



MARKETING AUDIT

For Nonprofit Organizations



WILDWOOD
CREATIVE

THE WILDWOOD TRAIL SERIES FOR NONPROFITS

WELCOME TO BASECAMP

Your first step on the trail to clearer, more effective mission-driven marketing.

Every nonprofit has a mission—but not every nonprofit knows how to market that mission effectively.

This workbook is your Basecamp—a place to pause, take stock of your current marketing efforts, and chart a more focused, strategic path forward. It's designed to help you identify what's working, what needs refining, and where to focus your energy for greater impact.

Whether you're a one-person team juggling fundraising, communications, and programming—or part of a growing organization with multiple hands in the mix—this audit is here to help you simplify, clarify, and align your marketing with your mission.

WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR

This workbook is designed for nonprofit professionals who wear many hats and care deeply about telling their organization's story in a meaningful way. Whether you're brand new to marketing or have years of experience, this guide will help you step back and see the big picture.

It's especially useful for:

- ▶ Small to mid-sized nonprofits looking to increase visibility, engagement, and support.
- ▶ Communications and development professionals seeking more alignment between their goals and messaging.
- ▶ Leaders who feel their marketing is inconsistent, reactive, or disconnected from their impact.

Whether you're building from scratch or refreshing existing materials, this audit gives you the tools to evaluate and elevate your approach.

WHAT YOU'LL GAIN FROM THIS AUDIT

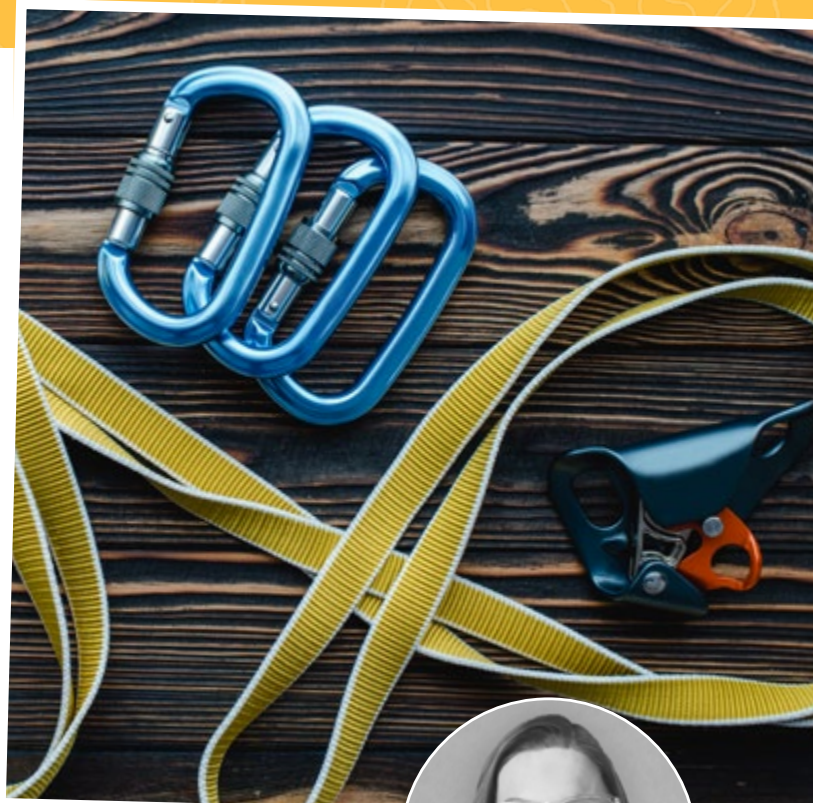
In the pages ahead, you'll evaluate four foundational areas of your nonprofit marketing strategy:

- ▶ Brand & Positioning
- ▶ Audience Understanding
- ▶ Content & Outreach
- ▶ Measurement & Optimization

Each section includes self-assessment prompts, scorecards, and reflection questions to help you:

- ▶ Uncover where your messaging or outreach may be falling flat.
- ▶ Identify strengths you can build on.
- ▶ Prioritize your next best steps based on what matters most to your organization.

You don't need to be a marketing expert to complete this audit—you just need a little time, a little focus, and a willingness to be honest about what's working and what's not.



WHY I CREATED THIS SERIES

Hi! I'm Shannon, a marketing strategist with over 17 years of marketing experience. I've worked with nonprofits of all sizes—from small grassroots organizations to regional nonprofits with statewide reach—and I understand the unique challenges of balancing limited resources with big goals.

