



## Giver Interviews: What We Learned





## How to make our communications more compelling

1. Clearly define the target audience
2. Review industry research on giving
3. Conduct 'best case' interviews to find out what's going on when everything is going right
4. Summarize findings
5. Develop recommendations







**WHO IS OUR TARGET AUDIENCE**



AUDIENCE:

## Who Matters

### CORE TARGET (Who matters most to us?)



### WE ARE FOCUSING PRIMARILY ON 'GIVERS'

Those who get involved, volunteer, make financial contributions, or give other resources (i.e. retreat condos, houses, meals, rides, goods, etc)

### BROADER AUDIENCE (Who else has a stake?)



### SECONDLY, WE WANT TO TALK TO INFLUENCERS

People and organizations who our target audience pays attention to. This group includes media, civic and corporate leaders, and other advocates.

*NOTE THIS INITIATIVE DOES NOT TARGET PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS, EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE THE ONES WHO ULTIMATELY BENEFIT FROM LITTLE PINK,*



# **Our Communications Challenge**

**Little Pink has  
important things  
to say**

**Potential givers  
have a lot going  
on and are not  
thinking about  
LPH**



# Our Communications Challenge

**LITTLE PINK**

*What's important to you*

*Only communications  
that is relevant to our  
target audience will  
bridge this gap*

**GIVERS**

*What's important to them*





**WE REVIEWED NATIONAL TRENDS AND  
THEN SPOKE WITH COMMITTED GIVERS.**

**HERE'S WHAT WE LEARNED**



Identify **key consideration drivers** for givers of LPH.

Identify **Relevant Messaging, Reasons to Believe, and Calls to Action** that are most likely to lead to interest and action.

Develop a recommendation for LPH that will be **more compelling to our target audience**. This means it would:

- Fit within our outreach budget
- Leverage our best assets (i.e. our people, stories, and impact)
- Work more strategically at reaching our target
- Present LPH with our best story (i.e. more urgent, impactful, and personal)





**Donor retention is fragile.** Nationally, only 42% of donors renew — and first-time donor retention can be as low as 18% (AFP/FEP).



**Younger donors are relatively untapped pipeline.** Millennials and Gen Z give more through peer-to-peer and digital campaigns.



**Storytelling matters, A LOT!** Across audiences, donors said they give when they “see the face and hear the story” — impact narratives resonate more than stats.



**Local impact can be a competitive edge.** Donors value that their gifts stay in their community, making the mission tangible and differentiating LPH from national causes.



CONTEXT:

## National Trends: Giving\*

- **Overall giving remains under pressure.** According to *Giving USA 2024*, total charitable giving in the U.S. declined slightly for the second consecutive year in inflation-adjusted dollars, following historic highs during the pandemic.
- **Fewer donors, larger gifts.** The *Fundraising Effectiveness Project (2024)* reports that the overall number of donors is shrinking, with small and mid-level givers pulling back, while major gifts (>\$5,000) now account for a disproportionate share of revenue growth.
- **Donor retention continues to be a challenge.** National retention rates hover around **42%**, with first-time donor retention as low as **18%** (*AFP/FEP*). This reflects both economic uncertainty and donor fatigue.
- **Online giving is growing steadily.** Digital giving grew by **9% year-over-year** in 2024, representing nearly **15% of all charitable revenue**, with strong growth among younger demographics (*M+R Benchmarks, Nonprofit Source*).
- **Generational and family giving are shifting.** Baby Boomers still account for the majority of dollars given, but Millennials and Gen Z are driving growth in online and peer-to-peer fundraising. Meanwhile, *NCFP Trends 2025* finds that over **80% of family foundations** are prioritizing next-generation engagement and succession planning.
- **Trust and transparency influence giving.** Surveys from *Chronicle of Philanthropy* and *Edelman* show that donors are increasingly skeptical of institutions; organizations that demonstrate clear impact and personalized stewardship are most likely to maintain donor loyalty.

*\*These trends primarily reflect financial giving, but provide a useful guide for giving overall.*



CONTEXT:

## National Giving Trends: Giver Behavior and Engagement

- **Personalized outreach drives retention.** Givers are far more likely to renew when communications reference their past giving and interests, and retention rates rise significantly when this personalization is paired with authentic relationship-building like thank-you calls, handwritten notes, or tailored impact updates (*HubSpot 2025, AFP/FEP*).
- **Younger donors lean into experiences and peer networks.** Millennials and Gen Z prefer to engage through events, peer-to-peer campaigns, and community service opportunities, often giving smaller amounts but at higher participation rates in digital and social-driven campaigns (*M+R Benchmarks, GivingTuesday Data Commons*).
- **Multi-channel engagement increases lifetime value.** Supporters who are reached through both digital and offline touchpoints (e.g., email + mailer + event) demonstrate stronger long-term commitment than those who receive outreach through a single channel (*Blackbaud Institute Giving Report 2024*).
- **Impact clarity drives action.** Givers respond most strongly to campaigns that tie dollars and other ways of giving directly to tangible outcomes (“your donation of a condo provides one family a week to relax on Marco Island”), with case studies showing that these appeals can nearly double conversion rates (*Mightycause, AFP/FEP*).





FINDINGS:

**Our LPH Research:  
Who we spoke with**

**Gena & Donald Bradsher, Mega Plumbing of Carolinas**

**Lynne Griffin, Team Pink: Emerald Isle**

**Brian Greybush, The Island Men: Carolina Beach**

**Krystal Tyndall, Fishing for a Cure: North Carolina**

**Larry and Judy Sacher, Marco Island**

*Each interview was conducted virtually by Rob and Susan and lasted approximately 45 minutes.*



FINDINGS:

## What we learned

**Take-away #1:**  
**The givers we spoke with are much more than transactional givers. They are believers.**

Each was bona fide advocate for Little Pink Houses of Hope. Once they got on board, it didn't take take much convincing or reinforcing.

