**CASA of Marion County**

Recruitment Strategy

# Problem:

After a period of director turnover and program instability, the volunteer base has decreased. Based on records, there has been no formalized recruitment plan, however implemented strategies included informational meetings at the library, tabling at community events and newspapers.

Other identified problems include an outdated and unappealing website, no social media presence, poor communication with the community, brand confusion and limited community awareness of the mission.

# Other Factors:

Resources and staff time are limited. Grand scale measures are unrealistic. Marketing and recruitment budgets are low.

# Solution:

Research community demographics and behaviors of current volunteers locally and nationally to target marketing efforts, resulting in more effective recruitment practices. Combine recruitment and marketing budgets as they will now be viewed as one in the same.

[ marketing ! recruitment = recruitment ! marketing ]

# Other Considerations:

* 70% of current CASA volunteers in Marion County began volunteering because they had a friend, colleague or acquaintance that was also serving as a CASA.

**Idea**: Improve retention and appreciation practices to promote longevity in volunteers.

**Idea**: Empower current volunteers as informed recruiters. Develop tool?

* A large-scale recruitment campaign is not feasible due to limited funding and staff resources.

# Goal:

**Idea**: Use a phased approach to implement plan so successes and failures can be accurately measured to improve outcomes and limit waste of resources.

To have 15 trained, active CASA volunteers by the end of 2022.

# Research:

Research includes review of motivating behaviors of current volunteers in {County name} County, demographics of volunteers nationwide as well as consumer and marketing behaviors from Yankelovich Monitor Mindbase and Publicis Dialog.

# National Marketing Research

* + Yankelovich’s Monitor Mindbase 8 Segments considers the individual’s position on a set of core values with his or her life cycle stage. Values identified include: materialism, technology orientation, family values, conservatism, cynicism versus optimism, social interaction and activity level. Of the 8 segments, Renaissance Masters most closely match the core demographic of most CASA volunteers according to NCASA data.
  + Reviewed data on generational behaviors.

# Research

Four recurring themes emerged through a local program’s #UNselfie campaign.

## Believe

* + - “A child’s life is worth my time. Their time is precious.”
    - “Kids are our future.”
    - “I believe in people and we can be the difference in the life of a child.”

## Should

* + - “I am so lucky to have so much. I believe I should give back.”
    - “It is my duty to give back to the community in a way that I can.”
    - “My life has been good. Everyone else’s should be too.”

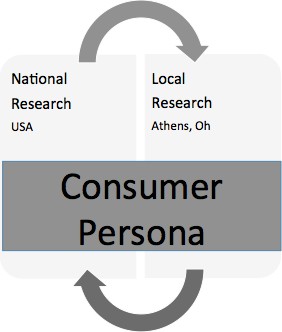
## Care

* + - “I care about kids in the community.”
    - “I care about the safety and well-being of our children.”
    - “I care about kids and want to support local families.”

## Want

* + - “I want happy, healthy, loved children.”
    - “I want to make a difference in people’s lives.”
    - “It makes me a better person.”

**Next Steps:** To synthesize research from multiple sources and develop a plan of action.



**Year 1 Target:** To focus on improving the program’s relationship with schools, establish improved technology-based marketing tools and develop social media presence. This area of focus was chosen as year one due to the late implementation and overreaching themes anticipated to trickle down to assist with other focus areas.

# Plan:

* Develop social media presence, post weekly
  + Facebook
  + Twitter
  + Instagram
  + Linked In
* Design and publish new website
  + Due to limited funding, self-directed and free/reduced cost options need to be thoroughly explored.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Word Press** | **Wix** | **IES** |
| * requires maximum level input * unlimited design options * only recurring cost is domain hosting fee: $99/year * very user friendly | * $200 initial set up * $99 annual fee * customer support included * customizable * templates included | * Complete customization and support from the company * aligns with NCASA branding * Most expensive option: $1500+ initial setup, annual fees vary depending on level of support |

* Participate in community service/volunteer fairs at Marion Technical College
* Target trailing spouses: include CASA volunteering information in realtor relocation packets

**Year 2 Target:** Renaissance Masters (identified as the core persona of a CASA volunteer). Renaissance Master persona includes:

