

**Part D - Final Report: Diagnostic Analysis of World Vision**

**Australia's Bounceback Campaign**

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# **Executive Summary**

Our project problem-solving on World Vision Australia’s (WVA) Bounceback Campaign aims to re-engage churning supporters; however, our analysis shows that it is currently facing a drop in engagement and donation performance as a long-term trend and not a short-term seasonal fluctuation. Whilst our goal is to optimize the supporter journey as a bigger picture, we attempt to do so by drilling down into their engagement. One key issue in this campaign is that a one-size-fits-all outreach strategy of sending 7 outreach messages every year in the same pattern to all the segments hasn’t evolved to meet changing supporter expectations. This report takes a diagnostic approach to uncover core issues related to this problem via channel usage, supporter segment targeting, seasonal timing, and donor fatigue. By donor fatigue as per our analysis and understanding, we are referring to a pattern where previously engaged supporters reduce or stop giving due to excessive outreach, repetitive messaging, or emotional burnout from constant donation requests.

With our analysis, we have addressed four diagnostic questions out of which two of them relating to channels and segments, each to address the underlying problem. We found that while Online channels are growing, especially during Q4 where Direct Mail still brings in the most consistent donations. However, Direct Mail’s effectiveness is starting to plateau. Meanwhile, a small group of high-performing donor segments is showing signs of burnout from repeated, non-personalized messaging. Our main insight is that WVA’s decline in engagement is not due to a lack of donor intent, but rather a campaign design that needs updating. This report recommends a “donor journey optimization” approach by personalizing messages, better segmenting donors, and using the right mix of communication channels.

Key Recommendations from the analysis and mentioned in detail in the following sections of the report:

1. Create personalized messages and campaigns for under-engaged donor segments.
2. Reduce how often fatigued segments are contacted and refresh campaign content.
3. Focus more on Online engagement during high-impact periods, while still using Direct Mail strategically.
4. Build real-time feedback tools and KPIs to track engagement and adjust strategies.

The aim of this report is to improve how WVA connects with its supporters, making each interaction more meaningful and increasing long-term support for the child’s education.

# **Introduction and Approach**

World Vision Australia is a leading non-profit organization dedicated to supporting vulnerable communities around the world through humanitarian and development initiatives. Its core mission is rooted in child sponsorship, which enables donors to contribute to the well-being, education, and health of children in need. Alongside sponsorships, WVA also runs a range of donor-driven programs focused on community upliftment, disaster relief, and sustainable development.

To retain and re-engage donors who have become inactive, WVA developed the Bounceback Campaign, a targeted outreach initiative designed to reconnect with supporters who have previously contributed but have since stopped engaging. The campaign uses multiple communication channels, including Direct Mail, Online, and SMS, to prompt renewed donations by reminding donors of key emotional touchpoints, such as birthdays and holidays.

However, in recent years, the Bounceback Campaign has experienced a steady decline in engagement rates and donation volumes. This downward trend raised the need for a closer examination of the campaign’s strategy and outcomes. This report aims to unpack the underlying reasons behind these declines and provide practical, evidence-based recommendations to reinvigorate donor relationships and improve campaign effectiveness.

To do this, we adopted a Diagnostic Analysis framework, a structured method that helps identify not just what is happening in the data, but why it’s happening. This approach allowed us to examine performance patterns across several dimensions and uncover root causes rather than surface-level symptoms. We framed four diagnostic questions to investigate:

* The effectiveness of communication channels
* Changes in donor engagement over time
* Whether the right donor segments are being targeted
* Long-term donations decline in previously high-performing groups

These insights are based on historical Bounceback campaign data from the 1980s to 2023, enabling a long-term perspective on both strategic gaps and emerging opportunities.

# **Basic Assumptions**

For this analysis, the following assumptions have been made to define campaign scope and interpret donor behaviour:

* All lapsed donors included in the Bounceback Campaign receive seven uniform outreach communications annually, without personalization across content, channel, or timing.
* Channel definitions across the dataset (e.g., Online, Direct Mail, SMS) are consistently and accurately applied.
* Helix Community segmentation is a valid reflection of donor demographics, values, and preferences.
* Outcome Cards and donation totals are reliable proxies for engagement and intent.
* Donors included in the data had no ongoing active sponsorships at the time of re-engagement efforts.
* Seasonal campaigns like birthdays and Christmas significantly boost Q4 engagement, especially via the Online channel.

# **Data Analysis (Diagnostic Analysis)**

We used a diagnostic analysis framework to identify the root causes behind declining donor engagement. This method allowed us to move beyond surface-level metrics and examine deeper patterns in donor behaviour, communication effectiveness, and campaign outcomes. By posing targeted questions and exploring historical data trends from 1980s to 2023, we were able to isolate issues related to channel performance, seasonality, donor segmentation, and long-term value shifts. This approach helped us develop data-driven insights and practical recommendations that directly support journey optimization.

