

Acquisition Playbook

Six steps from Right Offer to Donation — the complete system for donor acquisition.

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Right Offer

A specific ask, not a generic appeal — clear enough to act on immediately.

WHAT THIS STEP MEANS

The offer is the single, concrete thing you're asking someone to fund. “Support our mission” isn’t an offer — it’s a slogan. A real offer names one problem, one outcome, and one dollar figure a donor can picture funding today.

EXAMPLE — WEAK VS. STRONG

Weak: “Help us support families in need.” Strong: “\$45 provides 10 emergency food packs for flood-affected families this week.”

CHECKLIST

- ✓ Goal is specific and time-bound, not open-ended
- ✓ One primary ask per campaign — not three asks bundled together
- ✓ Cost is broken into a concrete, fundable unit
- ✓ Framed around impact/outcome, not organisational need
- ✓ Ask size matches what this specific audience can realistically give

Right Offer

Do's, don'ts, the KPIs to track, and what to do when this step isn't working.

DO

- ✓ Use concrete numbers
- ✓ Tie the ask to one outcome
- ✓ Make the amount easy to visualise

DON'T

- ✗ Bundle 3 asks in one appeal
- ✗ Use vague mission language
- ✗ Set a goal detached from real need

KPIs TO TRACK

Metric	What it tells you
Click-to-donate rate	Whether the offer is compelling enough to convert interest
Average gift vs. suggested tier	Whether the ask size is calibrated to the audience
Landing page bounce rate	Whether the offer is clear the instant someone arrives

TROUBLESHOOTING

Symptom	Likely Fix
High traffic, low donations	Offer is too vague — rewrite around one problem, one figure
Gifts below suggested tiers	Ask is too high or impact isn't clear — lower entry tier, add framing

Right Audience

The people most likely to care, reached before anyone else is.

WHAT THIS STEP MEANS

Every offer needs a defined audience before it needs a channel or a creative. This is the person most likely to already care — identified from data you have, not a guess about who “might” be interested.

EXAMPLE — TARGETED, NOT GENERAL

An orphan-sponsorship offer aimed specifically at a Zakat-intent audience during Ramadan outperforms the same offer sent to “everyone who follows our page.”

CHECKLIST

- ✓ Audience persona documented — who, why they care, what moves them
- ✓ Segment list built from real data (email, past donors, engagers)
- ✓ Lookalike source identified from existing donors, not cold interests
- ✓ Existing monthly donors excluded from acquisition targeting
- ✓ Messaging language matches how this audience actually talks

Right Audience

Do's, don'ts, the KPIs to track, and what to do when this step isn't working.

DO

- ✓ Build lookalikes from real donor data
- ✓ Segment messaging by audience type
- ✓ Validate audience size before launch

DON'T

- ✗ Guess the audience from assumptions
- ✗ Target a vague “everyone” audience
- ✗ Ignore existing supporters when building lookalikes

KPIS TO TRACK

Metric	What it tells you
CPM / CPC by segment	Whether the audience is priced efficiently to reach
Engagement rate by segment	Whether the message is actually landing with this group
Cost per lead by audience tier	Which segment is most efficient to acquire from

TROUBLESHOOTING

Symptom	Likely Fix
Delivers, but CPM spikes fast	Audience too narrow or overlapping — broaden or consolidate ad sets
Clicks high, donations low	Audience mismatched to offer — realign targeting to the actual donor persona

Right Message

Framed in their language, around what moves them.

WHAT THIS STEP MEANS

The same offer can succeed or fail purely on how it's said. The right message speaks in the audience's own values and vocabulary, leads with emotion, and gets to the point before attention runs out.

EXAMPLE — VALUE-MATCHED FRAMING

For a Ramadan campaign to Muslim donors: "Multiply your reward this Ramadan — your Sadaqah Jariyah keeps giving long after you give it."

CHECKLIST

- ✓ Message tested with a small sample of the real audience first
- ✓ Headline names the beneficiary or outcome, not the organisation
- ✓ Emotional hook lands in the first line, not paragraph three
- ✓ Call-to-action is explicit — no ambiguity about what to do next
- ✓ Tone matches brand voice across every channel it appears on

Right Message

Do's, don'ts, the KPIs to track, and what to do when this step isn't working.

DO

- ✓ Lead with emotion, then facts
- ✓ Use the audience's own words and values
- ✓ Keep the message focused on one idea

DON'T

- ✗ Open with statistics
- ✗ Use jargon or internal acronyms
- ✗ Reuse one message across every segment unchanged

KPIs TO TRACK

Metric	What it tells you
Click-through rate (ad/email)	Whether the hook earns attention fast enough
A/B message win rate	Which framing actually performs, not just feels right
Email open rate	Whether the subject line/first line is doing its job

TROUBLESHOOTING

Symptom	Likely Fix
Low CTR across the board	Weak headline/hook — test 2–3 new opening lines
High CTR, low conversion after click	Message promises something the landing page doesn't deliver — realign the two

Right Channel

Delivered where they're already paying attention.