* + Strong belief in **traditional values**
  + Empty-nesters
  + Family oriented yet vigorously pursue outside activities
  + Committed to their own well-being and their **communities**

# Have positive self-perception’s

* + Believe that their children’s success in an indication of their own
  + Good-natured and continue to be hardy and vigorous
  + Have a spiritual hunger, regularly attend religious services, participate in **volunteer** work
  + Enjoy being active: 75% of renaissance masters engage in **gardening** as a hobby
  + Avid readers and television viewers, 50% of renaissance masters report listening to, watching or supporting public radio or public television
  + Make decisions based on **information**
  + Likely to be **retired**

# Plan:

* Establish relationship with local news station
  + 6:00 News Segment
  + Conversations from Studio B
  + Post opportunities to get involved on local news station’s community page
* Table at the Farmer’s Market – giveaway branded reusable shopping bags
* Present at the Master Gardeners Club monthly meetings
* Based on research, newspaper paid ads are ineffective in recruiting renaissance masters (they make information-driven decisions), instead focus:
  + Cultivate relationships with media:
    - News reporter & columnist
    - owner of local radio station
    - Messenger court/government reporter
* Organize community training events
  + Cross-over youth
  + Mandated reporting
  + Bystander prevention

**Year 3 Target:** Young Professionals, Generation X & Millennials. Research shows that young professionals are more likely to commit to causes they care about than any other generations. They tend to value quality over quantity and place personal happiness over traditional success benchmarks. Barriers for this demographic include busy careers and raising families.

# Plan:

* CASA to attend networking events
  + YAP (Young Professionals, monthly happy hours)
  + Host Marion County Chamber of Commerce Business Before Hours event
* Utilize graphic-heavy infographics and videos for marketing
  + Apply for Clicking Creates Change grant for promotional video
  + Work with Scripps to develop infographics for use in web marketing
* Form relationships with businesses and corporations and present at staff events, explore employer incentive programs to encourage volunteerism

**Year 4 Target:** Early retirees, baby boomers. Research suggests that baby boomers take an active view of retirement and are generally healthy and focused on wel-being. Young retirees report difficulty adjusting to retirement due to the decreased activity, intellectual stimulation and social interaction.

# Plan:

* Form relationships with retirement organizations: retired teachers, nurses, etc
  + Send “Happy Retirement” notices
* Improve the “social aspect” of volunteering with CASA to fill the void identified by young retirees:
  + Monthly CASA to CASA events (already occurring, can improve)
  + Book Club
  + Quarterly social events
* Develop and implement guidelines for current volunteers to serve as recruiters

**Year 5 Target:** Addressing disproportionality and disparity in our volunteer base as compared to our client population. In terms of race and/or ethnicity, our volunteer base is more diverse than our service population and the community at large. A large disproportionality exists related to gender and geographic area. Focus is to be on recruiting men, and recruiting individuals from beyond the city limits of {County name} and into the larger county and smaller border communities.

* Review promotional material for accuracy
* Implement strategies from the CASA QB recruitment plan
* Hold informational sessi[ons in county communities
* Target male dominated organizations and community centers for recruitment:
  + Veterans organizations
  + Cross fit, area gyms
  + Building Industries Association

# Other Notes:

* **Volunteer Retention:** Research shows that volunteers don’t need an incentive to participate, the incentive is the CASA mission and the belief that they are making a difference. The goal is to focus on demonstrating appreciation and effects of their volunteerism to ensure continued involvement.
  + **Remember**: the UNselfie campaign data related to volunteer motivation and align appreciation activities to those principles.
  + Continue to improve the social aspect of volunteering to allow CASAs to form solid friendships through their work with CASA.
  + When giving gifts, make sure that they are branded with CASA information
    - Bags
    - Apparel
    - Window clings

**Measurement:** This is a fluid plan that will change and adapt as new information emerges. The strategy of focusing on a different area each year is to utilize that year as a learning exercise to determine which methods are most effective and to minimize wasting resources. It should also be noted that strategies from each year should continue moving forward to continue to make the CASA recruitment strategy sustainable and robust.