***How do we find more people like them?***



## **Take-away #2:** **Our givers do not expect anything tangible in return.**

Unlike other nonprofit organizations who need to find valuable tangible items to give back, LPH returns an emotional wave of warmth and satisfaction. It makes people feel whole. Their giving already brings them deep-seeded personal fulfillment.

***The messaging implication is that our promise to them should be emotional (vs. tangible). We need to think in terms of “eROI”***





## FINDINGS:

### What we learned

#### **Take-away #3:**

**In each case, the decision to give was based on a personal contact, and often tapped into their own personal experience.**

Before we dedicate additional funds to reach new people we have no contact with, we should first find ways to use our network to spread the word.

***This would rely less on paid media and more on harnessing and then expanding our current network.***



## **Take-away #4:** **Good news: Little Pink has little baggage.**

**Conversely, not many people know about us.** This is tricky as generating awareness can be very expensive. PR and Social media can help. But we will need more.

We can start in logical places (i.e. areas where we have retreats, similar high-wealth areas, civic volunteer organizations) who look like the ones who are already giving and who may be more sympathetic or connected to what we do.

***We should be precise about where and when we spend media dollars to build awareness. This means we should focus where receptivity is highest.***



## FINDINGS:

### What we learned

#### **Take-away #5:**

**Our givers are not looking for or attracted by big, corporate organizations to give to or get involved with.**

Being too slick or corporate is a turn-off. The local roots of the organization give it a clear and appealing authenticity. But local can come across as amateurish. That is a turn-off as well.

***We must find the balance between being a buttoned up, well run, professional organization and keeping our humble personality.***





## Take-away #6:

### **Showing the impact LPH has on families is extremely impactful to givers.**

“The retreats are a happy time where people can let go of their worries and focus on connection. The value of offering a ‘breather’ and a chance for families to reunite and forget their struggles for a week...”

- Givers shared anecdotes about seeing first-hand, how relieved children were to know that they shared experiences (i.e. like other kids who dealt with moms without hair) with others.
- One of the givers whose wife went through breast cancer described it as “We went through cancer” and wanted to get involved with LPH to help other families.

***Featuring families and the benefits they feel is a powerful approach for givers.***



## FINDINGS:

### What we learned

#### **Take-away #7:**

**When people get involved with Little Pink, the personal passion of the organization comes through.**

Jeanine's origin story was repeatedly called out. As the founder and spokesperson, she is profoundly impactful. But Team Pink and others were called out as well.

***Let's find ways to use our best spokespeople to showcase the organization; it's deeds, values, and impact on participants.***



## **Take-away #8: Two key drivers for givers are storytelling and urgency.**

It's one thing to tell people what LPH does, but quite another to bring that to life with participant and giver stories. We also know from national studies that urgency is a critical driver for givers (i.e. "When you give your time to LPH, you will make an immediate difference to a family who desperately needs a break right now...", "You can see the difference you make on their faces at the retreat")

***We should double-down on family stories and add more urgency to our messages.***



## What we learned

### Verbatim's that that resonated:

We asked, "why LPH":

"I Know what it brings"

"I see what it does"

"I want it to be local to see the value"

"I know I am going to make a difference"

"It just clicked/felt right"

And we asked people to complete the sentence, "When I give, it makes me feel?"

"That I've been blessed"

"I'm doing things fo the right reasons"

" I didn't go seeking, but I found"





## Summary:

Little Pink Houses of Hope is incredibly well received by a core group of givers. Those who get close to the organization take great pride in being involved.

The catalyst to give was meeting or knowing someone with a direct connection to the organization. Once that connection was established, the ask was not hard.

People said they *initially* got involved because it felt the right thing to do. They *stayed* involved because it was so fulfilling. And what they most valued in return was a deep emotional charge.



**Audience:** We should focus on the committed givers. They are motivated to get involved and make a difference, give their time or money consistently, are dependable.

**Messengers:**

We need to make this personal. Jeannine and those who are already involved are our best voices.

**Message:**

Our best givers don't require a big 'sales' pitch. It might even be received as a turn-off. This is the opposite of **“give ‘til it hurts”. Instead it's more of “give because it makes you feel good”.**

**Approach:**

- **Expand awareness with PR and social media.** Craft our message entirely with points that resonate with our givers.



## Approach:

- As resources allow, **add paid media** (i.e. paid social, local ads, billboards, etc) to precisely defined target groups (i.e. local markets similar to those we already serve, organizations, and those who may be more familiar with the need for our retreats.)
- **Create understanding on the website** where a deeper, more emotionally driven message should live. The site needs to maintain the authenticity and humility of the organization but also needs to be better organized and more inspiring. Add 'Giver' testimonials here where we can demonstrate the satisfaction of giving. Connect and reinforce the importance of giving to make this happen.
- **Close the deal with a 'Kevin Bacon' strategy** . Work from the inside out: We need to create LPH Ambassadors by using our core team to expand the circle of advocates, then using that group to expand the circle again. Givers respond to a sincere ask from someone they know. In addition to delivering an emotional message, the website will provide the evidence and credentials.



**THANK YOU!**



# The Outcome

**By addressing the “giver's” perspective:**

We will tap into their needs (vs those who attend retreats).

LPH will speak with more relevance.

Your audience will be more receptive.

They will care about who you are and what you say.



***Little Pink Houses of Hope  
will matter more.***