WHAT THIS STEP MEANS

The channel should match where the audience already spends attention — not just the channels your organisation happens to be active on. A perfect message on the wrong channel still fails.

EXAMPLE — MATCH THE MEDIUM

An older, major-donor base responds far better to email plus a personal phone call than to an Instagram Story ad — same offer, different channel logic.

CHECKLIST

- ✓ Channel choice backed by audience research, not habit
- ✓ Budget split reflects each channel's actual strength
- ✓ Tracking (pixel/UTM) confirmed working before scaling spend
- ✓ Posting/sending cadence planned across the full campaign
- ✓ Owned channels (email, WhatsApp) used first for warm audiences

Right Channel

Do's, don'ts, the KPIs to track, and what to do when this step isn't working.

DO

- ✓ Match channel to funnel stage
- ✓ Test small budget before scaling
- ✓ Lead with owned channels for warm audiences

DON'T

- ✗ Rely on a single channel alone
- ✗ Copy-paste one creative across every channel unchanged
- ✗ Scale spend before tracking is confirmed

KPIs TO TRACK

Metric	What it tells you
Cost per donor, by channel	Which channel actually converts efficiently, not just cheaply
Channel share of total donations	Where your real revenue is concentrated
Click-to-donation rate, by channel	Whether the channel's audience matches the offer

TROUBLESHOOTING

Symptom	Likely Fix
One channel underperforms the rest	Audience or creative format mismatch — reallocate budget, adapt format
Good reach, poor tracked results	Tracking gap — confirm pixel/UTM before blaming the channel

Landing Page

One page, one job: carry the message into a decision.

WHAT THIS STEP MEANS

Every major offer earns its own dedicated page — not the homepage. The page has one job: carry the exact promise made in the ad or email through to a completed decision, with nothing else competing for attention.

EXAMPLE — DEDICATED, NOT GENERIC

A “Give the Gift of Water” ad links to a page headlined “Give the Gift of Water” with a \$45 tier already selected — not a homepage with five other things happening.

CHECKLIST

- ✓ Page loads in under 3 seconds on mobile
- ✓ Single primary call-to-action visible above the fold
- ✓ Social proof or progress indicator visible on the page
- ✓ Headline matches the ad/email word-for-word
- ✓ Form asks only for what’s needed to process the gift

Landing Page

Do's, don'ts, the KPIs to track, and what to do when this step isn't working.

DO

- ✓ Keep form fields minimal
- ✓ Add an impact line next to each amount
- ✓ Test page speed on a regular schedule

DON'T

- ✗ Send paid traffic to the homepage
- ✗ Add a nav menu that pulls focus off the CTA
- ✗ Let the headline drift from the ad that sent them

KPIs TO TRACK

Metric	What it tells you
Page conversion rate	Overall effectiveness of message + design together
Bounce rate	Whether the page delivers on the ad's promise instantly
Form abandonment rate	Where friction is costing you completed gifts

TROUBLESHOOTING

Symptom	Likely Fix
High bounce rate	Message mismatch or slow load — align headline, optimise speed
Started but didn't finish donating	Too many fields or missing trust signals — cut fields, add badges

Donation

The first gift. The moment acquisition becomes a relationship.

WHAT THIS STEP MEANS

The completed gift isn't the finish line — it's the handoff point from acquisition into retention. What happens in the first few minutes after a donation shapes whether it becomes a second gift or a one-time transaction.

EXAMPLE — FAST AND PERSONAL

An automated thank-you and tax receipt lands within minutes, naming the exact offer the donor just funded — not a generic “thank you for your support” template.

CHECKLIST

- ✓ Thank-you automation is live and tested end-to-end
- ✓ Receipt / tax documentation sent immediately
- ✓ Donor tagged in the CRM by source and campaign
- ✓ Next-step nurture sequence scheduled to begin within days
- ✓ Team is notified automatically for major gifts

Donation

Do's, don'ts, the KPIs to track, and what to do when this step isn't working.

DO

- ✓ Personalise the thank-you with real impact
- ✓ Respond to first-time donors fast
- ✓ Log the donation source accurately

DON'T

- ✗ Leave a donor without confirmation
- ✗ Send a cold, generic receipt only
- ✗ Wait days before any follow-up

KPIS TO TRACK

Metric	What it tells you
Time to thank-you	How immediate the donor's confirmation experience is
Donor correctly tagged, %	Whether reporting and future segmentation will be accurate
First-30-day repeat rate	Whether acquisition is actually feeding retention

TROUBLESHOOTING

Symptom	Likely Fix
Donors rarely give a second time	No meaningful post-gift engagement — build an impact-update sequence starting day 3
High rate of failed/abandoned payments	Payment friction — audit the gateway and available payment options