I've seen how mission clarity and simple, thoughtful marketing can increase support, deepen engagement, and build long-term community trust.

The Wildwood Trail Series is designed to guide you through that journey—one thoughtful step at a time.

Grab your gear, our climb to Basecamp starts now!

SECTION ONE: BRAND & POSITIONING

Your mission matters. Let's make sure your message does too.

Branding isn't just for big corporations or fancy campaigns. For nonprofits, your brand is how people connect to your mission—how they remember you, trust you, and decide to support you.

It's your voice, your visuals, and your values, all wrapped into one. A strong nonprofit brand builds credibility, communicates impact, and

makes it easier for people to say yes—to donating, volunteering, partnering, or spreading the word.

In this section, we'll evaluate how clearly your brand shows up across your materials and whether your messaging is consistent, compelling, and grounded in your mission.

Let's make sure your foundation is strong.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: MISSION & MESSAGE CHECK-IN

STATEMENT	SCORE (1-5)*
Our mission statement is clear, memorable, and easy to understand.	
We have consistent visual branding (logo, colors, fonts) across all platforms and materials.	
Our messaging speaks to the emotional heart of our mission, not just facts and logistics.	
People outside our organization can describe what we do and why it matters.	
Our brand feels aligned with our values and resonates with the community we serve.	
<i>*RATING SCALE: 1 = Needs work, 5 = Totally dialed in.</i>	TOTAL SCORE (OUT OF 25)

REFLECTION PROMPTS

Think about how your organization is showing up in the world:

What first impression do your materials give a new donor or volunteer?

Is your messaging focused on what you do—or why it matters?

Does your brand feel authentic, or like something you inherited but never updated?

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR SCORE

SCORE	WHAT IT MEANS	SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS
20 - 25	You have a strong, mission-aligned brand that builds trust and helps you stand out.	Consider expanding your brand presence—create a talking points doc for board members, train staff on brand voice, or create branded templates for partner orgs to use.
14 - 19	You've laid a solid foundation, but your brand may be missing consistency or emotional clarity.	Revisit your brand story and voice. Does it reflect your mission's heart and soul? A messaging refresh or storytelling workshop can help fine-tune how you show up.
BELOW 14	Your brand may be unclear, inconsistent, or not actively supporting your mission.	Start by defining your brand promise and key messages. Then conduct a visual and voice audit across your website, materials, and campaigns to identify what needs a refresh.

CASE STUDY

THE REBIRTH OF DUMB FRIENDS LEAGUE

Background: Founded over 100 years ago, Dumb Friends League built a strong reputation as a leading animal welfare organization in Colorado. With a focus on adoption, veterinary care, and education, the organization served thousands of animals and families each year—but its quirky name and brand identity hadn't kept pace with the evolving mission or the modern audiences it aimed to reach.

Challenge: While the organization had deep community roots, its name felt outdated and unclear. It didn't reflect the organization's impact, and at times created confusion or even discomfort—especially among younger or first-time supporters.

The Strategy: In 2025, the nonprofit rebranded as Humane Colorado, introducing a new name, logo, and messaging to better reflect its values, broaden its reach, and strengthen its connection with the communities it serves. The brand update focused on clarity, inclusivity, and future-forward positioning without sacrificing its legacy of care.

The Outcome: The rebrand improved public perception and made it easier for people to understand and support the organization. It strengthened their voice in the animal welfare space, increased engagement, and helped realign their outward identity with their internal mission.

Key Takeaways: Nonprofits grow and evolve—but sometimes, their brand doesn't. Humane Colorado's story shows how a thoughtful rebrand can help an organization speak more clearly, reach more people, and move their mission forward with greater confidence.

NEED HELP STRENGTHENING YOUR NONPROFIT BRAND?

If your brand feels disjointed, dated, or like it doesn't reflect the heart of your work, you're not alone. Many nonprofits grow and evolve, but their brand doesn't grow with them.

That's where I come in!

I work with nonprofit teams to:

- ▶ Clarify your mission, values, and voice.
- ▶ Create messaging that connects emotionally and builds trust.
- ▶ Refresh your visual identity or develop consistent templates.
- ▶ Build a brand guide your whole team (and board!) can use.

Whether you're preparing for a rebrand, updating your website, or just trying to make your messaging more meaningful, I can help you shape a brand that reflects your impact—and inspires people to support it.

Let's talk brand.

[Request a free consultation >>](#)

[View my portfolio >>](#)

SECTION TWO: AUDIENCE UNDERSTANDING

Know who you're speaking to and what matters most to them.

