

**The Consumer
Journey
to the
American Heart
Association**



The Challenge

The American Heart Association asked us to find, and then bridge, the disconnect that their desired target market, millennials, is experiencing when showing interest in contributing to the organization and taking action.

In order to successfully fulfill this request our team used a mix of secondary and primary research to uncover the consumer journey for millennials. This book explores the target market's attitudes and thoughts about the American Heart Association, the steps they take in donating and participating in events and offers relevant touchpoints and recommendations the brand can use in order to increase millennial involvement and ultimately increase action and awareness among the target.

MEET THE TEAM





Morgan Brown



Katie Caponi



Erin Curry



Sarah Dumas



Catelyne Snitker



Hannah Thomas



American
Heart
Association®



Table of Contents



Brand Overview
8

Primary Research
20

Consumer Journey
38

Touchpoints
54

Recommendations
60

Conclusion
66







BRAND OVERVIEW

History



1924: The AHA was founded through a handful of pioneering physicians and social workers who conducted studies to learn more about heart disease.

1949: The first research grant was awarded to a Nobel Prize winner, which helped fund studies about the energy that muscles, such as the heart, need to contract.

1947: The first public campaign kicked off in February to celebrate National Heart Week.

1956: The AHA funded research for the first external defibrillator that steadied a quivering heart.

1966: Researchers discovered how to perform surgery to correct heart defects in newborns.

1960: With the AHA's support, the first artificial heart valve replacement was performed.

1920s

1940s

1950s

1960s

1948: The AHA was reorganized from a scientific society to a voluntary health organization with the introduction of volunteers and fundraising activities. This resulted in rapid growth in size and influence nationally and internationally.

1957: With the AHA funds, the first pacemaker was installed. Today, between 200,000 and 300,000 pacemakers are installed every year in the U.S.

1963: The American Heart Association formally endorsed CPR.



Mission:

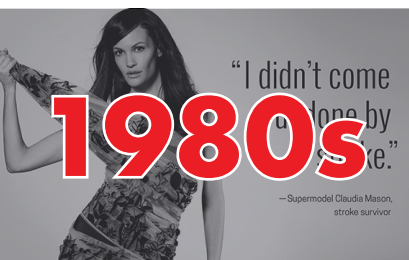
"To build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke. That single purpose drives all we do. The need for our work is beyond question."

Who They Are:

"The American Heart Association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke."

What They Do:

In order to improve the lives of all Americans, the AHA provides public health education and science-based treatment guidelines to healthcare professionals. They also educate lawmakers, policymakers and the public, as well as invest money into life-saving research.



1980's: The AHA became a visible champion of public health, starting advocacy efforts that remain active today in all 50 states and in Washington D.C. Large gifts allowed the association to support new research projects and education programs, including more efforts to address heart disease and stroke in women and minorities.

1997: The American Stroke Association was created as a division of the AHA.

2008: Researchers discovered the success of Hands-Only CPR.

2015: Through a network of about 400,000 instructors and 4,000 training centers worldwide, the AHA trains more than 17 million people in CPR each year.



