of all of those ideas and those tactics just cuz someone's doing it doesn't mean it's good or because, or doesn't mean it works. So we've gotta put it to the test. We've gotta look at AB testing experimentation and optimization to figure out what actually works to increase giving and what really hurts it. And there's learning from both sides of that. Uh, and so that's what we're gonna look at next is a few different learnings from some experiments actually from the early days of COVID 19. So you remember this thing, uh, work right on the tail end. I think fingers crossed of, of all this, this COVID stuff.

Speaker 1: Uh, and, but in the early days there was a lot of unknowns and, and in the fundraising world, it seemed like there were kind of two schools of thought. There are people who felt like, you know, we really shouldn't be asking for money very often and really pouring into fundraising because there's so many people across the globe that are affected by this pandemic in a ton of different ways, from health to economics and finances and all that stuff. So that was one school of thought another being, well, we could stop asking, but then what about all the people that are in need that we could actually help? Cause not everyone is impacted the same way and people who have the means to give might actually be more generous in this time. So we can go help people over here that really have needs. And so those are two kind of like diverging schools of thought, right at the beginning of the pandemic, which means there's a lot of questions about what should we actually be doing.

Speaker 1: And the only way that organizations could really get answers to what is gonna be effective. And what's the right approach for now was to put their best ideas to the test. And so we're gonna look at three different experiments. Uh, and if you were, you know, following next, after research two years ago, you saw some of these back then we shared them. But I think they're really helpful for us today. Understanding how should we position ourselves and our messaging when you're making a fundraising appeal in relation to a crisis there's some things to do. And there's some things to really not do. So we're gonna look at three different experiments in organization. Number one, uh, they had a membership renewal appeal where they were wondering, can we do some work like policy type work that's somewhat related, but can we use that? And should we use that to go ask people to renew their membership with us?

Speaker 1: So that was really the core question organization. Number two, they also did some policy work, but is really directly related to, you know, influencing, uh, legislation and policy around how to handle the economic impact of C. Uh, and so they did this direct work that had a direct correlation to the crisis, but they were wondering, should we lean into this messaging in our appeal? And then third, an organization that kind of has, has worked related somewhat to people that be impacted by COVID 19, but they're not doing work directly to address COVID 19. So they're sort of like tangentially related if you will. So we're gonna look at these three different organizations, what they tested and then what they learned. So we won't spend too much time in the copy of this experiment, but you can see version a, it's a pretty standard renewal appeal when your membership renewal comes up, it was on March 27th.

Speaker 1: In this case, they send this email out to ask you to renew your membership. And this is their a standard appeal version B you can clearly see has a lot more copy and it leans into COVID 19 as sort of the, the reason why you should renew your membership because they're doing some policy work it's somewhat related to it. So you should go renew your membership and they wondered, should we be using this type of messaging? Is it appropriate for us to use this type of messaging? Our donors gonna respond to this type of messaging? So they put us in a test and what they saw was actually an 81% decrease in donations. And so what the, what the takeaway is for, for you is to be really careful as you go start to insert crisis related messaging into your appeals, because if it's not really, truly authentic and genuinely directly related to the crisis, if your appeal isn't directly related, you might actually be really, really hurting yourself.

Speaker 1: So, so make sure you're authentic in your messaging and you're not just trying to, you know, attach yourself to the crisis because there's opportunity that could actually lead to really poor results. Cuz people can see through that organization. Number two, uh, tested something similar, but a, a little bit different. So this is actually a petition appeal. Someone has just signed a, a petition where they're expressing their voice about their thoughts on what policies should be implemented related to trying to solve sort of the economic impacts of COVID. And that's the work that this organization does every single day. So they're in their lane here and they wondered, should we just kind of mention COVID 19 and then make our standard fundraising appeal? Or should we spend a lot of time talking about the impact of COVID 19 on the policies and on the economics. And so I'll highlight kind of the places where they talk about it in version a, in this first sentence, first paragraph, they mentioned coronavirus COVID 19 in version B, the whole length of the appeal is talking about things related to COVID and you know, policy impacting COVID.