You can have a powerful mission and a beautiful brand, but if you don't truly understand your audience, your message won't land.

For nonprofits, "audience" can mean many different people: donors, volunteers, community members, partner organizations, program participants, even your board. Each group has different motivations,

needs, and expectations. And the better you understand those differences, the easier it is to communicate in a way that builds trust and inspires action.

This section will help you assess whether your outreach is built on real understanding or assumptions that may no longer hold true.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: AUDIENCE ALIGNMENT

STATEMENT	SCORE (1-5)
We've identified our core audiences (donors, volunteers, etc.) and understand their needs.	
We know what motivates our audience to engage, give, or spread the word.	
Our messaging speaks to the values and priorities of the people we serve and those who support us.	
We regularly gather feedback, testimonials, or input from our community to stay connected.	
We tailor content or outreach based on audience type (rather than using a one-size-fits-all message).	
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REFLECTION PROMPTS

Think about your outreach efforts over the past few months:

Who are you talking to the most—and who might be getting left out?

What questions or concerns do you hear most often from donors, volunteers, or program participants?

Are you still working from assumptions about your audience, or do you have real insight?

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR SCORE

SCORE	WHAT IT MEANS	SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS
20 - 25	You understand your audiences deeply and are engaging them with intention.	Push further by mapping out a supporter journey or testing segmented messaging (e.g., by donor type or program interest). Look for moments to personalize and surprise.
14 - 19	You have some insights, but may be missing opportunities to deepen connection.	Run a quick listening campaign—surveys, social polls, interviews, or inbox reviews. Gather stories and feedback to sharpen how you speak to what people really care about.
BELOW 14	You may be speaking from assumptions, not real audience insight.	Start by defining your top 2–3 core audiences and creating basic personas. Who are they? What do they want? Let those answers shape everything from tone to timing.

CASE STUDY

EVERTHRIVE ILLINOIS EXPANDS ITS REACH WITH INCLUSIVE REBRANDING

Background: For 25 years, the Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition focused on women and children’s health. But as their programs expanded to serve teens, men, and broader community wellness, the name and branding no longer fit.

The Challenge: Their original name and logo unintentionally excluded key audiences and created confusion about who they served. They needed a more inclusive identity to reflect their evolving mission and engage a wider range of stakeholders.

The Strategy: Through surveys and focus groups, they worked with staff and community partners to rebrand as EverThrive Illinois—a name that reflected their commitment to lifelong health for all. They updated their logo, clarified their messaging, and rolled out the new identity with a thoughtful communication plan.

The Outcome: The rebrand helped EverThrive connect with new audiences, improve clarity, and strengthen their role as a statewide leader in public health advocacy.

Key Takeaways: When your audience grows, your brand should grow with it. EverThrive Illinois shows how inclusive branding can build stronger connections and expand impact.

NEED HELP TURNING INSIGHT INTO ACTION?

Many nonprofits believe they know their audience—but often, the messaging is built around internal language or assumptions. That disconnect can make outreach feel flat, unclear, or out of sync with the people you’re trying to reach.

That’s where I come in!

I help nonprofits:

- ▶ Define their key audience groups with clarity, empathy, and strategy.
- ▶ Understand what really motivates donors, volunteers, and community members to act.
- ▶ Create messaging that speaks to the heart—not just the mission statement.
- ▶ Develop outreach plans that resonate across programs, campaigns, and platforms.

Whether you need to rethink how you’re showing up, realign your messaging, or rebuild trust with a new audience, I can help you move forward with intention—and impact.

Let’s connect.

[Request a free consultation >>](#)

SECTION THREE: CONTENT & OUTREACH

Tell your story. Share your mission. Invite people in.

Marketing for nonprofits isn't about selling—it's about building relationships, earning trust, and inviting people to be part of something meaningful.

This section covers two types of key message content:

- ▶ **Evergreen content:** The foundational materials that work in the background, like your website, email series, donation page, and printed collateral.
- ▶ **Engagement content:** What you're doing in real time, like social media, events, campaigns, and community partnerships.

Evergreen content gives people a consistent place to land and learn about your mission while engagement content brings your story to life in the moment.

Together, these tools help you stay visible, nurture connection, and create moments that turn awareness into action.