Competitors



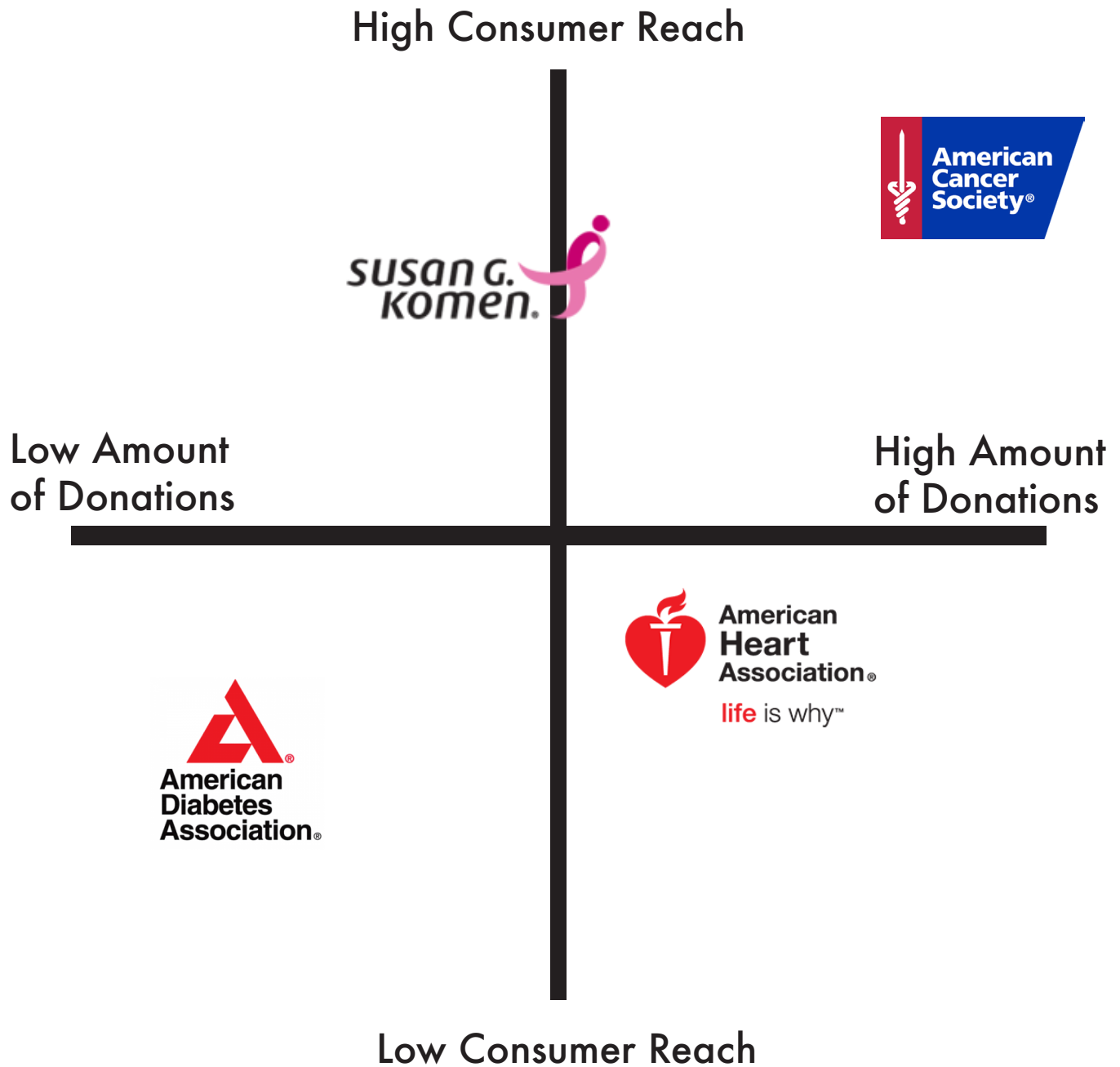


Competitor Analysis



Despite their focus on non-heart related issues, the American Heart Association's competitors are directly comparable to the AHA in revenue, consumer reach, research and donations. The American Cancer Society brings in the most revenue and reach among the competitors because of the prevalence and wide varieties of cancer in the human population. Similarly, the impact of breast cancer on the female population makes Susan G. Komen top-of-mind for the breast cancer sector. However, the AHA has a leg-up because heart disease and stroke are the world's biggest killers, accounting for a combined 15 million deaths in 2015, making heart health a focus for many.

Perceptual Map



Current Target



The American Heart Association's current target market is above the age of 50 and is beginning to experience the impact of high cholesterol and heart disease on their health. They see heart-related issues impacting their quality of life, so they are more aware of the need for organizations like the AHA. Because of this, they give the most donations out of any other age range. Currently, the average age of an AHA donor is 62 years old.



Social Media



The majority of the American Heart Association's messaging is through owned content on their social media and their website. The majority of the posts on social media include a call-to-action to visit their website with very few posts offering donation or volunteer opportunities. Most posts across the Facebook, Instagram and Twitter platforms are an infographic or an image overlayed with inspirational or informative quotes.

Facebook

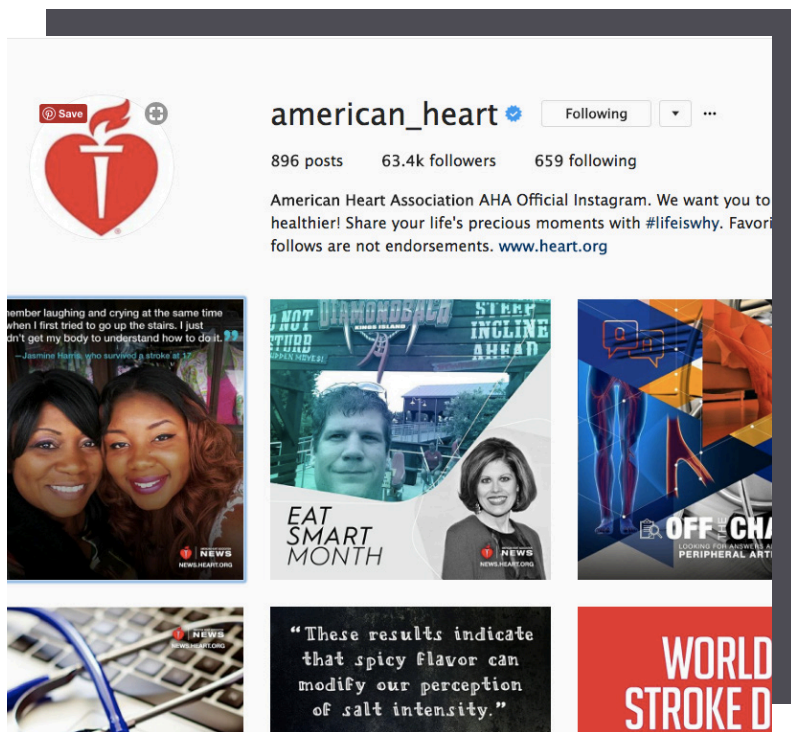
- 944,180 followers
- 976,166 likes
- Posts anywhere from three to eight times a day, with one to five comments on the posts
- Often replies to comments from patients or survivors, providing guidance and resources
- Posts garner between 100 and 400 likes and a quarter of that in shares
- Posts feature an image, quote or caption and a direct link to the AHA's website
- Most comprehensive platform



Twitter

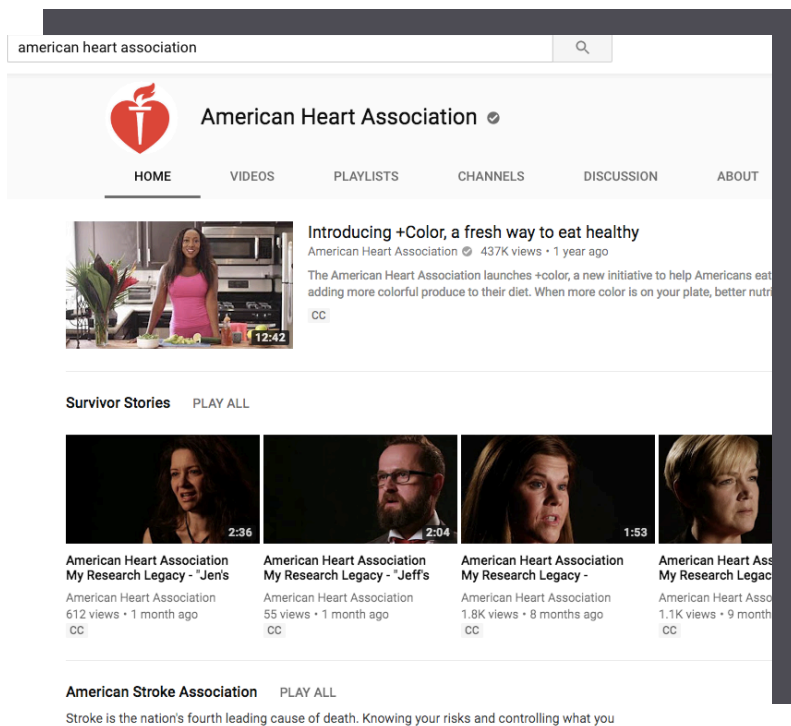
- 237,000 followers
- Highly active, some days featuring up to 12 tweets
- Majority of tweets include an image (the same ones from Facebook and Instagram)
- Interacts with partner organizations and the AHA division accounts





