

charity: water

BRAND — BOOK

2016



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OUR BRAND

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WELCOME!

Together, we're gonna make some amazing things.

charity: water is a nonprofit organization bringing clean and safe drinking water to people in developing countries. 100% of all public donations directly fund water project costs, and we prove every dollar using photos and GPS coordinates on Google Maps.

We believe a strong sense of brand can set us apart and amplify every message we send. This Brand Book should inspire creativity, while explaining the core attributes that make charity: water unique. If you have questions as you work with our brand, never hesitate to ask: creative@charitywater.org ›

OUR VISION

REINVENT CHARITY

At charity: water, we're creating a new kind of charity. Through genuine transparency, an unshakable 100% model, and a brand built around hope instead of guilt, we're reinstilling confidence in nonprofits and building a community of generous world-changers.

OUR MISSION

To bring clean and safe drinking water to
people in developing countries.

OUR ESSENCE

Water changes everything.

OUR VALUES

Integrity, Respect, Excellence,
Innovation, Generosity, Passion

OUR PERSONALITY

Helpful, Optimistic, Honest,
Adventurous, Generous, Grateful,
Creative, Respectful

Our Brand Tone

Above all, we want our brand to be inspirational. Whether we're talking to our biggest donors or a ten-year-old campaigner, our goal is that every interaction with charity: water feels exciting and filled with possibility.

We also want our brand to feel clear, in both message and design. We believe in transparency, and that applies to more than financials. It means we work hard to make sure language is understandable and visuals feel spacious. We love simplicity.

LOGO

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Meet Jerry

For 663 million people on the planet, the Jerry Can is a way of life. Women and children in developing countries often spend several hours every day walking to collect water. Then, they bring it home in these cans, which weigh 40 pounds when full.

For us, the Jerry Can is a reminder of both hardship and hope. That's why we made the bright, iconic yellow symbol our logo: it's a constant reminder of what we're working toward—and how much more work we still have to do. We use this icon often, but we also use it with care. The following guidelines will show you how to use our logo.

Elements & Versions

Our logo is made up of two elements: our Jerry Can icon and our “charity: water” wordmark set in Baskerville regular at 140 tracking.

Our icon and wordmark can be set horizontally or vertically, whichever works best with your design. The wordmark can be black or white, whichever is most clear on your background color or design. The Jerry Can icon can be yellow, black, or white. Download our [logo](#) ›



charity: water



charity: water

Watch the Details

1. Don't capitalize our name.
2. Don't remove the space after the colon.
3. Don't remove the colon.
4. Don't change the font.
5. Don't make the Jerry Can too small for our name.
6. Don't squish or skew our logo.
7. Don't place our logo on a cluttered background.



Charity: Water



charity:water



charity water



charity: water



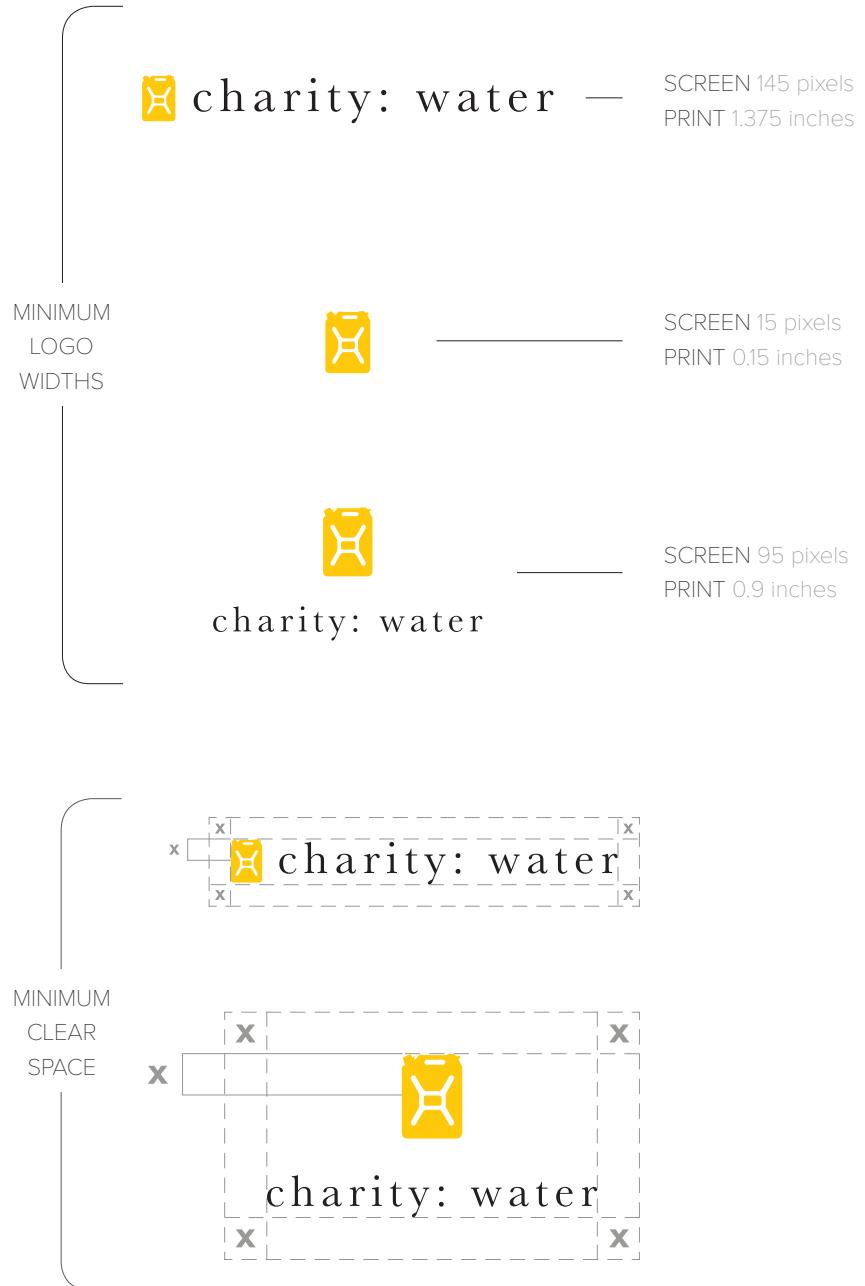
charity: water



charity: water

Size & Space

We like our logo to be easy to read. Keep the size legible and always give it breathing room. How much space does the logo need, exactly? Half the height of the Jerry Can icon, on every side.