Speaker 1: And because they kind of stayed in their lane, they made a donation appeal directly to the work they're doing related to COVID. It actually led to a 37% increase in donations. In fact, it may have actually hindered them if they didn't talk about COVID because it might come across as stale or like their kind of out of touch because this was the whole conversation for so long. So it made sense for them to lean into this messaging because the work they're doing was directly related to the crisis. So if you can make a natural connection, you should make that natural connection it's likely gonna lead to better results. And then organization three is probably where most of us fall for most crises that come up, this is the reality of it, which is you probably do something that might have an impact, but how do you really talk about it?

Speaker 1: How do you phrase it? How much do you lean into it? And so the approach this organization took was a little bit different. Uh, this organization is called CaringBridge. Uh, if you're not familiar with them, they basically have these health journal pages. Someone can sign up for, to keep family and friends, uh, in the know as they're going through this health journey. So as you can imagine, people who are ex going through COVID 19, maybe they've had it or have a family member that has it there's long term impacts. They might be using CaringBridge to keep people up to date, but CaringBridge isn't necessarily doing work specifically related to COVID or treatment or things like that. So they're tangentially related. This is their standard donation widget help Kelly stay connected to family and friends. You can leave a little note and then you move on to the donation page, version B doesn't specifically address the crisis, but it uses crisis language, if you will.

Speaker 1: So I'll highlight what it says. It says in times like these staying connected online is more essential than ever, which is something we, we learned during, during the pandemic. It's not specifically addressing COVID 19, but it's trying to stay at least relevant. And what they saw through this messaging approach was a tiny little uptick in donations, but not nearly at the level of, of statistical confidence that we would want to say, yeah, it's gonna lead to this result of our time. So in other words, it didn't really make a significant difference. And so the takeaway here is if you don't know where you should fall, if you're uncertain about what messaging you should use, lean into testing optimization experimentation, let your donors tell you through how they respond. So there's kind of your three takeaways. Be authentic, make a natural connection if you have one and then if you're not sure, put it to the test next where I wanna go is hand things over to Courtney. Who's doing this fundraising marketing communication work with organizations every single day. Uh, she's gonna walk through a couple different case studies, uh, of nonprofits who have done some really interesting work in response to the crisis in Ukraine. So Courtney,

Speaker 3: Take a awesome, thanks Nathan. All right. So, um, I have the privilege of working with organizations every single day and asking some of these very questions, like what do we do? Should we be involved? And when the, uh, Ukraine crisis hit, this was, uh, of course, top of mind for so many people. And, um, you know, I think we, even at next after, we're like, what, what should we do? This is what we've learned through COVID, but this is also a very different crisis, you know, um, especially because COVID was really affecting every single person, the Ukraine, uh, war and crisis is maybe only affecting a small percentage of, of, of nonprofits and organizations, you know, who are like kind of boots on the ground. And so, um, you know, as we talk with the organizations that we get to work with, uh, one thing I will say in regards to, to what Nathan was talking through is, you know, he really focused in, on the appeal side of things.

Speaker 3: And, and if, if I would tell you one thing of that we learned through all of this and the work that we've done over the last few months in regards to the UUP Ukraine crisis, um, is that organizations trust you to put out a specific message about a specific thing that said when things like this, like something as horrific as this war in Ukraine happens, they're also looking to you to understand how they should respond, to understand how they should maybe even think, or, um, you know, feel about this whole thing because they trust you. And so, um, if you do testing and you, you think, well, maybe we should do an ask around this, even though we're not directly related to that, absolutely test that. But I would say at a very bare minimum, you should be involved in the conversation just from a communication standpoint, cultivation side of things, just to say, Hey, this is our take on this.

Speaker 3: This is what we think we feel about this, just for those people, the people on your file, the people who are looking to you for answers, and you might not have that direct connection with, um, you know, Ukraine or, or refugees or, or whatever the crisis is. They still are looking to you to speak to that specific thing. Now I know that doesn't work for everyone and, and, you know, some organizations are very, like, we do not get involved in anything but this, and I totally hear you on that. But if you're on the fence and people are looking to you, um, you know, for maybe like how to care for, for people or things, or, or there's like this empathy angle that you have taken with your file, and you have a personal connection with people on your file, I would encourage you to consider, um, having some kind of cultivation to go out because they trust you and they look to you for your opinion.