You don't have to be everywhere—but you do need to show up with clarity and consistency.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: MARKETING COLLATERAL

STATEMENT	SCORE (1-5)
Our website and core marketing materials are clear, up to date, and easy to understand.	
We tell stories that highlight our impact and connect emotionally with our audience.	
We use at least one consistent channel (email, blog, etc.) to share updates and engage supporters.	
We tailor our content based on audience or platform (e.g. different messages for donors vs. volunteers).	
We run campaigns or promotions (organic or paid) that drive measurable results.	
<i>*RATING SCALE: 1 = Needs work, 5 = Totally dialed in.</i>	TOTAL SCORE (OUT OF 25)

REFLECTION PROMPTS

Take a moment to think about how you're showing up:

What parts of your content or outreach feel aligned—and which ones feel scattered?

Is your messaging rooted in your mission or focused mostly on logistics (event dates, deadlines, etc.)?

Are you building relationships or just sharing updates?

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR SCORE

SCORE	WHAT IT MEANS	SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS
20 - 25	You're creating purposeful content that keeps your audience engaged and informed.	Scale your efforts by building a content library, scheduling seasonal storytelling, or training team members to help co-create on brand.
14 - 19	You're producing content, but may lack a system or clear direction.	Choose your strongest channel and commit to a regular rhythm. Audit what content performed best recently and plan ways to repurpose it with fresh framing.
BELOW 14	Your content may be inconsistent or disconnected from your audience's needs.	Pick one focus area—like your newsletter, website homepage, or Instagram—and build a month of intentional content around a mission-aligned theme or upcoming event.

CASE STUDY

DOSOMETHING.ORG'S TARGETED CONTENT CAMPAIGNS

Background: DoSomething.org is a global nonprofit that empowers young people to drive social change through impactful campaigns. With millions of members worldwide, the organization engages youth in causes by creating relatable, action-oriented content.

The Challenge: Reaching a diverse, dynamic youth audience requires content that resonates with their values, interests, and communication styles. DoSomething.org needed campaigns that not only captured attention but also inspired participation and sharing.

The Strategy: DoSomething.org focused on understanding youth culture—researching their values, language, and digital habits to create content that felt relevant and authentic. They partnered with influencers to expand reach and designed campaigns that were participatory and action-driven, encouraging young people to take real steps and share their impact online.

The Outcome: Through targeted content, DoSomething.org successfully mobilized millions of young people in various social initiatives. For instance, their “Teens for Jeans” campaign, in partnership with Aéropostale, collected over 900,000 pairs of jeans for homeless youth in 2012. Similarly, the “Comeback Clothes” campaign with H&M encouraged recycling old clothing, promoting environmental sustainability.

Key Takeaways: By deeply understanding their audience and crafting content that aligns with their interests and values, DoSomething.org demonstrates the power of targeted content in driving engagement and social impact among youth.

NEED HELP MAKING YOUR CONTENT WORK HARDER?

If your content feels scattered—or worse, invisible—you're not alone. Many nonprofits are producing updates, flyers, and posts without a real strategy behind them. And that leads to burnout without results.

Here's how I can help:

- ▶ Build a content plan that's simple, sustainable, and strategic.
- ▶ Identify your best channels and tailor messaging to fit each one.
- ▶ Develop storytelling assets that bring your mission to life.
- ▶ Audit what's working (and cut what's not) so you can spend time where it matters.

Let's make sure your time and energy are turning into real connection and support.

Let's talk strategy.

[Request a free consultation >>](#)

[View my nonprofit marketing services >>](#)

SECTION FOUR: ANALYSIS & OPTIMIZATION

If you're not measuring, you're just hoping.

Your nonprofit has goals—programmatic, financial, and community-driven. But how do you know if your marketing is helping you get there?

Whether it's increasing awareness, bringing in new donors, retaining volunteers, or filling seats at an event, you need a way to track what's working (and what's not). Measurement doesn't have to be complicated or high-tech. It just has to give you insight.

Data also helps you communicate your value to your board, to funders, and to the community. When you can show not just what you're doing, but how it's working, you build credibility and momentum.

This section will help you assess whether you're using data to guide your marketing or just relying on gut feelings and guesswork.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: IS IT WORKING?

STATEMENT	SCORE (1-5)
We've defined clear marketing goals that align with our programs or fundraising strategy.	
We regularly track key data points like email engagement, website traffic, or campaign results.	
We understand which outreach efforts are helping us reach or engage our core audiences.	
We review data and reflect on outcomes after campaigns or major events.	
We adjust our strategy based on what's working (and not working).	
<i>*RATING SCALE: 1 = Needs work, 5 = Totally dialed in.</i>	TOTAL SCORE (OUT OF 25)

REFLECTION PROMPTS

Think about your past few campaigns, events, or outreach pushes:

What did success look like and did you track whether you achieved it?

