# Fundraising Pyramid

* At the top are extremely wealthy people who want to work with advancement office and create impact
* At the bottom of the pyramid we want the broad swath of people to donate a small amount, but it’s more important from an engagement standpoint
  + The university’s rankings strongly depend on the participation rate among alumni giving back to the community.
* We do far less calls and paper mail, mostly email (our data)

# About the Data

* Year Starts June 1, ends May 31st
* Collected through a system called Exact Target, similar to Constant Contact
  + Captures clicks, opens, link clicks, times, etc.
  + Separately compiles this data into an aggregated data set – i.e. it shows that someone opened it three times versus three separate observations
  + Data is updated as it comes in. We can infer that donors have more accurate information and those who haven’t given may be outdated.
* Biggest data set is each singular Touchpoint (Actions)
* Smaller data is aggregated by the individual (individual)
* We’ve been trying to decrease the number of solicitations, but can’t necessarily confirm that.
  + Open rates have been declining.
* When someone gives, we stop asking (still sometimes send stewardship emails)
  + There may be other types of emails besides solicitation
* Light the World – Capital Campaign going on since 2005/2006
  + Packages the fundraising
  + Publicly announced effort to reach a certain goal for a certain purpose.
  + $1.5bn goal announced in 2008, just hit $1.6bn goal in May 2016
    - Campaigns are usually 7 years, this was about an 11yr
* Third Data set that should let you match the ID to the smaller one using an ID to see how much they donated to light the world.
  + We don’t have dates attached to the Light the World donations.
* We have 30k living alumni without email addresses. Just getting 10% of them would move the needle on participation.

# Goals/Wish List

* **How do we improve giving/raise more money?** 
  + Mostly by increasing participation instead of donations
  + We don’t anticipate people will go from $25 to $1000 over email
  + We know that the greater proportion of years of given, the more likely you are to give in the future (another reason to go after young alums).
* **Are we sending too many emails? Anecdotally yes, but have no data on it.**
  + Perhaps look at number of emails sent to people who gave in May, end of FY. They’ve been getting emails all year long; compare them to the people who didn’t give. Is there a variation between them after we control for other things like school, etc.?
* **Undergrads receive a large volume of emails because we haven’t targeted them yet. How can we segment them beyond geography?** 
  + In marketing, that’s a huge part of how people operate.
  + Even if we can’t develop segments, hypotheses are good too.
  + Only real targeting we do is graduates of the last ten years (GOLD), they do get different programming
  + 1863 in Email title references “giving circles” i.e. give >$1000, you are in the “1863 Club”, so you get different content and suggested donations.
* **Anything that improves open rates is a key to improving giving.** 
  + How many emails do the people who give actually open?
  + What can we observe about people who haven’t opened ANY emails?
    - Anecdotally, a lot of AOL accounts in there.
    - Clustering/categorizing those types of respondents.
  + Can we create new factors?
* **Looking at different times of year, weeks, and days**
  + We only send solicitation emails on Tues/Thurs at 10am EST.
  + It could be different so do check.
  + December is a big month for giving, as is May (Christmas/Tax). Do you have to send anything in April? Do people give after April, or do they just give in May? Or if you stop sending in April, would they stop giving in May?
  + Are the people in the west coast who get the email at 7am opening them more frequently than those who receive them at 10am?
* **Mobile vs. Desktop**
  + Check cohort, time of day, etc.
  + Keep in mind that you can’t really donate on mobile. Easier to open, harder to donate.

# Implementation

* Marketing team here is much more rudimentary, fewer resources.
  + Haven’t done A/B testing to try two different emails/subject lines between two balanced samples to see how they perform. Capability does exist using a filter-based approach.
* Opportunities to vary time of day that emails are sent.
* We have metrics for “capacity to give” mainly to track the income for people who make pledges of over $250k over the course of 1-3 years.
  + They’re more likely to ask to be excluded but most still in the data.

# Lessons From Other Universities

* We don’t know much about what other universities and peer universities are doing from an email standpoint.
* There are no benchmark standards out there for this type of email marketing.
  + We know that we perform well in participation/giving, but have no idea about open rates.
* Most advancement offices have in-house marketing, smaller ones may outsource.
  + Also has to do with centralization – HBS and Harvard Law are far removed from the regular university’s marketing operations.
  + We try to coordinate with the central university marketing group, but we’re not integrated at all.

# Next Time

* Need to get summary and behavior down to small-ish so that we can get something in there.
* Explain Business Problems and what methodology we’ll use to solve them.
  + Technology will be Stata for now.