Speaker 3: So that was not asked of me <laugh> to bring to this conversation today, but it's something that I've been continuing to have. Um, even, you know, as things happen domestically over the past couple of weeks, we've had questions even come up of, do we say something about, you know, the shootings in New York or not? And, and so, um, this is, you know, sadly, this is not going to be the last time we have this conversation. And so I just wanted to kind of share that from the angle that we have taken with a lot of the organizations we work. All right, that said, let's jump into some actual case studies around Ukraine. Um, you know, as, as I had mentioned, we do work with incredible organizations who are asking these very questions just as I'm sure you are. And so I'm gonna start with, um, one specific example.

Speaker 3: We work with an organization who is not boots on the ground, uh, but they, they are a faith-based organization. You know, they feel, uh, led to care for their community, uh, care and, and, and share empathy and, and, and prayers, uh, support to those around the world. And when the Ukraine war happened, their question was, what do we do? We should do something. And so, um, on the 24th, when the war officially started, I guess that's, that's technically the official date of it. Um, though, as, as B was saying, there's been communications even prior to that, um, we, we talked with this organization, so it's, uh, a radio station actually here in the Dallas area. Uh, and they say, what can we do? What should we do? Um, and I started just kind of thinking about what the approach should be, especially because we had no idea how, how serious the war would be.

Speaker 3: We had no idea how long it would last, like, would we be able to put something together? Should we put something together? Um, and so as I started kind of looking at, at, um, some opportunities, there was this need, obviously for, for very practical things with refugees, you're gonna have people who don't have water, clothes, blankets, um, you know, for this faith-based organization, Bibles was a big thing for them that they could potentially provide. So while they don't have boots on the ground, they said, well, what, what can we do? Should we do? And so, um, six days later after the war had started, they, uh, formed a partnership with another organization here in Texas, um, that has boots on the ground. So they partnered with, um, uh, TBM again, they provide relief efforts for, for people around the world and said, Hey, can we work with you to get supplies, Bibles, water, blankets, to refugees as they're fleeing Ukraine and going to Poland.

Speaker 3: And they, they said, absolutely, we're actually headed there in two days, two days. And so this partnership, um, started, and we said, all right, now, what? So we developed a higher ancy campaign, um, strictly through K C B this radio station, where we sent six emails. We had a dedicated donation page. We communicated this deadline, um, of this hire Z campaign. We talked about the need, the financial goal. And we went out through both, uh, email social channels and they have a radio station. So obviously on the radio and we wanted to dedicate one day to relief efforts in Ukraine. So we did just that, but we knew that because we don't have, we, as in the organization that we're working with, doesn't have a direct connection with people in Ukraine. They've never, ever even talked about it. We needed that. We knew that we needed to do some, like educating some, some informing of what we're actually trying to accomplish.

Speaker 3: So this is kind of the formula that we took with this high urgency campaign for an organization that isn't boots on the ground, but they wanted to do something about it. So we wanted to inform first ask thank and steward. And that's just like this framework that we've used, um, through this campaign that has, as you see, worked very well. So on March 2nd, uh, that was a very first, uh, email that went out. Uh, they had looked at doing the honor campaign on, on March 3rd. It was a Thursday. So the first email just was about informing. Then what's going on? It says, Hey, I'm sure you've seen the images and even heard firsthand what is happening to Ukrainian people. We want to do something about that. I'm sure you're asking what can I do as well? So, um, it talks about all of these ideas of what you could do, um, to help people in your Ukraine to help these refugees going on.

Speaker 3: Um, and then they even talked about we're actually going to be helping in the relief efforts. We'll tell you more about that tomorrow, but for now, would you consider praying? And if you wanna learn more, here's a, a URL where you can go visit. So there wasn't a direct ask. It was just say, Hey, I know you're like confused. Wonder what do I do? So are we, we're going to do something about this? And if you want to take a, be a part of this, we want you alongside us. The next day we did. Um, the ask. And again, this specific day was like devoted just for this cause on air. They were doing, uh, you know, fundraising appeals asking for, uh, donations and contributions to these relief efforts. We sent an email in the morning. We sent one in the, in the evening and they were just a direct ask.