Instagram

- 60,500 followers
- Features up to five posts a week
- Similar to Facebook, but the captions are less informational and more narrative-focused
- Posts aim to motivate and inspire, while Facebook posts mainly direct the user to the website



YouTube

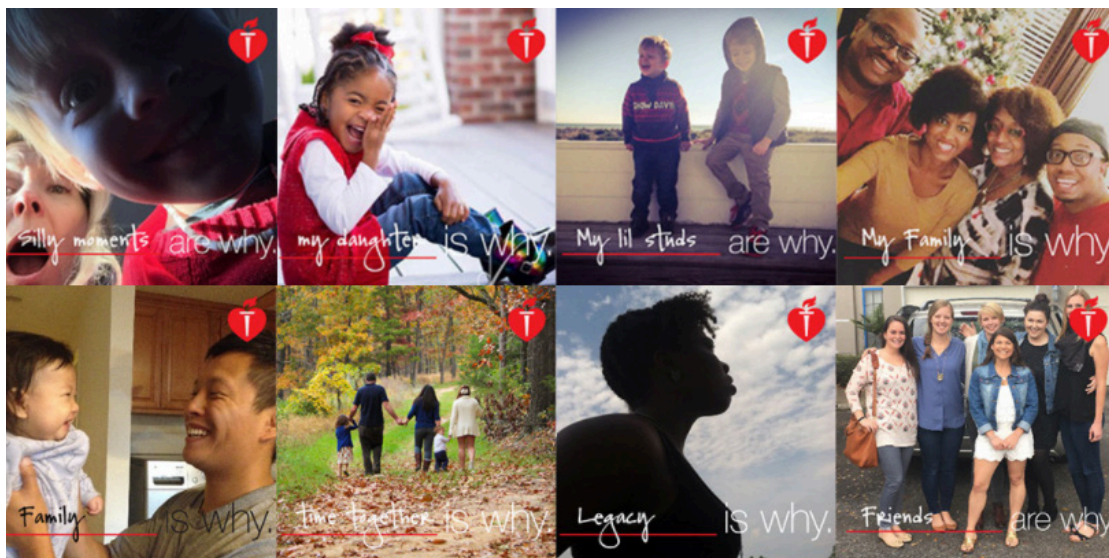
- Main channel has over 13 million views, but they have multiple channels dedicated to specific messages and initiatives
- Post videos featuring survivor stories, celebrity cameos and cooking and recipe videos
- Average views-per-day on all content (over all of the separate channels) varies widely depending on the content and execution of video
- Could be strengthened by including a donation link at the end of the videos

Marketing



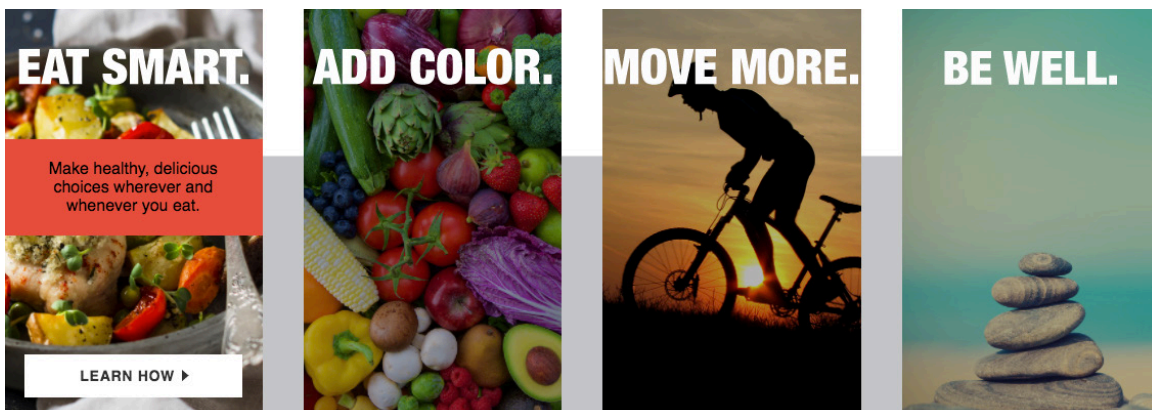
Life is Why

In 2014, the American Heart Association did their first rebranding project in over 80 years through the “Life is Why” campaign. The campaign is family-oriented, focusing on maintaining one’s health so that they can be there for major life milestones. It appeals to a wide target market and concentrates on direct consumer engagement and social sharing. The campaign includes print, digital, television and social media.



Healthy For Good

In 2017, the AHA began their “Healthy For Good” movement, which encourages eating smart, adding color, moving more and being well. A contributor to this evolving movement is Elizabeth Banks’ media company WhoHaHa, who created a series of relatable, humorous videos directed at women about maintaining their health. Overall, the Healthy For Good campaign is relayed primarily through the digital channel.



Go Red

The AHA's "Go Red" campaign consists of personal testimonies from women affected by heart disease, and it is targeted directly at older women to encourage them to maintain their overall health. The campaign, in sponsorship with Macy's and CVS Health, provides important information about heart disease. The top-of-mind components of the campaign include the Red Dress events, the Red Dress clothing line and the National Go Red Day in February.



