Engaging Supporters

How did you engage your supporters with the campaign? We're looking for examples of great planning, execution and learning.

This was the first time that Chickenshed had taken part in The Big Give Challenge. In order to make the most of this fantastic opportunity, the team at Chickenshed were aware of the importance of planning the campaign effectively. The core team working on the Big Give consisted of members from across the fundraising, marketing and communications departments, ensuring that a coordinated approach was taken during the planning process. Regular team meetings were scheduled, the first of which provided an overview of The Big Give and how Chickenshed would prepare for the campaign. Ideas for the concept were explored, potential target groups were identified, and it was decided which members of the team would watch the different webinars. These webinars assisted the core team in planning the campaign and crafting the campaign concept.

Within the planning meetings, the core team decided on which audience they would target, and developed strategies to best engage with these supporters, identifying groups as below:
After having decided on the multiple audience groups for the campaign, the core team considered ways in which a targeted approach could be taken. For each group, a decision was made as to which message was most appropriate – a ‘give’ or a ‘share’ message. The team agreed on how best to communicate with the different groups, decided who would make contact and captured those plans:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comms Group</th>
<th>Message</th>
<th>Donor?</th>
<th>Matchimp?</th>
<th>Depth/Individual?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*10 Club</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>*Regular Givers (Other)</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Donors (Non Major)</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - Gemma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Donors (Major)</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - Gemma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - Gemma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - Anteos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Membership - Billy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDT/Teaching/Parents</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rovers - Anne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy/Distributors</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Access Donors</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/School Groups</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust/Foundation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Business</td>
<td>1. Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Fundraising - Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Fundraising - Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate</td>
<td>1. Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Fundraising - Class</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Fundraising - Class</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiered Giving</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td>Executive - Latte</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Partnerships</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angel House Customers</td>
<td>Amazing opportunity to raise funds please share.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fundraising - Class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During regular team meetings throughout September to November, the team created a detailed plan for scheduling all marketing and communications activity. The campaign concept was explored and refined, and then design ideas were created and evaluated. Opportunities to ensure best practice were maximised, and so all webinars were viewed by key team members and feedback was shared, resources such as the Marketing Guidebook were utilised, and team members attended a practical workshop led by our Champion funders The Childhood Trust.

For the first time ever, a digital approach was taken for a mass appeal – most previous fundraising had been done direct and offline. This digital approach was an opportunity to reengage supporters, as well as to remind audiences, volunteers, participants and students of our charitable status and need. Our messaging was focused on those that already knew us, reminding them of what they, and we, believe about the Chickenshed approach. We used a concise message to engage our digital audience, and focused on the ‘heart and humanity’ of our work. It was made clear to supporters that the donations they gave would enable more children and young people, who would not otherwise be able to access it, the opportunity to take part in Chickenshed’s inclusive theatre programmes. This would provide children predominantly from disadvantaged backgrounds and/or with disabilities the chance to engage with Chickenshed’s fantastic work.

Providing cross-channel coverage of a consistent core message was central to our campaign, and critical in engaging our supporters. We adapted our materials accordingly to ensure a shared brand, which would be quickly identifiable across all our channels. As a working theatre, an academic institution, and a charity, Chickenshed have myriad shows, activities and courses to promote at any one time, so there is a constant demand for marketing and communication bandwidth. To ensure that no-one who engaged with us during the challenge week could miss our involvement with the Big Challenge, we took the exceptional decision to tone down the frequency of our usual messaging and instead blanket cover all of our communication and marketing routes with the Big Give message. We featured the message in areas that we would not usually, to create the sense of something new and different occurring.
Creative Marketing

What creative marketing approaches did you use?

The Concept

Drawing from direct feedback about and from our participants at Chickenshed, we chose five words representing key areas through which our approach impacts the lives of those we work with:


Alongside each of these we picked a stand-out quote, which we teamed with a colourful, energetic, and diverse group photo, featuring our beneficiary age group in theatrical form. This came together to reflect our belief in the contribution of ‘everyone’.

As we sought to unite all of these elements into a single message, we were inspired by the simplicity and power of the Big Give message itself. We recognised how significant it would be to a child to receive the gift of confidence, and what an honour it would be for a donor to be able to provide it.

Our key messages of the campaign therefore developed as a reflection of the challenge itself:

Confidence. It’s a Big Gift.
Belonging. It’s a Big Gift.
Empathy. It’s a Big Gift.
Self-Belief. It’s a Big Gift.
Expression. It’s a Big Gift.

CHICKENSHED. It’s a Big Gift.

We had our concept. We had our engagement strategy. We then brought these together into our marketing plan. Within this, we ensured that we kept a clear focus on the heart of our work, and reflected the humanity of our impact. This remained consistent with the visual identity and core message we had created, along with the reinforcement of the central ‘doubling’ message of the Big Give itself.
The Big Give Christmas Challenge 2017
Award Application

The Campaign

We kept the timescale of the campaign quite short to maximise momentum, and crafted the campaign across four stages.

