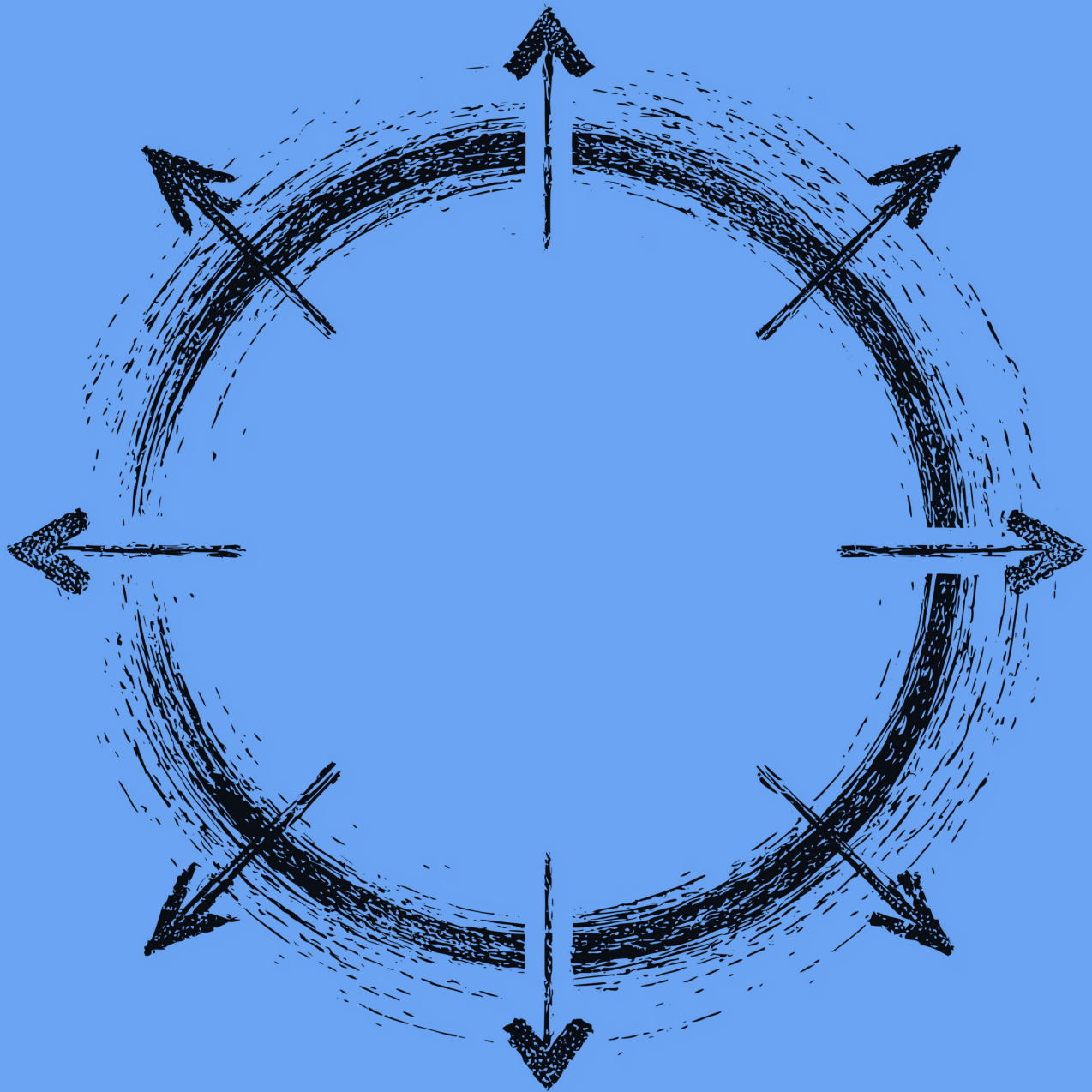


One Story, Many Channels

How to stretch one strong story into a full,
multi-touch campaign



a Nonprofit Storytelling Conference Publication

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First things first

The appeal and email examples you're about to see here are shortened sketches for teaching purposes. They are *not* full fundraising drafts you could drop in the mail.

The goal of this QuickApply isn't to write your letter for you — it's to show you how to take one strong story and extend it across multiple channels so donors see it more than once.

Why campaigns (not one-offs) win

A single letter or email is easy to miss. But a campaign — a coordinated set of touches across different “channels” (mail, email, social, ads, postcards) — keeps your story in front of donors.

The strategy behind campaigns is simple: **always have a reason to send another message.**

That “reason” could be:

- A reminder when the letter lands
- A progress update
- A match or challenge gift
- A broader community need
- A celebration or report-back

As long as you have a reason, you can keep your story alive.