PSAs

The AHA is known for its public-service oriented advertisements. They typically feature informative and inspirational quotes to convey their messages. Many of the advertisements also include quotes from heart disease survivors and from medical professionals. These advertisements are informative, but not always effective at generating attention because they are not typically eye-catching.







PRIMARY RESEARCH

What is the key to a millennial's heart?

There was only one way to find out. In order to gain a better understanding of millennials' perceptions and attitudes towards nonprofits, the American Heart Association in particular, we conducted our own primary research. We created a screener in order to make sure the participants fit the desired target market. It is important to note that we made it mandatory that the interview participants have not only donated or volunteered to a nonprofit organization in the past, but would also be open to becoming involved with the AHA specifically.

We used our results from the screener and our knowledge from secondary research to create a discussion guide that would be used in our designated methodology, 10 in-depth interviews. The discussion guide was designed so we could gain a deeper understanding of our target market and be able to correctly identify their journey to contributing their time or money to a nonprofit organization and their thoughts and motivations behind it.

Interviewee Profiles



Madeline Simon

Age: 21

Hometown: Columbia, MO

Occupation: Student at the University of Missouri

Nonprofit Involvement: Won by One, The Crossing, Global Brigades, My Life

Maegan McEnnis

Age: 21

Hometown: Springfield, MO

Occupation: Student at Missouri State University

Nonprofit Involvement: Relay For Life, Alzheimer's Association, Make-A-Wish, Maine Seacoast Mission, Convoy of Hope, Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation





Alli Ladd

Age: 23

Hometown: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Video Producer

Nonprofit Involvement:

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Stray Rescue

Dara O'Connor

Age: 21

Hometown: Kansas City, MO

Occupation: Student at the University of Missouri

Nonprofit Involvement:

UNICEF, Kids Helping Kids, Co-founded Kids Helping Kids Heal, Amigos de las Americas, Mizzou Alternative Breaks





Sean Brown

Age: 26

Hometown: Wheaton, IL

Occupation: Business Development Manager at UP Your Service

Nonprofit Involvement: Habitat for Humanity, American Red Cross, Spark

Madelyn Danly

Age: 21

Hometown: Wheaton, IL

Occupation: Student at the University of Missouri

Nonprofit Involvement: Public Action to Deliver Shelter, Central Missouri Humane Society, Delta Gamma Service for Sight





Hanan Southard

Age: 24

Hometown: Texarkana, Texas

Occupation: Communications coordinator for local government

Nonprofit Involvement: 4-H, National FFA Organization, Four States Fair

Brian Kemp

Age: 24

Hometown: Wheaton, IL

Occupation: Project Engineer/
Estimator at The Walsh Group

Nonprofit Involvement:
American Red Cross





Rachel Wuestling

Age: 22

Hometown: Chesterfield, IL

Occupation: Student at the University of Missouri

Nonprofit Involvement: Alzheimer's Association, Mizzou Alternative Breaks

Taylor Smith

Age: 23

Hometown: Shrewsbury, MO

Occupation: Montessori Preschool Teacher

Nonprofit Involvement: Low Country Orphan Relief, Water Mission, Creative Dreams, McNeilly Center, Kindred Spirits, Children's Miracle Network



Screenener



What age range do you fit into?

- 19 or younger
- 20-29
- 30 or older

What gender do you currently identify with?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Other

Which best describes your race or ethnic background?

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian/Alaska native
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Multiethnic/multiracial
- Prefer not to answer

Do you work for or attend school to pursue an education in any of the following?

- Medical Field
- Advertising
- Nonprofit organization
- None of the above

I am open to supporting (raising awareness, donating, volunteering, participating in an event, etc.) the following organizations: Select all that apply.

- The United Way
- The American Red Cross
- Goodwill Industries
- American Heart Association
- The Humane Society

Which of the following have you done in the past year? (Select all that apply.)

- Participated in a run/walk/event to benefit a nonprofit organization.
- Volunteered for a nonprofit organization.
- Donated to a nonprofit organization.
- None of the above.

Discussion Guide



PART A:

INTRODUCTION

Hi there! Our names are ____, ____, _____. For one of our journalism classes at Mizzou, we are conducting research to better understand millennials' interactions with nonprofits. So, thank you for joining us today! We really appreciate your participation in this interview. It should take about 30 minutes at most.

WARM-UP

What are your favorite things to do in your spare time?

What are you active in/passionate about?

LIFESTYLE

What social media are you on?

Probe: Why is that the case? What do you like about _____?

Probe: What social media platform do you normally find out about events on?

How many events such as concerts, festivals, etc. do you attend per year?

Probe: What are some you've been to?

Probe: Have you ever gone to a social event primarily for a charitable purpose?

For these events you just mentioned, why did you decide to attend it? What made you want to decide to go to this event?

Probe: Are you more likely to go to an event if you have friends going? How much money are you willing to spend on an event? How much time are you likely to spend at an event?

After you go to these events we just talked about, do you usually share about it on social media? How so?

Probe: What platforms do you use? Do you prefer to post a picture or post information?

Listen for: platforms used, likelihood to post about an event

PASSIONS/MAKING A DIFFERENCE

On the survey you took, it looks like you've volunteered or donated to nonprofit organizations in the past. What, if any, nonprofit organizations have you been involved in?

Probe: What did you do for this organization (e.g. walk, volunteer work, dance marathon.)

Probe: Is that your preference?

Listen for: How they group/define organizations, whether they are active with a certain type or if they like variety

How did you hear about this organization? How long have you been involved with them? Do you do it on your own time or are you required to?



Why are you involved with this organization?
Listen for: family/friends impacted, work

Would you ever be interested in being involved with other nonprofit organizations?
Probe: Which ones?
Probe: Why do these appeal to you?
Listen for: competitors of AHA

What impact do you think your activity with these causes/organizations has on them? Where do you think your money is going?
Probe for: Do you feel like you're making a difference?
Listening for: donations, participating or both?