Save the Date

In preparation for ‘Save the Date’, we created a webpage full of our heart and humanity content. With a variety of sections, this webpage allowed those who were browsing to get a quick sense of the campaign, whilst offering those who had more time the chance to gain more detailed knowledge about the challenge. This included information about the projects that would be supported by the funds raised. These projects are centred on open access inclusive theatre activities for children and young people who are not members of Chickenshed. We ensured that the webpage had a friendly URL - www.chickenshed.org.uk/biggive - which was useful for print and easy to refer to. We took advantage of a function of our content management system to add a countdown to the webpage, serving to remind supporters of the time limited aspect of the appeal.

To maximise the momentum of excitement for the challenge, we sent out our ‘Save the Date’ a week before the campaign went live. We sent a personalised email to key supporter groups with a clear call-to-action button, giving them the opportunity to sign up and take part. This button led them to a bespoke form on our website. Our Staff and Volunteers were also briefed by email, and the challenge was included in Staff bulletins ahead of the launch. An additional note about the challenge was included in our Artistic Directors Newsletter.

For use on all materials we created a rotating gif, using all of the key words laid over our central image. This enabled the message to be communicated quickly and with energy. ‘Save the Date’ notices were posted to our Twitter and Facebook accounts, using a bespoke short URL (bit.ly/giveabiggift) to ensure that all aspects of our marketing reinforced the core message.

We’re Live

To create the sense that something different was happening, we broke with standard use of our website homepage, and added the Big Give as the main story, filling the screen as soon as you landed on our website.

A personalised email was sent to those who had pledged interest in the challenge, with a clear button leading them directly to our page on the The Big Give website, keeping the user journey as short and smooth as possible. Announcement emails were also sent to staff, students and volunteer bodies, as well as posts to our alumni and local community networks via Facebook Groups. The event was also supported by local community group ‘Love Your Doorstep’, who shared the challenge in their weekly newsletter. We maximised scheduled e-marketing to our theatre and participation customers by adjusting timings so that emails landed during the week of the challenge, and added a special Postscript which highlighted the doubling opportunity.

Daily unique content was posted to social media, and given a small paid boost to ensure that Facebook and Twitter posts appeared on followers’ feeds that same day. It was also important for us to maintain engagement with these active networks throughout the week, so we regularly commented and liked others’ messages to remain in the conversation. Our social media strategy for the Big Give
meant that impressions, reach, and engagement for the campaign posts were significantly higher than the previous month’s posts. We managed to achieve 154% increase in reach and 88% increase in engagement compared to the previous month’s Facebook posts. On Twitter, our number of impressions increased by 366% compared to the previous month’s posts.

The core team were aware that the campaign was going to be taking place within the second week of Chickenshed’s seven-week run of the seasonal show, Rapunzel. During this week, footfall was around 4,000 across audiences, front-of-house volunteers, casts, parents and visitors. It was evident that this was a great opportunity to ensure that no-one who came to our building in the weeks before or during the campaign could miss our participation in the challenge. We took the following steps to increase publicity:

- We flooded the building with posters solely centred on the Big Give, overriding all other marketing material.
- We placed slides of the posters on high rotation on our screen, which sits at the front of the building as people arrive.
- We printed flyers, featuring the heart and humanity images and quotes. In the weeks before and during the campaign, the flyers were handed out to every cast member (over 800 in total), laid out on tables in our front-of-house bar area, and given to those exiting the building after every public show.
- We repurposed our tannoy system, usually used for practical messages, to broadcast an audio advert. This had been recorded by a member of our youth theatre, and shared our excitement over the opportunity to make double the difference by donating during the week.

Keep Going

Halfway through the challenge we introduced new content with a clear call to action. A video was posted in the middle of the campaign to ensure that we maintained momentum instead of allowing support to dwindle. The video summarised the challenge and explained the doubling process with simple graphics. The vision for the video was to inform, engage and inspire, as well as reinforce the heart and humanity message with footage of our participatory activities in action.

We wanted the viewer to see exactly where and who their donations were going towards, so we made sure to feature our beneficiaries, who describe their experience of participatory programmes at Chickenshed. The voiceover of the video was also spoken by a member of our youth theatre. In order to keep viewers engaged we made sure that the video was short and succinct, whilst continuing to mirror the rest of the campaign. We featured this video on boosted Twitter and Facebook posts, and on reminder targeted emails to encourage supporters to keep giving. Using rich-media content proved to be very effective, with our campaign video attaining a reach of 16,099 and an engagement totalling 348 on Facebook. The video also gained over 8,600 views.
During the week that the Christmas Challenge campaign was live, 10 members of Chickenshed staff were signed up to participate in the Skyline Santa Run event. To boost the Big Give campaign, all runners directed their supporters to donate to the Big Give Challenge, rather than having individual sponsorship pages. £503 (including Gift Aid) was raised through sponsorship of our runners.

Thank You

Every donor received a personalised email, via Mailchimp, within a couple of days of the campaign closing. This thanked them for their donation, displayed the amount they gave, and included the ‘Thank you’ video message. This video featured the total amount that had been raised by the campaign, thank you messages from members of Chickenshed, and let supporters know that their generosity had helped to secure enough funding to deliver all of the open access programmes for disadvantaged children and young people for the entirety of 2018.