Speaker 3: Hey, here's some things that you can do first. You can price second. You can give, this is what your gift is going to go towards. And we told them specifically that their gift would go towards, um, you know, Ukrainian refugees in Poland. And you'd be providing blankets, water heaters, food Bibles, and a place that you, you know, refugees could lay their heads. At night. We told them the goal of what we were trying to raise. We gave them a deadline of midnight tonight to drive that urgency. And then, uh, linked the donation page. The evening email was really a forward email from the morning. One that just says, I wanted to be sure you saw this. Um, we're just hours away from this deadline of midnight. Tonight. We have a team going to Poland and the next couple of days, we wanna make sure that we're equipped with all the supplies that we need to help as many people as possible.

Speaker 3: And then after the ask, a couple days later, we thank them. Uh, this is just one example of a thank you to people who actually donated, we, we did two things within this. Thank you. We, we told them, remember, we were trying to meet this specific goal by this specific date. Guess what? We blew the waters out of it. You blew the waters out of it. You help us, you know, four X, the goal that we were, uh, trying to go towards. And because, you know, because of you, this is what is going to be possible. Additionally, we're actually going to send someone from our radio station to go connect and talk with the ukranian refugees and actually deliver the things that you donated to, to these people. We said, we're not gonna just take the money and send it over. No, we're they actually send someone to Poland to actually deliver the supplies.

Speaker 3: And then we had another version that went to the entire file. I don't have that here. Um, if, to people who didn't donate, because even though they, someone didn't give, we still wanted to make sure that they were, uh, informed and knew what was going on. It was a great cultivation piece to kind of maybe even get people on board. Maybe there's additional people like, oh man, I wanted to give, and I never had the opportunity. Um, so it was very similar to this. Thank you email. But it was simply just like telling them really an update from what happened during the one day campaign. Uh, but we didn't stop there. So remember we wanted to inform, ask, thank, but we must steward as well. So, um, we actually sent two, uh, emails that were really about stewardship. It was kind of giving them a report back.

Speaker 3: Remember I told you that they sent in someone from their on air, uh, programming to Poland to deliver the supplies. We had the email come from that person. And we even had him capture video of just what was going on, um, going on in Poland. So that those who donated even just the file, anybody who, who was on their file could really see, um, the impact that they were having and honestly the need, how great the need was. Um, so we, we sent two steward to emails. They went out one week apart, and then we had a dedicated landing page on their website that had a video to kind of show the impact, um, of the work happening in Ukraine and Poland. The result of this was, was remarkable. They saw a four X times the goal, they were wanting to reach within that 24 hour window.

Speaker 3: So pretty remarkable, um, for this organization who, you know, has, has no connection relation with Ukraine, but really felt this desire and need to do something about this crisis. And also knew that the people who trusted them and looking to them for guidance of what to do, would want to be a part of something like this. And so if you're thinking, you know, if there's a crisis that happens, you know, I would hate to see something as, as horrible as this Ukraine war again, in the very near future. But if something horrible like that happens, you know, I love the, I love this angle that, um, K C B took in, in kind of like calling their friends. I'll never forget. I remember talking with, with our partners at K B and I said, this is what I'm thinking. I don't know if it's possible, but I know that supplies are needed.

Speaker 3: Could you, do you have any kind of partnerships with any organizations that are boots on the ground? And they picked up their phone that night and started calling, calling, calling blind as many organizations that they had partnerships with to see who would be willing to do that. So again, just a, a very, uh, incredible, uh, way to be a part of it to kinda lean in and connect, even with other organizations who are doing the very tangible work on the ground. Um, so that's one, one case study to kinda show you another one is an organization who, you know, does have boots on the ground. And the angle that they took and continue to take is really from the angle of ongoing support. So K C B took this kind of like one day big kind of high urgency campaign idea and ran with it.