Just Jerry

You can also use the Jerry Can alone.
In fact, we do it all the time.



COLORS

- 16 Primary Colors
- 17 Secondary Colors



CMYK 0, 22, 100, 0
RGB 255, 201, 7
HEX #FFC907
Pantone 114 U

Our **Favorite** Colors

Yellow is the color of our Jerry Can icon. Blue represents water. We use these colors a lot.

CMYK 69, 29, 0, 0
RGB 46, 157, 237
HEX #2E9DF7
Pantone 2925 U

Secondary Colors

Our secondary brand colors are bright, just like our optimistic attitude.

CMYK 44, 0, 24, 0

RGB 138, 211, 204

HEX #8BD1CB

CMYK 65, 0, 91, 0

RGB 79, 203, 83

HEX #4FCB53

CMYK 84, 14, 100, 2

RGB 23, 155, 73

HEX #159A48

CMYK 0, 53, 91, 0

RGB 255, 144, 42

HEX #FF902A

CMYK 0, 90, 92, 0

RGB 245, 64, 44

HEX #F5402C

CMYK 0, 78, 57, 0

RGB 254, 95, 94

HEX #F16061

TYPOGRAPHY

19 Brand Fonts



Our Favorite Fonts

Our primary brand font is Proxima Nova. We use it in print and on the web. When Proxima Nova isn't available, we use Avenir. We don't use serif fonts often, but sometimes we use Georgia for body copy, especially on the web.

Use the font that works best with your design, and always be consistent throughout whatever you're working on.

PROXIMA NOVA

Proxima Nova Thin
Proxima Nova Thin Italic
Proxima Nova Light
Proxima Nova Light Italic
Proxima Nova Regular
Proxima Nova Regular Italic
Proxima Nova Semibold
Proxima Nova Semibold Italic
Proxima Nova Bold
Proxima Nova Bold Italic
Proxima Nova Extra Bold
Proxima Nova Black

AVENIR

Avenir Light
Avenir Light Oblique
Avenir Book
Avenir Book Oblique
Avenir Roman
Avenir Oblique
Avenir Medium
Avenir Medium Oblique
Avenir Heavy
Avenir Heavy Oblique
Avenir Black
Avenir Black Oblique

GEORGIA

Georgia Regular
Georgia Italic
Georgia Bold
Georgia Bold Italic



PHOTOGRAPHY

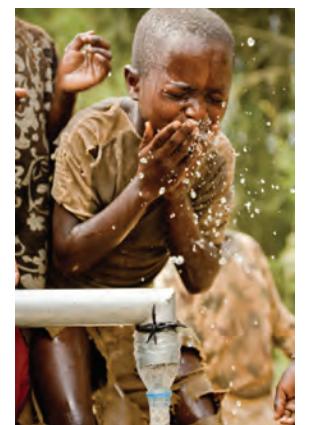
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- 22 Examples

Our Photo Approach

Focus on hope, not guilt.

Photography is an enormous part of the charity: water brand. You'll see beautiful photos of smiling people in just about everything we do. We like it that way. Our photographic style is built on one simple thing: possibility.

We never guilt people into giving. Instead, we portray the people we help with dignity. And anytime we show photos of harsh reality, we pair it with explanations of what you can do to help. We want everyone who interacts with our brand to feel inspired, hopeful, and motivated to take action. Our imagery is about opportunity.





ILLUSTRATION

24 Approach

25 Examples

Our Illustration Approach

For the most part, we keep our icons and illustrations flat, without gradients or shadows to add a false sense of depth.

Make sure your illustration matches your audience. When talking about campaigners, we use playful, imperfect illustrations. When talking about the water crisis, we lean toward simple icons in solid colors instead. Whether simple, fun, or elegant, our icons should always be easy to identify at a glance.

To help bring ideas to life and add visual appeal, see the following page or download our [icon library](#) ›



Sample Illustrations





LANGUAGE & COPY

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- 30 Style Samples

Copy Tone

How do you write for charity: water? Our brand voice is friendly, smart, and simple. Instead of thinking like a company, think like a person. Everything we write is written by a person, for a person. It's good when it feels that way.

At the same time, we keep things professional. If charity: water was a person, we'd be a knowledgeable, friendly one. When talking about the water crisis, we're downright experts. So though we like to keep things casual, we steer clear of LOLs and emojis.

Writing Tips & Tricks

As you write in the charity: water voice, here are a few simple ground rules to help you start off strong.

1. Be casual, but not too casual.

Do we use words like “totally” and “super”? Absolutely. Do we like exclamation marks and short, personal emails? Yes. Do we refer to our campaigners as “Bro” or drop an LOL at the end of a sentence? No. We’re a pretty chill organization, but a smart, professional one.

2. Be accurate.

Being casual doesn’t mean we’re careless. We proofread everything. Check stats. Then check them again. We’re a recognized authority on the water crisis, so especially when talking about the water crisis, or finances, or our programs, or reporting, triple check everything.

3. Be friendly.

We generally treat everyone like friends. Anytime you write something, think: “How would I phrase this if this were going to my best friend?” We love it when communications feel personal and real (while still being clear that we’re a reputable organization).

4. Be positive.

The water crisis is tragic. Talking about it can really put a damper on things. But we never want our supporters or audience to feel unhappy after interacting with us, so we always try to end communications on a positive note. While being honest about harsh realities, we also talk about what we can do to change things and how much better life is once people get clean water.

5. Be inspirational.

We ask a lot of our supporters. So whenever possible, try to inspire people. Think about how you’d describe what we do to your mom or dad—then write that down. Our goal is that every little interaction with charity: water will make people feel happy and hopeful.