### Q1: Are We Using the Right Communication Channels?

This question examines whether the current mix of communication channels is optimized for engagement and donation outcomes.

**Findings:**

The analysis shows a clear difference in performance across communication channels. Direct Mail stands out as the most effective channel, accounting for only 38% of total contact volume yet contributing to 62% of donors and an impressive 73.3% of total donation revenue. This indicates a high conversion and revenue yield from this more traditional and tangible outreach method. In contrast, Online channels while accounting for 31% of contacts and 35% of donors, generate only 24% of revenue, suggesting lower donation amounts per donor or less impactful engagement through digital messaging. Other channels, including SMS, SSG Inbound, and Retail Events, played a minimal role in campaign effectiveness, each contributing less than 5% of total donors. These findings suggest that while digital platforms are expanding in reach, Direct Mail remains the most reliable channel for both donor engagement and financial return, underscoring the need for a balanced and data-informed multi-channel strategy.

**Analysis:**  
Direct Mail works well due to its tangible and personal nature, especially when paired with emotional content like cards. However, Online channels are growing, particularly during key seasonal periods like Q4, suggesting that digital outreach, when executed around key moments, can be highly effective at scale.

**Conclusion:**  
Direct Mail remains the most effective channel per dollar spent, but digital strategies should not be ignored. An optimal approach blends traditional and online outreach with audience-specific tailoring.

A screenshot of a graph

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***Contact % vs Donor % by Channel Table***

### Q2: Are Channels Gaining or Losing Effectiveness Over Time?

This question analyzes performance trends across communication channels over four quarters in a year to assess seasonality and sustainability.

**Findings:**

The analysis across quarters from Q4 2019 to Q3 2022 reveals critical patterns in channel performance. Between Q4 2019 and Q3 2022, Online engagement outpaced other channels, with notable spikes in Q4 (287K and 282K donors in 2020 and 2021). Direct Mail remained stable but didn’t grow. Other channels made a minimal impact. This highlights the strong seasonal and emotional pull of digital campaigns during year-end appeals. In contrast, Direct Mail, while steadily contributing a baseline of donors (ranging from 103K to 145K in peak quarters), did not scale as aggressively and showed more stable, less volatile trends. The 'Other' channels remained negligible throughout the timeline, contributing minimally and displaying no significant growth or decline.

These trends clearly show the growing dominance and scalability of Online channels, while Direct Mail remains a consistent but plateauing performer. The spikes in Online engagement during emotionally significant periods suggest that digital strategies are well-suited for high-impact seasonal campaigns, whereas Direct Mail’s effectiveness lies in its steady, baseline contribution.

**Analysis:**

The analysis reveals a clear seasonality in digital engagement, particularly during emotionally charged periods such as year-end. This pattern suggests donors are more likely to respond to digital outreach during these times. However, the fact that Direct Mail’s contribution has remained stable rather than growing signals a possible saturation point. WVA needs to explore why certain digital campaigns spike and identify replicable factors such as tone, content type, or timing.

**Conclusion:**

Online engagement is gaining long-term effectiveness, especially for emotionally driven campaigns. Direct Mail remains important but must be complemented with digital innovation. The data underscores the importance of channel diversification, strategic timing, and emotional relevance in campaign planning.

A graph of sales and a few other sales

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

*Donors per quarters by Response Channel Chart (2019 – 2022).*

### Q3: Are We Targeting the Right Donor Segments?

This question investigates how donor personas (Helix segments) respond to outreach and whether current segmentation strategies are aligned with engagement outcomes.

**Findings:**

The findings indicate that the donor personas 107 Domestic Bliss, 101 Bluechip, and 204 Traditional Values accounted for many outcome cards received, highlighting their strong engagement with the Bounceback Campaign. In contrast, other segments such as Doing Fine showed minimal engagement, suggesting these personas are either less responsive to current outreach efforts or are not effectively targeted through the existing communication strategy.

**Analysis:**

There is a significant imbalance in engagement levels across segments. The campaign appears to be focused heavily on segments that have historically responded well, without adapting to include emerging or evolving personas. This limits growth and overburdens top-performing segments. New segments may require different messaging, timing, or channel preferences. Ignoring these could lead to missed opportunities in attracting fresh donors or retaining dormant ones.

**Conclusion:**  
WVA needs to reassess its segmentation approach and develop tailored outreach plans for less-engaged personas.A screenshot of a graph

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***Helix Persona Outcome Card Distribution***

### Q4: Why Are Top-Performing Segments Declining?

This question explores long-term donor disengagement among historically high-performing Helix Communities.