What do you look at most often: data, feedback, donations, or engagement?

How often does what you learn actually influence what you do next?

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR SCORE

SCORE	WHAT IT MEANS	SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS
20 - 25	You're tracking meaningful data and using it to improve your work.	Go deeper by integrating qualitative insights (like testimonials or donor stories) or building a simple dashboard to share results with staff and board regularly.
14 - 19	You're measuring some things, but may not be applying what you learn.	Set a rhythm—monthly or quarterly—to review your data and identify one action to take. Link key metrics directly to program or fundraising goals for clarity.
BELOW 14	You may be unsure of what's working—and missing chances to improve.	Start with just one goal (e.g., grow your email list) and track 1–2 metrics weekly or monthly. Build confidence by keeping it simple and consistent. Then expand.

CASE STUDY

NEDA: DATA-DRIVEN TRANSFORMATION

Background: The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by eating disorders. Each year, NEDA conducts NEDAwareness Week, a campaign aimed at raising awareness about eating disorders through social media and news outlets.

The Challenge: While NEDAwareness Week successfully engaged influencers and garnered public attention, NEDA sought to understand the campaign's impact on audience behavior and engagement. Specifically, they aimed to determine how their content influenced public discourse and awareness surrounding eating disorders.

The Strategy: To evaluate their campaign's impact, NEDA analyzed social media engagement—specifically retweet patterns—to determine which types of content resonated most with their audience. They also conducted a linguistic analysis of tweets before and after the campaign to assess how public conversations around eating disorders shifted in tone, focus, and frequency.

The Outcome: The analysis revealed that, despite involvement from popular influencers, content from governmental and nonprofit accounts attracted the most retweets. Additionally, linguistic assessments indicated an increase in mentions related to women, family, and anxiety in the 15 days following the campaign, suggesting heightened public engagement and awareness.

Key Takeaways: By systematically analyzing engagement metrics and linguistic shifts, NEDA gained valuable insights into the effectiveness of their awareness campaign. This data-driven approach enabled them to refine their content strategies, ensuring more impactful future outreach efforts.

NEED HELP TURNING NUMBERS INTO STRATEGY?

Data doesn't have to be intimidating—and it doesn't have to be perfect. What matters most is that you're learning from what you do and using that insight to make better decisions.

I help nonprofits:

- ▶ Identify simple, meaningful metrics tied to real goals.
- ▶ Create easy-to-use tracking systems and reporting habits.
- ▶ Review campaign results and uncover what's working (and what's not).
- ▶ Turn numbers into stories that funders, boards, and teams understand.

Whether you want to improve your fundraising outcomes, get smarter about outreach, or just feel more confident about where your time is going—I can help you build a marketing practice rooted in clarity, not guesswork.

Let's talk metrics.

[Request a free consultation >>](#)

[View my nonprofit experience >>](#)

YOU MADE IT!

You've made it to Basecamp—and that's a big deal.

It's not always easy to slow down and look honestly at what's working, what's not, and what needs attention. But that's exactly what you've done.

By completing this audit, you've taken a thoughtful first step toward more intentional, effective marketing—grounded in clarity, aligned with your mission, and built to support your goals.

You've now looked at:

- ▶ How clearly and consistently your **brand** is showing up.
- ▶ How well you understand and speak to your **audience**.
- ▶ How strategically you're approaching your **content and outreach**.
- ▶ Whether you're using **data and measurement** to guide smart decisions.

This isn't about doing everything perfectly—it's about doing the right things, with purpose. And now, you've got the perspective to decide where to focus next.

Now it's time to decide what comes next.



CHOOSE YOUR NEXT STEP

- ▶ **Ready to take action?** Great! Start with the lowest-scoring section from your audit. Set a small goal, identify one improvement, and start moving forward with clarity.
- ▶ **Need support along the way?** I offer nonprofit marketing consulting, content strategy, and brand development services to help you move from ideas to action—without overwhelm.
- ▶ **Want to keep learning?** Watch for future guides in the Wildwood Trail Series, including The Ascent (brand messaging) and The Ridgeline (content & campaign strategy).

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

If this audit gave you insight, motivation, or momentum—I'd love to hear from you.

- ▶ [Reach out for a free consultation.](#)
- ▶ [Connect with me on LinkedIn.](#)
- ▶ [Sign-up for my newsletter to be the first to know when new guides are released.](#)

Thanks for doing this important work—for your community, your mission, and the people you serve. I'm cheering you on!

See you on the trail.