TRIGGERS

PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUE:

Please draw the steps that you encountered from the first time you thought about donating through to afterward. Try to include as many steps in the process as you can. For example, where were you when you first thought about it? Draw an emoji to help describe how you felt in that moment. What were you thinking? Then, what happened next? Please tell me how you became interested in the organization, what you have done, what happened after, etc.

Does the political environment influence your contribution to organizations?
Probe: Are you proactive or reactive? Are you more likely to donate because of a shift in current events or because of your morals and values?

On a scale of 1-10, how important is it to you that others recognize your contributions?

PART A1:

DONORS

What organizations have you donated to in the past?

How does donating make you feel?
Probe: Why does it make you feel this way?
Listen for: accomplished, proud, happy, giving

After you donated to _____, did you receive any sort of acknowledgement for your donation? Did you share that you donated with anyone? How so?
Listen for: social media, family.

Is it important for you to receive an acknowledgement or a thank you after your donation?
Probe: Would a follow-up make you more apt to donate again?

Why do you donate to _____?

What impact do you think your donation ad on the cause/organization?

On a scale of 1-10, how important is it for you to see where your donation is going?

When you have donated, how much money did you donate?

Do you think this amount more or less than what was expected?

Probe: In comparison to other donors to _____, where do your donation amounts

Compare? How does this make you feel?

Probe: Do you ever feel insecure about your donation amount? Are you swayed by suggested donation amounts?

When are you more likely to donate?

Probe: What time of year is it?

Listen for: economics (like tax time) or holiday season

How do you usually donate? Online or in-person?

Probe: Is this what you prefer? Do you notice it's because of convenience or because of your passions?

PART A2:

VOLUNTEERS + EXPERIENCERS:

What kind of volunteering/participating have you done in the past?

How does participating/volunteering in a nonprofit event make you feel?

Probe: Why does it make you feel this way?

Listen for: accomplished, proud, happy, social, etc.

What made you want to participate/volunteer in this event? Was that the case with the other one's you mentioned?

Listen for: Social media, word-of-mouth, requirements, resume builder, interests/hobbies

Did you receive any sort of recognition the participation you mentioned above?

Did you share it with anyone? Post about it on social media?

Probe: What did you post? (Have them pull it up a post if they can.)

Probe: Was the sharing centered on the organization/cause or your involvement?

Have you ever gotten a gift from the organization your volunteered your time for?

How important is it for you to receive some type of gift or recognition when participating/volunteering in a nonprofit event?

When you participated or volunteered in the situations you just described, did you do this alone or with other people?

Probe: Who did you participate with?

Probe: Would you ever participate alone?

PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUE: Please draw the steps that you encountered from the first time you thought about volunteering/participating through to afterward. Try to include as many steps in the process as you can. For example, where were you when you first thought about it? Draw an emoji to help describe how you felt in that moment. What were you thinking? Then, what happened next? Please tell me how you became interested in the organization, what you have done, what happened after, etc.

PART B:
LOVED ONES

You indicated in the survey you have loved ones who have been impacted by heart disease. Would you mind telling us about your familiarity with the disease? If you would rather not, that is perfectly fine.

What impact has this connection to heart disease had on your life?

You also indicated you've been involved with health organizations, through participation in events, volunteer work or donating. Was this involvement driven at all by your connection to heart disease?

Probe for: How so?

Probe: Has it increased your involvement? Has it increased your urge to contribute financially?

Would you say you're more passionate about health organizations as a whole because your loved one is affected, or are you mostly concerned about heart disease?

Would you say you try to spread awareness about heart disease and how people can get involved?

Probe: How so?

Probe: Word of mouth? Social media? Both? What do you find works best?

Can you give a few examples of initiatives from health organizations that have caught your attention?

Probe: If no, what do you think companies could do to better promote their research and initiatives?

PART C:
AHA

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word "health non-profit organization?"

Do you know of any health nonprofits?

Probe: Where did this awareness come from?

PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUE: Write down what words come to mind when you think of the American Heart Association.

Are you familiar with the American Heart Association?

If yes, PROBE: What is your knowledge about what they do?

Listen for: inventions, where money goes, research, heart disease

Can you remember any times you've interacted with the American Heart Association?

If yes, PROBE: When and how?



So, what did we find?

Based on the feedback that we received from the in-depth interviews, we discovered six overall findings that sum up our target's current attitudes towards nonprofit organizations and their perceptions of the American Heart Association. These overall findings helped us effectively pin down our target market and successfully determine a unique consumer journey for millennials.

Overall Findings



Confident Contributions

Millennials are comfortable with the average amount of money they donate to nonprofit organizations because they feel that their contribution helps no matter the amount.

Low Brand Interaction

Our target market recognizes the American Heart Association's brand, but cannot remember any interaction they have had with the AHA.

Social Life

While millennials find themselves passionate about many causes, their participation in events is largely dependent on if their friends are participating.

Transparency

Knowing where their money is going in a nonprofit organization is a top priority for our target market.