**Findings:**

The data reveals a significant decline in donation value among some of the previously top-performing donor segments. Most notably, the “Leading Lifestyles” community has experienced a drop of over 35% in total donations since 2005, indicating signs of donor fatigue or disengagement. Similarly, other segments such as “Hearth and Home” and the Lewers persona “Melissa” have shown consistent downward trends in giving over the same period. These patterns suggest that the continued reliance on the same high-performing groups without evolving the outreach strategy may be leading to diminishing returns.

**Analysis:**

**Donor fatigue appears to be a major factor. We define donor fatigue as a decline in giving behavior or also measured as ‘donated amount’ over the years, due to excessive or repetitive outreach. In the data analysis, it typically shows up as a decline in donation frequency or value, especially from segments that were highly targeted in prior campaigns. We identified donor fatigue by analysing donation trends over time for high-value segments like Waleed and Leading Lifestyles.**

**1. These segments had high contact frequency (up to 7 times/year) but showed a 35%+ decline in total donations since their peak in 2010.**

**2. We also noted no significant increase in donations despite continued outreach, which suggests diminishing returns, which is a hallmark of fatigue. These segments have been the focus of multiple campaign cycles and are likely overwhelmed or emotionally disengaged. Repeated exposure to similar messaging also reduces perceived personalization.**

**Conclusion:**  
Over-targeting high-performing segments without updating the strategy leads to burnout and disengagement. WVA must implement "cool-down" periods and revise content regularly.

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***Donation Trend for "Leading Lifestyles" Segment***

# **Interpretation**

The Bounceback Campaign's reliance on broad messaging strategies, repetitive channel usage, and skewed segment targeting has led to declining donor returns. High-value segments are disengaging due to overexposure, while many personas are not activated at all. The data highlights a need for balance, optimizing trusted channels like Direct Mail, scaling online campaigns thoughtfully, and redefining segmentation to include underutilized audiences. Strategic timing and emotional resonance must also be key design factors in future communications.

Our analysis suggests that WVA is experiencing diminishing returns not because of a lack of generosity among donors, but rather due to tactical issues in their outreach approach. The significant decline among previously reliable segments indicates that the campaign strategy has remained static while donor expectations and communication preferences have evolved. The seasonal spikes in Q4 demonstrate that donors are still willing to engage when the message, timing, and emotional connection align properly. This presents an opportunity to revitalize the Bounceback Campaign by implementing targeted adjustments rather than a complete overhaul. Hence, donors are still willing to engage but only when content and timing align with their expectations. The solution is not to start over, but to refine the current strategy to better match donor behaviour.

# **Recommendations and Success KPIs**

**1. Target Under-Engaged Segments**

Action: Design tailored campaigns for under-engaged Helix personas like "Metrotechs" and Lewers personas such as "Greta" and "Pauline", aligning language, visuals, and motivations to each segment’s profile.

*Success KPIs:*

* Engagement Rate uplift: 10% increase in Outcome Card response rates within targeted segments (per quarter).
* Segment conversion rate: Achieve at least a 5% donor conversion from first-time engagement in these segments within 6 months.
* Reach expansion metric: Under-engaged segments account for 25% of total campaign contact volume by next cycle.

**2. Reduce Outreach Frequency for Fatigued Segments**

Action: Cut contact frequency for fatigued personas (e.g., "Melissa", "Leading Lifestyles") from 7 to 3 communications annually and introduce content variety (e.g., gratitude messages, impact stories).

*Success KPIs:*

* Donor retention improvement: 15% reduction in year-over-year drop-off among previously high-value segments.
* Response freshness rate: ≥20% increase in unique responses (non-repeats) from cooled-down segments post-reduction.
* Net Promoter Score (NPS): Increase by 10 points from donor feedback surveys in these segments.

**3. Diversify and Integrate Channel Strategy**

Action: Move away from over-reliance on Direct Mail. Centre campaigns around Online engagement, particularly during emotionally resonant periods like Q4, while supporting it with Direct Mail and SMS based on donor preferences.

*Success KPIs:*

* Multi-channel engagement rate: 30% of campaign interactions utilize two or more channels by the next campaign cycle.
* Digital channel ROI: Achieve a 20% increase in donations through Online and SMS channels combined, positioning online as the leading driver.
* Preference adoption rate: 50% of donors opt in to at least one preferred channel setting by FY end.

**4. Establish Feedback Loops and Dynamic Segmentation**

Action: Implement real-time data dashboards to monitor donor engagement, automate segment updates, and adjust strategies dynamically.

*Success KPIs:*

* Segment refresh rate: Segment definitions updated quarterly, with ≥10% of contacts dynamically reassigned based on behavior.
* Disengagement alert trigger: 100% of drop-offs flagged within one cycle for review and re-engagement.
* Message personalization index: 80% of outbound messages customized by segment or persona tag.

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