6. Be clear.

Transparency is a big part of our brand. Of course, it refers to our reporting and our promise to prove every project we build. But it’s bigger than that, too. Always make your language simple and easy to understand. Never send people somewhere else for information when you can just give it to them. Don’t complicate things unnecessarily. Just be as clear as possible.

7. Be brief.

People are busy. Respect their time. Say what you need to say, then stop writing. A great resource on brevity can be found [here](#)—it provides ideal lengths for just about anything you’ll ever write: Tweets, emails, subject lines, blog posts, etc.

Writing Tips & Tricks

continued

8. Use 100% carefully.

Whenever you talk about our 100% model, always use 100% (not “one hundred percent,” or “every dollar,” or “everything”). Whenever you’re talking about something else, don’t use 100%. For example, in discussing a match, use “double” or “dollar for dollar” or “every dollar,” instead of “matched 100%.”

9. Use can, not will.

When talking about the water crisis, and the impact a donation to clean water can make, never guarantee results. We don’t know in advance exactly how many people a given project can help, or how much life will change once clean water arrives. Instead, talk about the amazing things clean water *can* achieve.

10. Talk about real people.

We like to connect our donors with the real people they help. We tell stories about real people, with names and families. We tie dollars to real communities clean water has helped. When you’re talking about a community, talk about them as “people in Ethiopia” not “Ethiopians”—that will help your audience feel connected to the people they’re helping, even when they’re strangers.

11. Use Pipeline, not the Pipeline.

Our monthly giving program, Pipeline, is a proper noun. Don’t refer to it as The Pipeline. Think of it like Starbucks, which isn’t called The Starbucks. Or Trevor, not The Trevor.

12. Use The Well, not the Well.

When talking about The Well, on the other hand, always capitalize The.

13. They’re not our Well members.

The members of The Well are not ours. They’re a separate group of people. Though of course we wouldn’t exist without them, we treat them with respect and autonomy. In print, refer to The Well members as “members of The Well” or “The Well members” instead of “our Well members.”

14. Clean comes before safe.

When using the phrase “clean, safe drinking water” always put clean before safe. To help you remember, it’s in alphabetical order. This helps our mission statement stay consistent.

15. Be careful with the word crazy.

“The craziest thing we can do is nothing” is a phrase you’ll hear around here a lot. But use it judiciously. We love talking about the crazy, inspiring things our campaigners have done, but we never use the word crazy to describe our work, our partners in the field, or the people we help.

16. You are a who.

When talking about the water crisis, it’s helpful to remember that people should always be referred to with “who” not “that.” As in, “There are 663 million people in the world *who* don’t have access to clean water.”

17. Don’t call us a company.

When talking about our organization, talk about us like you’d talk about your family. Don’t refer to us as “the company,” just use “we.” If you do need to talk about our organization as a whole, use “charity: water,” or occasionally “our organization.”

Copy Style Samples

STYLE TIPS	BAD	GOOD
Avoid big words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✖ It can be overwhelming to comprehend the magnitude that 663 million people represents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ It can be hard to imagine what 663 million people looks like.
Keep sentences simple.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✖ The field teams of our local partners are chosen on the basis that their organizations have years of experience and acquired knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Our local partners have years of experience and lots of knowledge.
Stay positive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✖ Make your birthday actually mean something.✖ You don't really need presents, so tell people to give money to charity: water instead.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Birthdays can change the world. Pledge your next birthday for clean water and make this your best birthday yet.
Don't be too casual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✖ Drinking dirty water and not having toilets totally sucks. It kills tons of people—more than guns or stabbings or crime or war.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Diseases from unsafe water and lack of basic sanitation kill more people every year than all forms of violence, including war.
Focus on real people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✖ There are many Ethiopians without clean water.✖ In fact, more than half the population lacks access to clean, safe drinking water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ In Ethiopia, millions of people don't have clean water. Millions of mothers like Helen can't give their children clean, safe drinking water.

SOCIAL MEDIA

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Social Tone

While we still keep things pretty professional, we think of social media as a place where we can demonstrate personality, have fun, and relate to supporters.

Much like our brand voice, our social voice is written in a human tone. Our posts are typically full of optimism, celebration, and gratitude. More than anything, we try to create daily connections both to our work in the field and the people who make our work possible.

Social Media Suggestions

1. Be “likable.”

This is a space that people invite us into, and they can just as easily kick us out. Don’t think of social media as an opportunity to advertise or promote; think of it as a place to provide memorable moments that inspire and delight.

2. Be a storyteller.

Our work and our progress is really about people. From volunteers and supporters to our partners and the people we serve, there’s a world of stories out there waiting to be told.

3. Be a cheerleader.

It’s not just our story. We’ve had people jump out of airplanes, walk across America, swim naked, and run marathons to raise money for clean water. We want to use their stories to inspire even more by celebrating them well.

4. Be thankful.

Social media offers a wonderful, public “thank you” space, and we have much to be thankful for. From CEOs donating stock shares and little kids hosting lemonade stands to dedicated volunteers and discounted goods for our office... we always practice gratitude.

5. Be direct.

You don’t have to use all 140 characters to get your point across. And go easy on the asks. Keep it simple; focus on one call to action or message per post.

6. #BePartOfSomething

We use a handful of hashtags pretty regularly so we can compile collections by theme. Just so you know: #waterchangeseverything represents impact, #nothingiscrazy is a badge for our most dedicated supporters, #663million is how we talk about the water crisis, and #CWCampaignsWeLove allows us to celebrate current campaigners).

Our Favorite Platforms



We love **Facebook** because it's the place where people truly feel like friends. It's as good for awareness and inspiration as it is for behind the scenes and thought leadership. It's also one of our top traffic drivers.



Instagram is a natural fit because it's so visual. We love using beautiful imagery to connect people with our work. There aren't a lot of clicks happening there, but engagement is huge, and it's a perfect storytelling platform.



Twitter is another great venue for awareness and engagement. While posts get buried pretty quickly, it's still a strong traffic driver, and we love the immediacy. It's the perfect place to celebrate supporters and say thank you.

Our Favorite Platforms continued



Snapchat is a playful storytelling haven. It's a great place to connect with a younger, highly engaged audience and demonstrate transparency. Results are difficult to measure, but the engagement is well worth it.