Time is Money

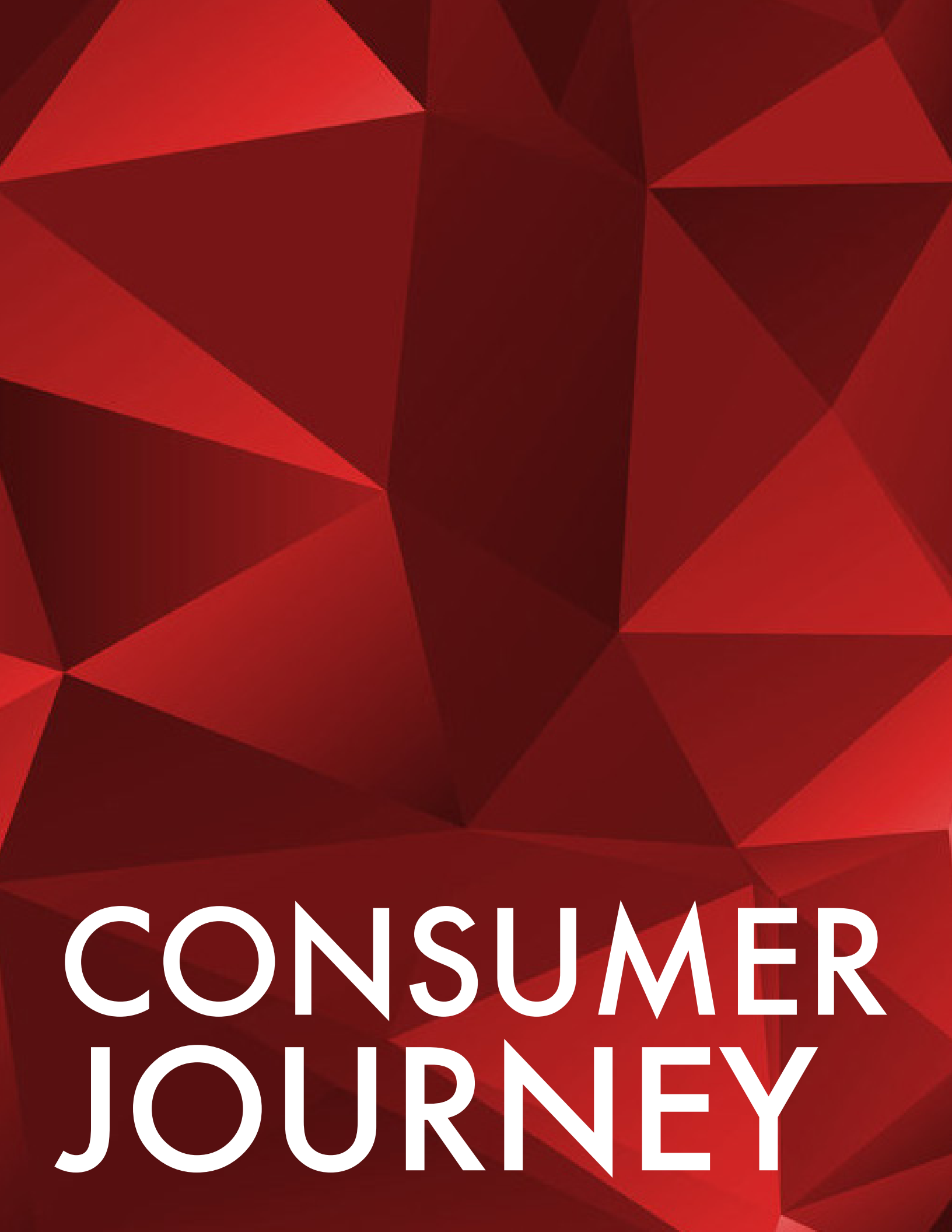
Our target values their time just as much as their money, so they spend a significant amount of time researching where their donations or their volunteer hours are going.

No Recognition Needed

Our target market does not find it important for others to recognize their contributions when donating or volunteering to a nonprofit organization.







CONSUMER JOURNEY

We found the key to their heart, what's next?

Our overall findings and key insights gave us an inside look at every step our new target market takes, from their first exposure to a nonprofit to that heart-pumping moment they decide to give their time or money. Every heart is unique, which is something that also applies to the journey for donating versus contributing time. There are striking similarities and also critical differences between the two, which is why we decided it was important to outline where the journey is the same and where it breaks off.

Target Market



The Calculated Contributors are college students and young professionals, ages 20-29, who are service-oriented and purposeful in their monetary contributions. They want to get involved in organizations that they care about, but only if those organizations provide transparency and convenience. They have no issue spending time researching to make sure their contributions are used effectively. This target is on-the-go and wants to spend their time where it matters. The Calculated Contributors are impacted by social interactions and are more likely to participate in organizations that interact online and/or provide social opportunities as a form of supporting the organization. They are also strongly influenced by their friends and are more willing to be involved with organizations that their friends care about. Social media is a big part of their lives, so most of their knowledge about organizations and events going on around them is acquired through online mediums.

We used the word “calculated” to describe our target market because they are intentional particularly with their contributions to nonprofit organizations. We discovered that they spend a lot of time researching and mapping out where their time and money will best be spent. We use the word “contributors” to encompass all the ways the target market gets involved with a nonprofit organization.



Key Insight



“Like a lot of millennials, I’m really invested in my passions. Because of this, it’s really important that my donations and volunteer work are going to good use in the organizations I choose to interact with. Since I don’t have a lot of free time, I like to spend the spare moments I do have with my friends. If I can combine a social life with the opportunity to give back in some way, I’m happy. Normally my friends and family introduce me to nonprofits, but no matter what, I research the organization to ensure it’s trustworthy and legitimate. I hate to be cynical, but these days I feel like you never know where your money is going. Nonprofit organizations that don’t tell me where my donations are going make me nervous and hesitant to contribute. Since I have #TrustIssues, I am more attracted to local nonprofits and events because I feel a more personal connection.”