What a Campaign Could Look Like

Here's a sample **2-week campaign** using one story:

- **Day 1:** Direct mail letter drops (anchor story).
- **Day 3:** Email #1 — a “chaser” email that mirrors the story, timed with the letter.
- **Day 5:** Social post #1 — a quick problem snapshot.
- **Day 7:** Email #2 — same story, new angle (like a match or other reason to act now).
- **Day 9:** Social post #2 — a quick outcome snapshot.
- **Day 11:** Update email — show progress (“7 families already helped”).

- **Day 13:** Email #3 — same story, framed as part of the larger community need.
- **Day 14:** Report back (if the goal is reached) or reminder (if still in progress).

Your campaign could be shorter or longer, or filled with more touches. You might add a postcard, a digital ad, or even a phone call. The point isn't the exact number of touches — it's the coordination and repetition across channels.

To see how this works in practice, let's start with one anchor story. Below is a shortened example appeal letter — not a full draft, just a teaching sketch. We'll use this story to show how the same message can move across different channels in a campaign.

Anchor Story Example (Appeal Letter — Shortened for Teaching)

For months, Maria's car was her only shelter. She locked the doors at night, trying to keep her daughter safe.

But because of a person like you, Maria spent her first safe night in her own bed.

Tonight, three more families are waiting for that same relief. Your gift of \$50 will help another family sleep in their own beds.

(Remember: this is shortened just to illustrate how a story can travel. Your actual appeal will be longer and contain more fundraising elements.)

Building Out the Campaign

Email #1 — The Chaser

Purpose: Land in inboxes around the same time as the letter lands in the donor's mailbox. Give donors another way to respond.

Subject: "Did you see Maria's story?"

This week, you'll see Maria's story in your mailbox. For months she and her daughter lived in their car. Thanks to support, they finally spent their **first safe night in a real bed**.

Tonight, three more families are still waiting for that same relief. Will you help? [Donate link]

Email #2 — The New Angle

Purpose: Add a fresh reason to act. This could be a match, a new stat, or a leadership gift. The point is variety with consistency.

Subject: “Your gift will go further tonight”

After hearing Maria’s story, a generous friend wanted to help more families. For a short time, gifts will be matched dollar-for-dollar.

That means your \$50 helps not one but two families find safe housing. Please give today while your gift goes further. [Donate link]

Email #3 — The Wider Lens

Purpose: Show the bigger problem while tying it back to the same story.

Subject: “Maria isn’t the only one”

Maria and her daughter finally found safety. But right now, dozens of other families in our community are still sleeping in cars or on couches.

Tonight, you can change that. You can give another family their first safe night in a real bed. [Donate link]

Social Posts — The Snapshots

Purpose: Stay visible with quick reminders.

- **Problem post:**
Image: Car window at night
Caption: “For months, Maria and her daughter slept in their car. Tonight, you can help another family find a safe bed. [Link]”
 - **Outcome post:**
Image: Cozy bed with warm light
Caption: “Maria just spent her first safe night in her own bed. You can make this possible for another family tonight. [Link]”
-

Update Email — The Progress Check

Purpose: Build trust and urgency by showing progress.

Subject: “7 families already safe — 3 still waiting”

Thanks to donors like you, seven families have already moved into safe housing. But three more are still waiting.

Will you help them tonight? [Donate link]

Report Back — Closing the Loop

Purpose: The campaign isn’t finished until donors hear what they made possible.

- **Email:** “Because of you, 10 families spent their first safe night in a real bed.”
 - **Postcard:** “Safe at last. Maria and nine other families are safe tonight — thanks to you.”
-

The Strategy in One Sentence

Keep telling the same story, but always have a reason to share it again.

That reason could be:

- A reminder when the letter arrives
- A match or challenge
- A progress update
- A broader community stat
- A new family just entering the program
- A final thank-you

As long as you have a reason, you can keep the story alive. Track results, and when your return on investment (ROI) of time or money drops, shift to a new story or angle.

You might also try framing your story differently.

If you’d like to learn how to frame your story differently, download the free QuickApply titled “The Power of Story Framing”. You can find it at the link below:

<https://nonprofitstorytellingconference.com/quickapply-library/>

Wrap Up

One strong story is too valuable to use just once. When you build a campaign, you:

- Multiply the chances donors will see and act.
- Stay consistent while still feeling fresh.
- Build trust with your donors.

That's the difference between a one-off appeal and a real fundraising campaign.

Want to take your storytelling skills even further?

Join us at the Nonprofit Storytelling Conference, where fundraising professionals gather to learn from the best, refine their messaging, and unlock the full potential of storytelling.

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