YouTube boasts one of the most loyal and engaged communities that we've seen. It's great for awareness and feedback; an ideal place to tell stories and connect with storytellers.

charity: water Posts

From sharing beautiful images of clean water to highlighting stories about the people we serve, these inspiring posts are some examples of how we connect our audiences to our work and impact.



Partner Posts

Our partners have also utilized social media to not only share the charity: water story with their networks, but also to highlight their journey in helping us solve the water crisis. These are some of our favorite posts they have shared.

EMC ANZ  @EMCANZ 

#EMCgivesback: staff all around ANZ gave up coffee \$\$ for @charitywater, see how you can help emc.im/6015B6RaN



RETweet: 1 

12:40 AM - 11 Jun 2015

pc wong  @p_c_w 

Love this photo from #EMCGivesBack's launch. Since April, we've raised over \$300K for @charitywater. Wow! #TBT



RETWEETS: 15 LIKES: 14 

7:10 AM - 10 Jul 2014

VIDEO

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Our Approach to Video

Video is one of the most powerful ways that we can share the impact of our work and introduce the people that we serve.

It's as close as we can come to taking our supporters to the field to see it for themselves. From Snapchat to virtual reality, these authentic moments are how we bring our work to life.

Video Suggestions

1. Form relationships first.

It's tempting to whip out cameras right away. Everything is new! Time is limited! Don't do it. Be respectful, greet the community, explain your purpose. All of the time you take getting to know people up front will provide better footage in the end.

2. Stock up on good b-roll.

Emphasis on "good." Again, we want to focus on hope, not guilt. If you're going to show footage that's bleak or hard to watch, be sure you're pairing it with footage that's hopeful and highlights the opportunity for a better future.

3. Be a good listener.

It's not an interview; it's a conversation. And it will go a lot better if you're actively listening and asking relevant follow up questions than it will if you're just trying to cross off all the questions on your list.

4. Embrace the silence.

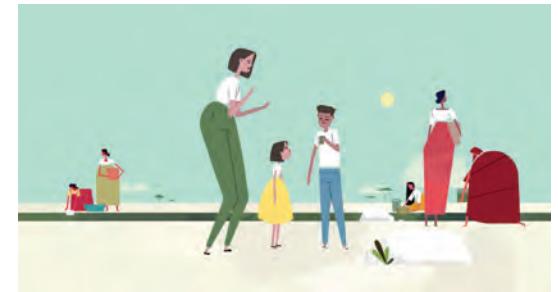
Some of the most magical moments in an interview happen in the long silences. If you're interviewing someone about a difficult topic and your interviewee gets emotional or pauses, give them time to reflect or gather the courage to speak before you jump back in.

5. Put fewer people in the room.

You want the person you're interviewing to feel as comfortable as possible. Show respect by offering privacy and getting rid of spectators. That goes for curious community members and anyone on your team who doesn't need to be there.

6. Consider gender.

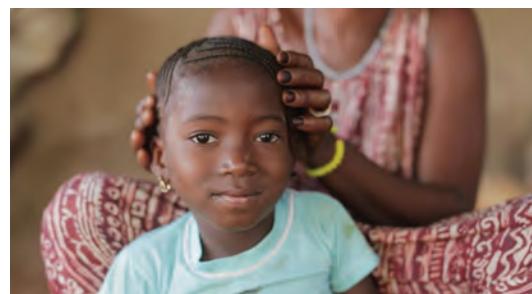
Although it's not always always possible, we try to use a female translator when we're interviewing women. Not only does it provide comfort for the interviewee, it also brings better answers.



Videos that educate.

A chance to get informed about what's happening in the world.

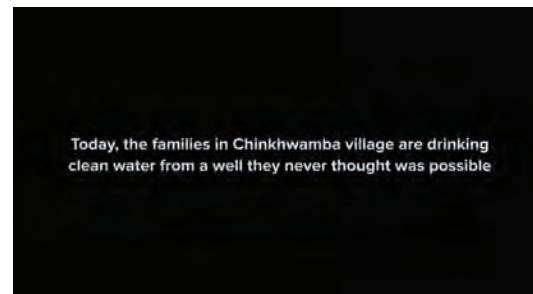
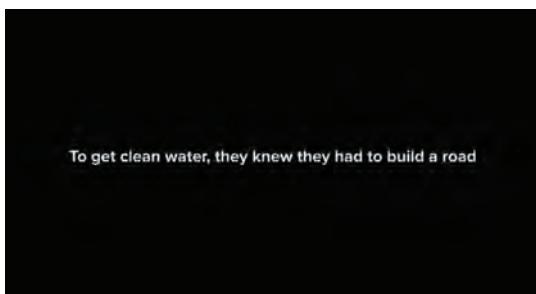
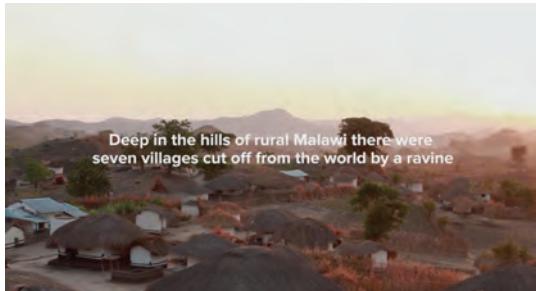
[Why Water >](#)



Videos that inspire action.

Communities who don't have access to clean water and what you can do to change that.