Speaker 3: And now it's really just about stewardship, but save the children. Um, an organization that we, that we have the privilege of working with, um, as soon as the war hit the second day, the, the day after that the war started, they started sending emails. They started sending emails and emails and emails and emails, and it continues. And in fact, during, um, you know, as the war was kind of happening within those first, that first week, they sent an email every single day, they were sending emails, you know, morning and evening sometimes, um, because the need was so great. Uh, since then, since February, they continue to send emails to their file. Some of them, um, are a little bit more on the stewardship angle. Some are on the educational side. I think the third one I have in here is like, Hey, guess what? Before this crisis in Ukraine, we were doing this work.

Speaker 3: We were helping to save children's lives affected by crisis. Here's the timeline of actually our work in Ukraine. So that was like, I just, like, I love that angle of that education was really, really cool and everything isn't just like alert, alert, emergency emergency. It's no different than if you think about, uh, a high urgency campaign, if you've been around or you've seen some of our trainings around that, we want to diversify that message so that it doesn't sound same, same, same, and people start to tune you out. So this idea of emergency and alert, coupled with, uh, impact stories and education, and they had a survey and they had testimonials and they diversified their message throughout while this, this, you know, the, the volume of emails is, is pretty remarkable, pretty, uh, significant. Um, they still had a message that was cohesive and also diverse so that it continued to draw people in and people weren't tuning out or saying, I've already heard this.

Speaker 3: I already know this. No, it gives them new content to kind of get in front of people and really drive home the need and drive home the ask. So, um, just wanted to kind of highlight what they were doing. Uh, again, they, they continue to see just an overwhelming response from this effort. In fact, um, in the first six days of the crisis in Ukraine, they raised more revenue than the entire year of one of their primary emergency relief campaigns from another crisis that they're continually working on. So more revenue in the first six days than in an entire year, they also saw like average gift was up 170% compared to all other crisis relief campaigns. So these people, you know, that were starting to give to the Ukraine relief efforts. Uh, weren't just these new donors like chipping in five bucks and 10 bucks.

Speaker 3: And, uh, you've got people who are like, I want to do something and I want to do it so that it has a great impact, a huge impact. I want to make a difference. I see. And I hear, I understand the concern and the issue at hand, we have to resolve this, you know, as, as this community of people reaching out to those who, who, who need us most. And then the last thing kind of what they found is is that, um, the Ukraine relief, uh, is actually one of the highest response, uh, efforts that in the organization's history, it's remarkable. Again, I think about the effects of COVID and how long COVID lasted. They saw, you know, a, a tremendous increase in revenue from that. Um, because, you know, they work in so many different places around the world and everyone was affected by that, but really, um, there was something unique about this crisis, probably the severity of it.

Speaker 3: Um, and, and I can kind of think this like shock factor that we probably all felt when it happened. Like, is this really happening? What could this mean? And, um, has led to this, uh, incredible response, uh, you know, of their donors, prospective donors, people who had probably even never made a gift to any non-profit before any nonprofit before stepping forward and saying, Hey, I want to help. I know you a little bit, but I trust you because I believe what you're sending me, I believe what you're saying. And I believe that my gift is going to make a difference. So those are kind of two case studies I just wanted to share and encourage you to kind of think as you, um, are faced with these situations, these are not easy. <laugh> I understand, I, I, I feel the, the concern and questions that you probably have, and I would just, I would just encourage you to think about how could we be involved, you know, even if at all, um, and kind of going back to my first statement of, um, just remember that people trust you for, um, what you're going to communicate about this specific crisis.

Speaker 3: So how are we going to respond, uh, when that time comes?

Speaker 1: Awesome. Thank you so much, Corey, your of course, insight is so needed and so helpful. Awesome. Thank you. Yes. Um, if you have questions we have about six minutes until the top of the hour, bottom of the hour, top of the hour, some part of the hour. Uh, and I'd love to answer some questions if we can. Uh, so open up that Q and a panel, if you haven't already and drop your questions in there. If you've got questions for ING, or if you've got questions for B they're both here to, um, help get you some answers. And so while you drop any additional questions in there, uh, I do wanna point you to two other resources. One of them being a brand new study, we released, uh, last week, two weeks ago, uh, on copywriting in, in partnership with our friends at donor voice.