Consumer Journey



1

The Heart-
to-Heart

2

The
Operation

Donor

Experiencer

3

The Adrenaline Rush

4

RE: You've Got Mail

3

The
Pacemaker

5

Spreading
the Love

4

Love in
Action

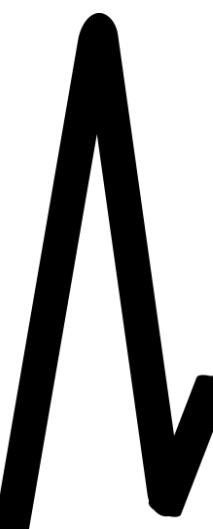
1

The Heart-to-Heart

ALL

The Calculated Contributors spend a lot of time socially interacting, whether it be online or face-to-face. The heart-to-heart is the primary step in our target's journey where they **first** hear about a nonprofit organization or event from a friend and become **inspired** to dig a little deeper. Our target is more likely to trust recommendations when they come from a friend because they typically surround themselves with individuals who have the same passions and values. Whether they are scrolling through their newsfeed or it comes up in a conversation, this is the exact moment they form their first **connection** to the organization. Upon this introduction, our target is feeling **inquisitive**, and maybe a little **hesitant**, so they begin progressing into step two.

"When I see that one of my friends is interested in an event on Facebook, it catches my attention and I typically click on the event to see if it's something that I'd be interested in getting involved in."



2

The Operation

ALL

It is really important for our target to know **exactly** how their contribution is going to impact the organization. They don't mind taking the time to **research** a nonprofit organization that they are volunteering with, donating to or attending an event for. In this step, our target is taking the time to visit the organization's website for a variety of reasons. If donating, our target is looking for **specific** areas of the nonprofit their money will help. If volunteering, our target is looking for the **duties** they will be performing and the **hours** expected. It's important to note that this step is crucial for donors. If the donation page isn't **easy to navigate** and **completely transparent**, it can deter a donation from coming in. At this point, our target is starting to feel more **invested** and is preparing to take the next step.

"If I'm really considering donating, I want to make sure the money and the time I'm spending is really truly going to those causes and is not going to be stretched over the whole organization."



3

The Adrenaline Rush

DONOR

After careful consideration, the Calculated Contributors are ready to **make the leap**. This is the step where they are **taking action** and making their donation. They've done their research, and they are **happy** to be giving back to a nonprofit organization that invests in issues close to their heart. These donations primarily occur **online** for convenience purposes, but our target market would be willing to give in person, as well. Whether the contribution is big or small, they are **confident** knowing that any amount of money they donate is helping make a difference in the organization. They are not bothered by suggested donation amounts.

"Giving something is better than giving nothing at all, so whether it's a couple dollars or \$20, I know that I'm in some way contributing to the nonprofit. Even if I can't be there to help hands on, I'm providing help to those who can be."

"I sent my friend a link about volunteering for a local nonprofit organization and he ended up getting involved with me. It's like the buddy system - I had the opportunity to contribute to an organization I care about and got to bond with him at the same time."

This is the step in their journey where our target **reaches out** and sees who they can **share** their experience with. The Calculated Contributors prefer to spend their free time with friends and loved ones. Whether or not someone is able to participate with them plays a **major role** in their decision to actually follow through. Once they know that they are ready to commit, they **sign up** and begin preparing, whether that be through fundraising, training, or setting up a carpool.

EXPERIENCER

3

The Pacemaker



4

RE: You've Got Mail

DONOR

Whether they are recognized for their donation or not, our target is **feeling good** about the step they've just taken to give back. **Reassurance** that their donation was successfully received is critical, but an actual "thank you" is unnecessary. Because they spend so much time researching a nonprofit before giving, and they primarily donate online, it gives them **peace of mind** to receive a confirmation that their payment went through. A **painless** donation process makes them more likely to donate again in the future.

"Not getting a thank you note won't stop me from donating again. All I really care about it getting some sort of confirmation that they've received my money and are processing it since giving online can be a little sketchy sometimes."

“You can prepare and prepare but nothing beats the feeling of actually participating with other people who are passionate and care about a cause just as much as you do.”

This is the moment when all of their research and preparation **pays off** and their journey peaks. Because our target market has spent so much time preparing and sharing the process with friends and family, they’re likely feeling **positive** about their decision to get involved. If they feel **connected** to the nonprofit organization during this step, it is probable that they will continue with their involvement or support the organization again.

EXPERIENCER

4

Love in Action

"I really love sharing about organizations after an event or volunteering because I think it's so important for people to learn about all of the causes and amazing organizations out there and what they do to make the world a better place."

If millennials have a **positive** experience with an organization, they are likely to post about it on social media. Our target prefers visuals, so they will normally post a picture with a short caption on Instagram or Facebook to summarize their experience. They don't typically share on social media for personal **recognition**, but moreso to shine light on the organization and the values they now identify with now that they are connected to the nonprofit on a **personal level**.

EXPERIENCER

5





The background is a complex, abstract geometric pattern composed of numerous triangles of varying sizes and orientations. The color palette is monochromatic, featuring various shades of red, from deep, dark burgundy to bright, vibrant red. The triangles are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some areas appearing more prominent than others.

TOUCHPOINTS



Social Media



Social media plays a large part in our target's interaction with nonprofit organizations. They are more likely to find out about donation opportunities, volunteer opportunities and nonprofit events through their newsfeeds, especially if their friends are involved. Additionally, our target enjoys sharing their contribution to nonprofits with others in the form of visual posts, such as a story on Snapchat or an Instagram picture. Currently, the American Heart Association is very active on social media, often posting to each of their platforms multiple times a day. However, there is a disconnect between the content they post and the content our target is more likely to engage with. This touchpoint is critical because it kickstarts our target's journey to donating and experiencing, so it's necessary for the American Heart Association to create content that will more accurately pique the interest of millennials.



Website



The website is an important touchpoint in our target's interactions with the American Heart Association. Since a majority of our interviewees indicated that they would prefer to donate online for convenience purposes when they are donating to a nonprofit organization, this donation would occur through the American Heart Association's website. While there is a link highlighted in red on the top right corner of the website, the home page is cluttered with all kinds of information that can be potentially distracting and an overload to our target. Since research is such a large step in the Calculated Contributor's journey to interaction with a nonprofit, it's important that they are able to find the information about an organization they are looking for easily and that the information is straightforward and helpful. Though the target isn't bothered by high suggestion amounts, including lower suggestion amounts may cause the target to feel like the American Heart Association wants to connect to their demographic and their lower budget.