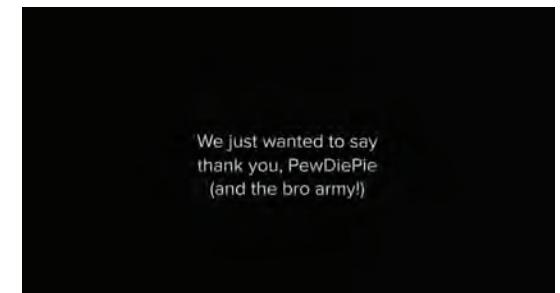
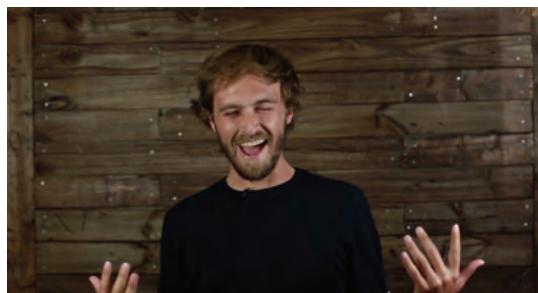
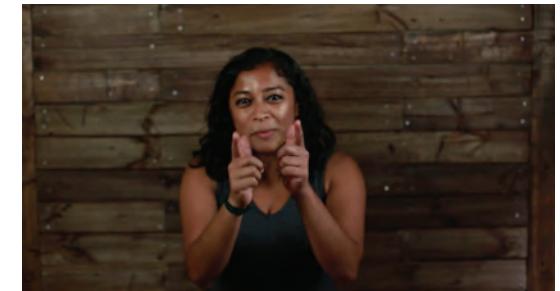
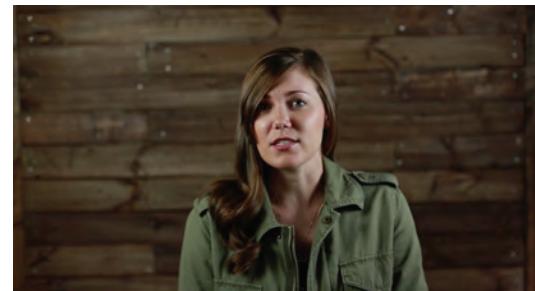
[Sahel September Campaign >](#)



Videos that demonstrate impact.

Our chance to show you where your money went and who it helped.

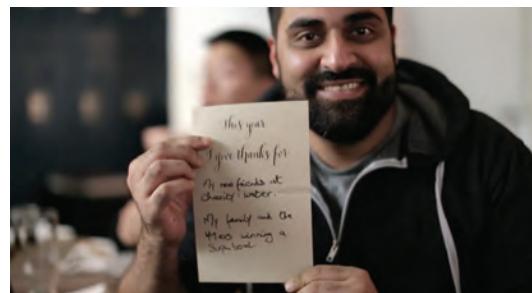
[The Road That Changed Everything >](#)



Videos that say thank you.

Public gratitude for the time, talent, and generosity it takes to change lives with clean water.

[Thank You PewDiePie >](#)



Videos that define us.

From office shenanigans and holiday parties to end of year recaps and special messages.

[Happy Thanksgiving >](#)



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BRAND PARTNERSHIPS

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Our Approach to Brand Partnerships

charity: water seeks to craft holistic, multi-year partnerships with companies that have an established brand and a strong commitment to our mission and 100% model. We partner with brands that value excellence, operate with integrity, share our passion, and push the boundaries of innovation so, together, we can fuel good, inspire generosity, and create a community of compassionate world-changers.

General Co- Branding Guidelines

The charity: water name should only be used when talking about the impact you're making as a business (not to promote a product or service), and should never appear in greater prominence than the company or product benefitting charity: water.

We ask that only our official partners use our logo, and that the charity: water logo and name not appear on any products or packaging. Occasionally, we'll work with a partner to raise awareness and funds through a co-branded product featured in our online store. In that case, we may work with our partner to co-design a product featuring our logo.

Getting Your Community Involved

Partnerships are a great opportunity for us to share the charity: water story with new communities and networks. When promoting on social media, get your followers involved. Engage in dialogue. Spread the hashtag. Encourage sharing.

Lokai kicked off our partnership with an Instagram post highlighting a product that supports charity: water and asking their community to share photos of their blue lokai bracelets (along with a blurb about what water means to them) using the hashtags **#livelokai** and **#charitywater**. Lokai re-grammed their favorites and got hundreds of supporters involved!



Utilizing Digital Media

Video is one of the most powerful ways that we can share the impact of our work and introduce the people that we serve. Whether you create your own co-branded media or share one of our videos, it's an incredibly effective way to inspire, encourage, and bring people together online.

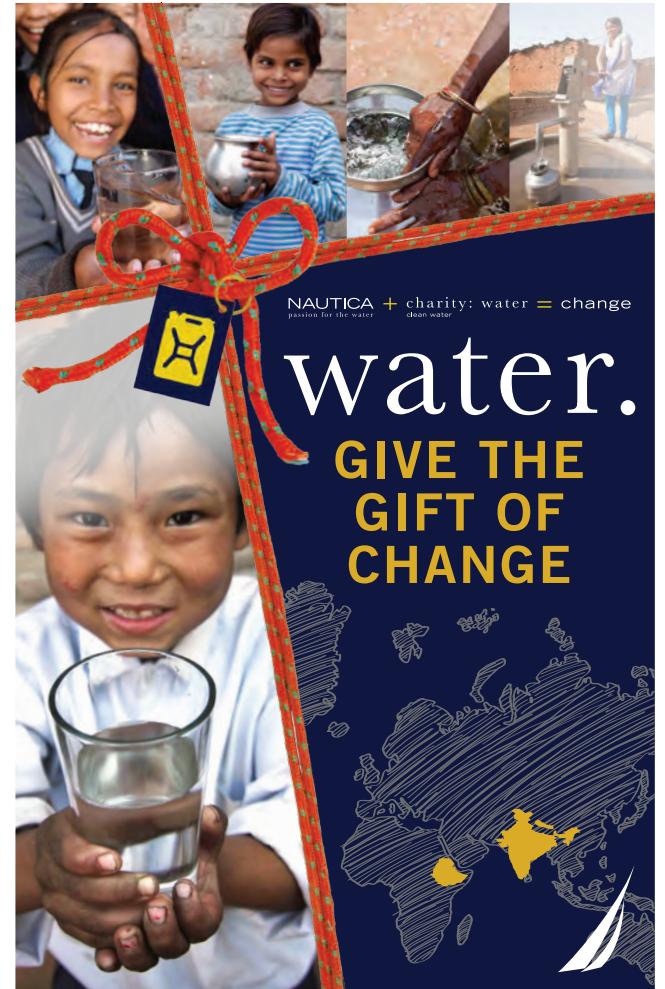
As a part of **American Express's #PassionProject**, they featured inspiring co-branded videos on their YouTube page, sharing the charity: water story and explaining how to get involved by turning birthdays into fundraising campaigns for clean water.