We shared the same thank you message via social media and sent it to our group lists, including Supporters News, Staff, volunteers, parents, students, and Boards of Trustees. The core team were also aware of the importance of personalised messages. As such, all donors who had given £11 - £99 received a personal letter (mail merged), and those donors who had given £100 plus received a handwritten note from our Senior Development Manager for Philanthropy.
Thank You

Confidence.
It's a big gift.

CHICKENSHED.
It's a big gift.

“Being involved with different people in the nurturing environment of Chickenshed has broadened our daughter’s experiences and meant that she has gained confidence in approaching new environments.”

www.chickenshed.org.uk/biggive

When children and young people come to Chickenshed, many are lacking in confidence, are struggling with insecurity, or find it difficult to form positive relationships. Through participation in our empowering, inclusive performing arts projects these barriers are broken down, confidence grows, self-belief blossoms, empathy emerges, children find new ways to express themselves and everyone finds a place they can truly belong.

Could you help give a big gift this Christmas?

Between 28 Nov and 5 Dec all donations given in Chickenshed through The Big Give online challenge will be DOUBLED, making twice the difference to young lives.

www.chickenshed.org.uk/biggive

CHICKENSHED
THEATRE CHANGING LIVES
Registered Charity No: 1123589
Self-Belief. It’s a big gift.

“Chickenshed creates an incredible sense of self-worth and a real belief that even as a young child they have an important contribution to make.”

We’ve been selected to take part in The Big Give which means that all donations given between now and 5 December will be DOUBLED! During the challenge, we will be raising funds to enable even more children and young people who access our activities to change their lives. Could you give a big gift to more children and young people, and make a double impact with your donation? http://bit.ly/biggivegift

Empathy. It’s a big gift.

“Chickenshed’s special ethos, emphasizing that we all have something to give regardless of abilities and that we are all accepted for who we are, is very rewarding for a child.”

Could you help us give a big gift to more children and young people, a double impact with your donation? Donate via The Big Give and all donations given between now and 5 December will be DOUBLED! http://bit.ly/biggivegift

We’d like to say an absolutely massive THANK YOU to everyone who supported Chickenshed during The Big Give Christmas Challenge. We have been overwhelmed by your generosity. Your support has helped us to secure enough funding to deliver ALL of our open access programmes for disadvantaged children and young people for the WYOL of 2018. Thank you from all of us, for being the next generation of life-changing gifts of confidence, belonging, expression, self-belief and empathy.”
Reflection

This was a successful appeal for Chickenshed, achieving our target in our first year of taking part in the challenge. We engaged a number of new supporters, saw engaged donors increase their giving, and converted a number of long term givers of time, our volunteers, to give financially also. The team took time after the challenge to review what we had learnt through our first year with The Big Give:

- **Project selection**: the project we selected to fundraise for was quite complex, as it included several separate elements. For future campaigns, we feel it would be more straightforward to focus on one impact area, to ensure clarity in our messaging.

- **Application process**: we decided upon the project we would fundraise for at the point of application. In future we would have our campaign concept conversations at this same stage, to ensure the initial project description aligned closely with, and used the same language as, the campaign we presented.

- **Concept and design**: ultimately we were very happy with the clear concept we came up with, and the simple but moving design, using few words and striking images, which was able to cause an emotional response and take people on a journey.

- **'One donation, double the impact'**: we adapted the 2017 Big Give strapline to include the key ‘double’ reference and used this across all of our materials. However, feedback revealed that not everyone understood this to mean donations would be matched/doubled. In future, we would be clearer on this, particularly as match funding was the main motivator for most givers.

- **Online donations only**: not everyone understood that the only way their donations could be matched was to give online directly to The Big Give. We received in excess of £1,200 in cheques/cash during the campaign week, with a request for these to be included towards our total and matched. Unfortunately, this was not possible. For future campaigns we will communicate this more effectively, to save donors from being disappointed.

- **Using our Board members**: we were grateful that some of our Board members donated. For a future campaign, we would look to use these close contacts as potential pledgers, and work more closely with them to reach their networks during the online campaign. This would involve communicating with our Boards at a much earlier stage to ensure their buy in and support.

- **Collaboration**: this campaign provided a fantastic opportunity for cross-departmental working, and it was motivating for all staff and stakeholders to get involved with.

- **Charity message**: as an organisation that is many different things to many different people (a theatre, an arts centre, a further and higher education campus, a Children's and Youth Theatre etc.) it was highly beneficial to be able to run a campaign across all platforms that highlighted our charitable status to everyone. Sometimes our charity messaging can get lost amongst sales and activity specific messaging, but throughout The Big Give, everyone who came in to contact with us, either physically or digitally, would have been clear that we are a charity who need to raise funds to continue our work.

- **Bigger campaign**: this was our first online match funding venture, and so we were keen to test the waters with a manageable target. We exceeded this target, but it was clear that once the match funding was used up, the motivation to give was reduced. However, we were aware of additional donations that supporters would have been willing to give, had further match funding been available. This gives us confidence that a more ambitious target would be attainable in future and this is certainly something that we will work towards in 2018.