Speaker 1: Uh, so we're talking somewhat about copywriting today in terms of how you frame your messaging. Uh, this study gets more into like readability and storytelling and how you can get a good view into, uh, the quality of the copy that you're writing. And so I'd encourage you to check this study out. Uh, it's got some really interesting insights in there, plus a cool tool, uh, from donor donor voice called the copy optimizer, uh, that you can use to help try and improve the copy, uh, and then put those ideas to the test. So scan that QR code or go to the URL you see in your screen, you can get a free copy of that. And then, uh, additionally, just a reminder to check out, uh, Neo summit ni summit.com, make sure you get your tickets to join us in September, uh, for even more insights based in data based in research, based in testing, not just best practices, but what we think works, but what we've decoded can actually work to grow giving and increase generosity.

Speaker 1: We'd love to see you there. We've got one question in the Q and a panel, uh, from Katherine. And she's wondering how do you choose which organizations to get emails from? And I believe that's in relation to, uh, you know, the original data source here. And it's, it's, it's a, there's, there's kind of a mix because some of these, some of the studies we produce we're doing in partnership with, uh, maybe a different tech platform or nonprofit service provider. And so sometimes it's skewed one way or the other, depending on, uh, the partnerships that we have in place. And those sponsors help produce these studies, uh, and make them free for you. Uh, in this case, uh, the kind of the core study, uh, that we are producing is around mobile giving. And so we're going to go donate to a bunch of different organizations that, you know, have digital fundraising programs where you can go give a gift online and we're assessing the mobile giving strategy.

Speaker 1: And so then from that, that, uh, data source where we're pulling emails from, and then it's really interesting to watch some of that stuff come in, because sometimes you start to get emails from organizations that are beyond what you've actually donated to, uh, which kind of shows how quickly your data can move around in, in this circle, even in the nonprofit fundraising world. Uh, but we try to get a good spectrum of different types of organizations, different verticals, different sizes to kind of see what what's the nonprofit space doing overall. So hopefully that's helpful for you, Catherine. Uh, the question from Tim, have you seen a decrease in donations and responses to organizations that are not directly linked to the Ukrainian in war, in other words, has the crisis sucked away funds from other organizations, Courtney, what have you seen as you're working with a, a wide variety of different nonprofits?

Speaker 3: Yeah. Um, we haven't seen a, a significant decrease, um, from this, I, I actually think that we won't see the, the real impact, uh, for another, for another month or two because, uh, organizations are still, you know, receiving donations for the Ukraine war. We've also, <laugh>, we've also got, you know, our economic, uh, financial issues right now with, uh, inflation. And so like even some of those things that in itself is, is a crisis that, that kind of relates to, to this question too. But, um, what I would say is this is that if people aren't giving to you Ukraine, it doesn't mean that they're going to necessarily stop giving to your organization. It's usually an, an additional gift, um, uh, you know, with what they would normally give to, to your organization. I, what we're really finding with this is that people are giving to organizations that they trust. So, so, um, you know, is, is, I wouldn't, I wouldn't say that they're actually like sucking away funds from, from other org orgs. It's really like leaning into the organizations, um, who are providing opportunities for them to give, uh, to those efforts.

Speaker 1: So, yeah, that makes sense. Cool. Thank you, Courtney. And thank you, Tim, for the question, it looks like that's all the questions we have. I know there's a lot here to kind of take in and digest and think about, and then go start to figure out how do you continue to respond to this crisis and others that will come up certainly in the next six months as that sounds, but, um, yeah, there's lots to think about and lots to consider. If we can help you in any way, let us know, feel free to E must email us, reach out to us in, in any way. We'll try to provide you as always with resources and tools based on data that can try to help you grow your giving and your fundraising. That's all we've got for you today. We're rooting for you. We're hoping for the best for you, and we're grateful for you and for all the work that you do. We'll see you next time. Thank you.