Creating Print Materials.

Print has a tangibility that the web doesn't. It allows you to present static messages to your audience and attract the attention of readers. By creating print materials that feature engaging copy and visuals, you can inform, educate, and inspire your audience!

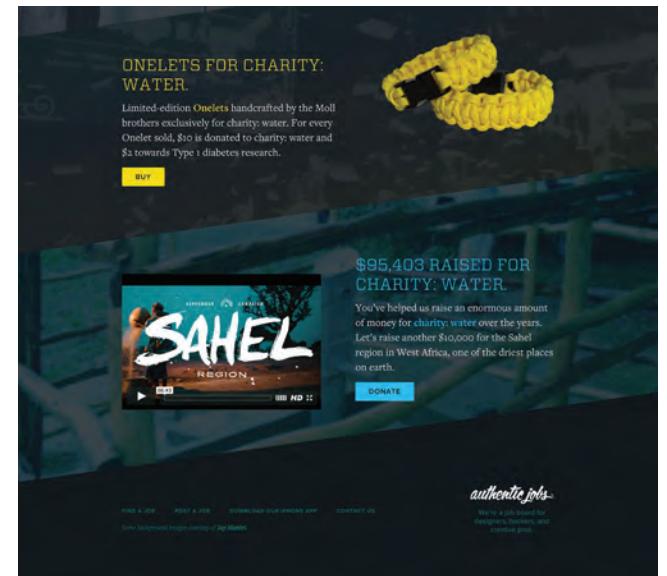
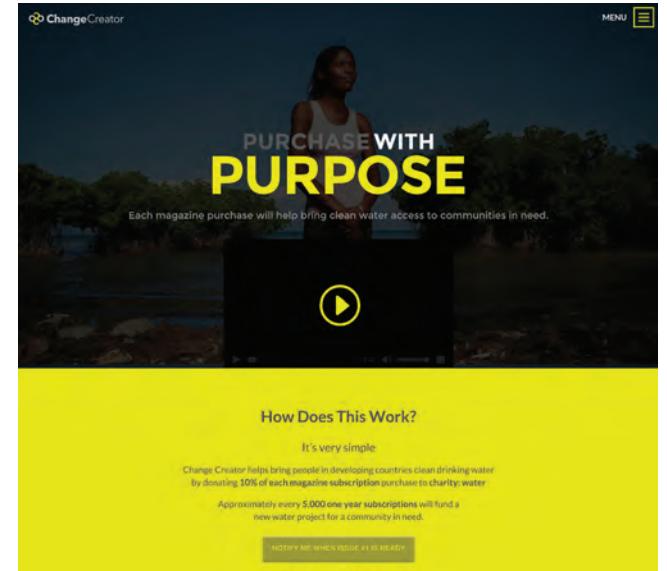
Nautica featured this co-branded poster in their stores which serves as a great example of how to create a print piece that not only represents both brands clearly, but also combines inspiring copy and visually appealing images to successfully attract the attention of an audience.