Campaigns



Since 2014, the American Heart Association has improved their marketing campaigns to reach consumers. Though the Life is Why campaign is directed more towards adults with families, it has the potential to appeal to a younger demographic because of its social media presence. Another initiative that is notable is the Go Red for Women campaign. This campaign is geared towards older women to encourage them to stay active and have their heart checked. Both of these do a great job of promoting the American Heart Association's mission and values, but they are not making an emotional connection with the desired target market, millennials. Millennials prefer to receive messaging from local organizations because of the personal connection and transparency. Because both of these campaigns are national, they are not making a strong connection with our target market. The American Heart Association should focus on grabbing the attention of our target with their local chapters to ensure the message sticks.



Word of Mouth



Our target market tends to rely on word-of-mouth recommendations from their friends and families when considering to donate, volunteer or attend an event for a nonprofit organization. Through secondary research, we found that millennials trust their loved ones' experiences. According to our primary research, hearing about a positive experience or heartwarming story from a loved one tends to spark interest within our target market and motivate them to take an active role within the organization. The Calculated Contributors spend a lot of time interacting on social media, so seeing positive posts about a nonprofit organization from their peers is an effective word-of-mouth method. The American Heart Association knows how to create an emotional connection, but not with our particular target.





RECOMMENDATIONS

Social Media



The American Heart Association can more successfully attract our target by establishing a more cohesive brand aesthetic across platforms, including more visuals that millennials can relate to and inserting more brand personality through their copy.

When it comes to Instagram, our target consistently uses this platform for visual content. Aesthetic and visual consistency is very important for the Calculated Contributors and the current Instagram lacks this. The feed looks cluttered with word-heavy posts, inconsistent infographics and color schemes and pictures of older individuals. We recommend paring down the copy and sticking to a clean, modern color scheme. The lack of millennial presence on the AHA's Instagram creates a disconnect because it's unrelatable to the desired demographic.

The AHA's Facebook does a good job of including a mix of visual, informational and video content; but, much like their Instagram, the visuals are too text-heavy, the infographics are not aesthetically appealing and the individuals portrayed in the media are outside of our target market's age group.

Snapchat is a very popular platform among our target and a lot of our interviewees admitted to being heavy users for in-the-moment social media use. We recommend creating a Snapchat filter for the day of the event or volunteering opportunities. This gives the attendees the opportunity to Snapchat about their experience while also incorporating the AHA sponsored content.

Website



In order to make the website easier to navigate and more visually pleasing for our target market, we recommend that the American Heart Association reduce clutter on their main page. Since the Calculated Contributors look to the website as a source of knowledge when they are calculating their next move in involvement with an organization, the important information that the American Heart Association wants individuals to recognize about their brand should stand out on the home page. Once they decide that they do want to donate, the link to the donation process should be more streamlined from the home page.

Along with redesigning the website, we recommend that the AHA change the donation process to create lower donation amounts along with the already suggested donation amounts. Because our target is less financially stable than the AHA's current target, they may feel more apt to donate if they feel like the AHA understands their budget.

Campaigns



In order to capture our target market, we recommend that the American Heart Association create a campaign that is directed at local chapters. Millennials respond favorably to local campaigns, so this would be a great way to make the Calculated Contributors aware of the AHA and understand its mission. Millennials spend more time on social media than any other generation, so making sure that these campaigns are posted heavily on the AHA's social media accounts will ensure that the Calculated Contributors catch on and interact with these efforts.



Word of Mouth



In order to give our target something to talk about, the American Heart Association needs to establish more of a local presence. One of the major tensions between our target and the AHA is that our target cares about their overall health and wellness but is not currently concerned with their heart health. A great way for the AHA to resolve this tension is to meet the target where they are currently at in their health journey. Our recommendation is that the the AHA partners with college recreation centers and local gyms, establishing brand awareness and reinforcing the personal connection through local partnerships.

Once a year, the American Heart Association should sponsor an interactive day of wellness at the local gyms. This would entail team activities, such as tournaments, instructor-taught classes, races, etc. This gives our target the opportunity to socially engage with both their friends and the AHA at the same time.

In order to maintain this connection with the Calculated Contributors, the AHA can set up pop-up booths once a month in the gyms promoting different aspects of wellness. The AHA representatives would pass out free items with their logo on them, such as water bottles, stress balls, step counters, healthy snacks and informational packets about how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. We believe that correlating the AHA with these wellness items reinforces their mission of healthy living while simultaneously creating a presence with our target. By doing this, the AHA will become top-of-mind when millennials are considering where to donate their time and/or money.



The background is a complex, abstract geometric pattern composed of numerous triangles in various shades of red and dark red. The triangles are of different sizes and orientations, creating a dynamic, low-poly aesthetic. The colors range from a deep, dark burgundy to a bright, vibrant red.

CONCLUSION

For the past three months, we have conducted primary and secondary research, identified and analyzed our target market, discovered and defined the target-specific consumer journey and created recommendations for the consumer touchpoints. Through these tactics, our team was able to identify the barriers the American Heart Association faces when it comes to effectively connecting with their desired target, namely the Calculated Contributors. To successfully inspire our target to take action, the American Heart Association needs to focus on creating an environment where millennials can give back while also making lasting memories with those close to them. The American Heart Association can reach the millennial generation by being transparent and engaging, and using relevant communication methods to tap into millennials' charitable giving and urge to make the world a better place.

Sources



https://www.instagram.com/american_heart/

<https://www.facebook.com/AmericanHeart/>

https://twitter.com/American_Heart

<http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/>

<http://www.adweek.com/agencies/the-american-heart-association-just-named-its-first-global-advertising-agency-of-record/>

<http://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/qa-elizabeth-banks-her-digital-platforms-partnership-american-heart-association-175644/>

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs310/en/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/americanheartas-soc>





