

## HOW TO REACH MILLENNIALS

Millennials are a hot topic in fundraising, and rightfully so. Millennials are the 80 million 20- to 35-year-olds already in or about to enter the workforce. In fact, millennials will make up 50 percent of the workforce by 2020.

This document is designed to help you use research-based best practices to reach millennials within your United Way campaign. Much of the research presented in this document is based on the four-year studies of The Millennial Impact, sponsored by the Case Foundation, which has received input from more than 16,000 participants through 50 research partners. Complete details of the report can be found at [themillennialimpact.com](http://themillennialimpact.com).

Using this research, United Way has developed the following actions, tools and suggestions for companies wanting to reach this important demographic. It's important to note, however, that there is no silver bullet to reach this audience, with the possible exception of building long-term relationships. Implementing these tools now will help in the short term and as millennials grow in their positions.

### **MILLENNIALS PREFER TO PERFORM SMALLER ACTIONS BEFORE FULLY COMMITTING TO A CAUSE.**

Research suggests that millennials tend to get involved with causes first by taking smaller actions that connect them to the organization. This could be anything from a “like” on the organization’s Facebook page, sharing a video or attending an event.

Companies holding United Way campaigns can easily incorporate these smaller actions into their campaigns through rallies, by asking them to view and share the campaign video and by offering ways to volunteer.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR COMPANIES:**

- Share information about STLVolunteer and GenNext.

According to the research, the top three factors that spur millennials’ engagement in a case are (1) being passionate, (2) the opportunity to meet like-minded people and (3) enhancing their expertise. STLVolunteer is a United Way program that allows individuals and companies to connect with volunteer projects they’re interested in. Opportunities fall across the volunteer continuum – from episodic volunteering to skills-based volunteering – to meet millennials at their life stage. Professionals in their 20s and 30s interested in more in-depth volunteering, networking and learning opportunities will enjoy GenNext.

- Link them with United Way’s social media.

Millennials engage through social media, and connecting them with United Way’s social media is an easy way to introduce them to the cause.

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unitedwaystl>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/unitedwaystl>
- LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/united-way-of-greater-st-louis](https://www.linkedin.com/company/united-way-of-greater-st-louis)
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/unitedwaystl/>
- Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/uwgs1>

- Provide millennials with the opportunity to make their moment.

United Way’s Make Your Moment feature is the perfect way for millennials to learn about United Way, engage in causes, and take a small action – sharing out their preferences through social media.

Helping people.



Greater St. Louis

## **MILLENNIALS NEED TO EXPERIENCE THE CAUSE'S WORK THROUGH IMAGERY AND VIDEO.**

Millennials expect to be inspired through story. In the 2013 Millennial Impact Survey, more than 60 percent of respondents said they felt most invested in a cause when the nonprofit shared a compelling story about successful projects or the people it helps.

United Way campaigns have long been built on the use of story and imagery. Companies wanting to reach millennials have access to a wealth of stories and supporting materials. These items can be shared with employees through email, social media and your company's spaces and intranet.

### **1. United Way campaign video**

United Way's campaign video is a powerful way to share United Way's story. It's available for organizations to download at United Way's campaign headquarters and accessible to the public through United Way's main website starting in August.

### **2. United Way campaign headquarters**

The Campaign HQ not only has information on how to run an effective campaign, but it also has the tools to do it. The campaign materials pages includes the video, photos and other tools.

### **3. United Way's main website**

United Way's website, [HelpingPeople.org](http://HelpingPeople.org), links users to a wealth of stories and opportunities. Some pages of particular interest include: individual stories, the impact calculator and what we're doing to help people.

### **4. Speakers and torchlighters**

Another great way to share stories is in person through events. United Way offers agency speakers and torchlighters to share stories of how United Way helps people.

## **MILLENNIALS ARE INFLUENCED BY THE DECISIONS AND BEHAVIORS OF THEIR PEERS.**

The same research shows that peer influence plays an important role in motivating millennials to volunteer, attend events, participate in programs and give. Research consistently confirms that the influence of an individual on his or her friends is substantial. It also suggests that they have a strong desire for leadership roles within the causes they care about.

Organizations can leverage this by identifying top-giving millennials and asking them to champion the United Way cause among their peers or departments. This provides a leadership role for those already associated with the cause and uses the effective peer-to-peer fundraising tactic.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Eighty-three percent of the respondents made a financial gift to a nonprofit organization. This is a generation that gives, but many may not have reached a career level that lends itself to replace gifts of those retiring. According to the same study, 23 percent of respondents gave \$51-\$100 with all other respondents giving at lower levels. This is why it's especially important to build authentic, long-term relationships with millennials now. As younger millennials reach the next life stage, they will be more apt to give when that relationship is already established.

As you think about ways to incorporate the tools in this document, keep in mind that according to the book "Marketing to Millennials," unlike any generation before them, millennials are actively trying to assimilate other generations into their culture. This means that millennial culture has become mainstream. As you focus on millennials, your work will reach your entire workforce and help spread the message of United Way even further. Your United Way staff person is happy to assist you with strategies directed toward millennials. Let us know how we can help.