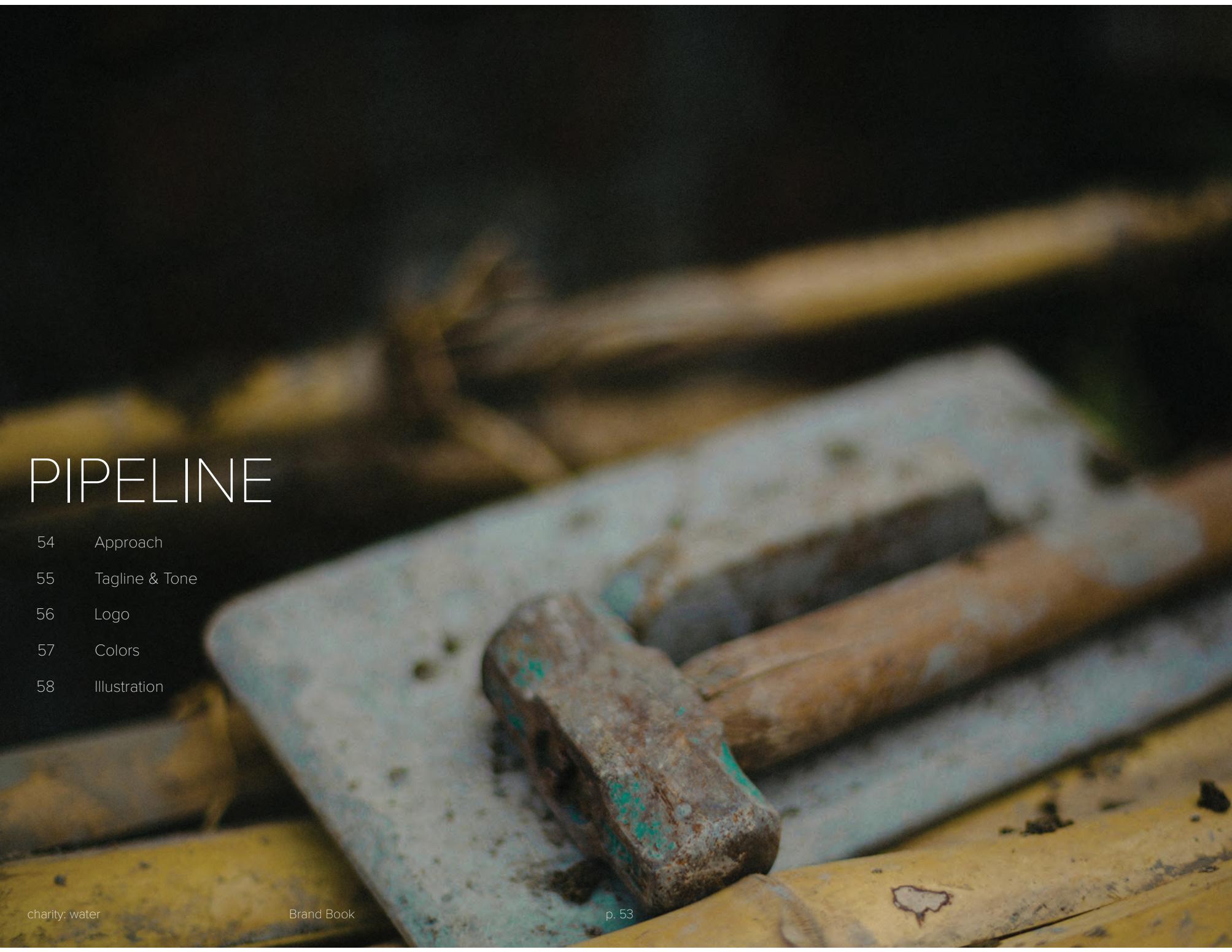
Working Without Our Logo

Use of our logo is strictly prohibited outside of official corporate partnerships. But you can still share the charity: water story without it! Create a landing page. Use our photos. Promote our videos. Develop a product. There's no limit to how non-corporate partners can still help spread the charity: water story.

Both **Change Creator Magazine** and **Authentic Jobs** featured charity: water on their websites without using our logo, but instead by promoting our videos and using our photos. They shared the charity: water story while also highlighting how they have joined us in the mission to end the water crisis.



PIPELINE



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Pipeline is a system of local leaders, innovative technology, and trained mechanics all working together to keep water flowing at water projects around the world.

Pipeline is about the real work happening on the ground, so the Pipeline brand is fast-paced, genuine, personal, and a little more raw than the rest of the charity: water brand.

Tagline & Tone

TAGLINE

KEEP WATER FLOWING

We use this phrase often when talking about Pipeline.

COPY TONE

Copy for Pipeline should feel relevant, recent, and personal. Our Pipeline monthly members are some of our most loyal, long-standing supporters. Anytime we communicate with them, it should feel like one good friend talking to another.

Pipeline is a proper noun (like Starbucks, or Scott), and should not be referred to as “the Pipeline.”

Emails should always come from real people at charity: water (not “the charity: water staff”).

Stories should feel like they’re coming straight from the field.

PHOTO TONE

Images for Pipeline should feel real, relevant, and raw.

To get updates out rapidly, Pipeline photos and videos don’t always need to be edited before being shared.

Logo

Pipeline has two logomarks:
the primary logo and the
supporting mark.

PRIMARY

The main Pipeline logo can be used
for just about anything.



SUPPORTING

The supporting mark works when you
need something smaller, but remember
to mention the full Pipeline name, too.



Colors

Our Pipeline colors are bright and inviting, to match the upbeat, forward-looking brand.

CMYK 0, 84, 54, 0

RGB 249, 79, 94

HEX #F94F5E

CMYK 1, 12, 83, 0

RGB 255, 218, 72

HEX #FFDA48

CMYK 67, 0, 32, 0

RGB 63, 191, 187

HEX #3FBFB8

CMYK 33, 0, 12, 0

RGB 165, 220, 224

HEX #A5DCEO

CMYK 80, 56, 62, 49

RGB 40, 64, 63

HEX #28403F

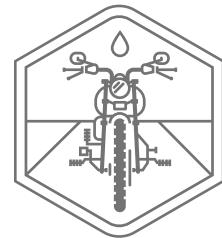
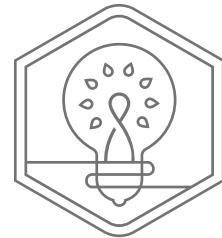
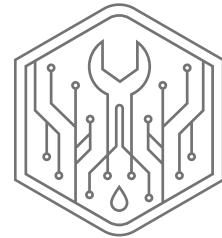
CMYK 3, 20, 44, 0

RGB 243, 204, 152

HEX #F3CC98

Illustration

We use three key icons to represent what Pipeline supports: training & tools, innovation, and local repair teams.



THE WELL

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The Well is a membership program that supports the staff and operating costs of charity: water. By covering the necessary expenses of running our organization, The Well members power our 100% model and allow public donations to go entirely to the field.

The Well brand speaks to generous, essential individuals who keep our organization running. The tone is refined, yet familiar. We treat members of The Well like family, but like our most respected family members. In short, The Well brand is the most mature version of the charity: water brand.



The Well Brand Tone

The brand tone for The Well is friendly, welcoming, and intelligent. The Well is a private membership club, so the look and feel is upscale and exclusive. But the copy isn't snobby. It's genuine. It's inspiring. It's heartfelt.

Since the members of The Well make all our work possible, we always speak to and about them with gratitude, affection, and respect.

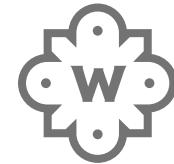
Logo

The Well has two logomarks:
the primary logo and the
supporting mark.

PRIMARY



SUPPORTING



Colors

CMYK 0, 21, 99, 0

RGB 255 201, 10

HEX #FFC907

CMYK 30, 36, 76, 3

RGB 181, 153, 89

HEX #B49859

CMYK 16, 26, 46, 0

RGB 215, 185, 145

HEX #D7B992

CMYK 2, 1, 13, 0

RGB 250, 248, 224

HEX #F8F6DF

CMYK 17, 9, 22, 0

RGB 212, 216, 199

HEX #D4D6C5

CMYK 33, 0, 15, 0

RGB 166, 219, 218

HEX #A6DBDA

CMYK 28, 0, 38, 0

RGB 187, 221, 177

HEX #BBDEB2

CMYK 79, 44, 53, 21

RGB 57, 103, 103

HEX #3A6766

Typography

BRAND MOMENTS

SNAG BOLD

HEADLINES

Domaine Display Bold Italic

SUBHEADS

Domaine Text Regular Italic

SUPPORTING

UNITED SANS CONDENSED

TEXT

PROXIMA NOVA

Illustration



EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

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Our Editorial Guidelines

A crash course in writing for charity: water.

These guidelines are designed to help you write in the charity: water voice. The info here will help you understand the basics of our work and the language and tone we use when talking about what we do. This guide also has some great boilerplate language that you're welcome to use and share.

PLEASE NOTE: Especially when talking about the water crisis, numbers change often. Always check with our Programs Team before sending numbers to print.

About the Water Crisis

If you already have clean water, it can be a little hard to understand just how dire the water crisis really is. Think about how often you use water in a typical day. A morning shower. A cool drink. Washing the dishes. Even making coffee requires water.

Now, imagine turning on the tap and rather than clean, cool water, mud comes out. Or worse yet, nothing at all. Imagine how difficult and time-consuming each daily task would become.

This is a daily reality for 663 million people around the world. Except they don't even have taps, they have to walk—sometimes three or four hours a day—to gather dirty water and bring it home in heavy Jerry Cans. Then they have to carefully choose the most essential uses for the little water they have.

In 2006, we started charity: water to change this. We believe clean water is a basic human right, so we set out to solve the water crisis.

Waterborne Diseases

The most common waterborne diseases are arsenicosis, cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, fluorosis, intestinal worms (worm), schistosomiasis and typhoid. Malaria, E. coli, trachoma and HIV/AIDS are also affected by lack of safe water sources.

Common diseases can usually be lowercase: arthritis, leukemia, bilharzia, diarrhea. When the disease is known by the name of a person identified with it, capitalize only that individual's name: Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease. To be sure about a particular disease, look it up in [this guide >](#)

bilharzia

A parasitic (worm) waterborne disease, also known as schistosomiasis, usually contracted from bathing, washing, or swimming in contaminated water.

arsenicosis

Disease caused by long-term exposure to low concentrations of arsenic in drinking water. Causes skin lesions and can result in cancer. Avoid using this unless you're writing specifically about the illness.

cholera

A waterborne disease that affects the lower intestine, usually contracted by drinking water or eating food contaminated with human feces containing the bacteria. Cholera is very contagious and a danger for post-disaster areas.

diarrhea

The most significant health problem that results from unsafe water and sanitation. Diarrhea can be caused from a variety of microorganisms (viruses or bacteria). Technically, diarrhea is a symptom of other illnesses; when appropriate, use "diarrheal disease" or list diarrhea as a symptom of water-related illnesses.

dysentery

Bloody diarrhea.

E. coli

Contagious bacterial infection commonly contracted from contaminated food or water.

fluorosis

A bone disease caused by high concentrations of fluoride occurring naturally in groundwater. It's not a disease we commonly refer to by name when writing about waterborne diseases, but it does exist in areas where we work.

Waterborne Diseases

continued

Guinea worm

A parasitic disease that causes debilitating ulcers. It's usually contracted through dirty water. Guinea worm has almost been completely eradicated—it is no longer a threat or major health focus in developing countries.

intestinal worms, worms

There are hundreds of varying intestinal worms that can be contracted through contaminated drinking water or food; the most prevalent are roundworm, whipworm, and hookworms, but any of them are referred to commonly as just “worms.” About 10% of people in developing countries suffer from intestinal worms at any given time; worms cause malnutrition, anemia and stunt growth. Use simply “worms” for informal copy but identify the particular worm if your writing is formal or focused on a specific infection.

HIV, HIV-positive, HIV/AIDS

Always abbreviate to HIV, without periods. Preferably use HIV/AIDS or HIV rather than just AIDS (more are infected with the HIV virus than are inflicted with full-blown AIDS).

malaria

A parasitic disease contracted through infected mosquitoes. Standing water (in uncovered water tanks, poor drainage areas, swamps, etc.) is a huge factor in malaria prevention, since that's where mosquitoes lay eggs.

schistosomiasis

A parasitic (worm) waterborne disease, also known as bilharzia, usually caused by bathing, washing, or swimming in contaminated water.

trachoma

An eye infection spread mainly through poor hygiene (often due to lack of safe water). Much more common in women than men.

typhoid

A bacterial infection that causes a fever, contracted through contaminated water sources.

About Our Work

We are on a mission to bring clean, safe drinking water to every single person on the planet. As a fundraising organization, we raise money for lots of types of water projects, from wells, to rainwater harvestings, to piped water systems, to BioSand Filters. Then we work with local partners to build sustainable water projects in developing countries.

All the while, we're also taking an entirely new approach to charity. We believe charity should be exciting. We work to inspire our supporters through stories of global change that get hearts racing. Then, we use the latest technology to create authentic, innovative giving experiences that inspire people to action.

Where We Work

We've worked in 24 developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.



Bangladesh
Bolivia
Burkina Faso
Cambodia
Central African Republic (C.A.R.)*
Cote d'Ivoire (the Ivory Coast)**
Democratic Republic of the Congo (D.R.C.)†
Ethiopia
Guatemala
Haiti
Honduras
India
Kenya

Liberia
Malawi
Mali
Mozambique
Nepal
Niger
Pakistan
Rwanda
Sierra Leone
Tanzania
Uganda

Our Partners

We fund water projects. To do the dirty work of actually *building* projects, we depend on incredible, local implementing partners around the world. We call these wonderful teams “our partners,” “local partners,” or “partners on the ground.”

A Glimmer of Hope

Ethiopia

Always use full name. Based in Austin, Texas, they oversee one of our leading local partners, the Relief Society of Tigray (REST).

Action Against Hunger

Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Pakistan

Use full name on first reference, may shorten to ACF after that (they shorten their French name). Committed to ending world hunger; charity: water funds water projects that complement their nutrition programs.

BRAC

Bangladesh

Always in all caps. The world’s largest NGO with 100,000 people working to mobilize the most impoverished people to start their own businesses.

Clear Cambodia

Cambodia

Implementing partner for Samaritan’s Purse; runs our BioSand Filter program. Previously known as Hagar International.

Concern Worldwide

Bangladesh, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda

Use Concern Worldwide on first reference, shorten to just Concern in informal copy. An Irish NGO that works to improve the lives of the world’s poorest people.

Goal

Uganda

Always use full name. An Irish NGO focusing on emergency response, health, child protection and livelihoods.

Gram Vikas

India

Always use full name. Provides clean water to households in Orissa, regardless of social caste.

The International Rescue Committee (the IRC)

Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone

Always include “the” and spell out on first reference; use “the IRC” thereafter. A global humanitarian aid, relief and development organization working in 40 countries.

Jal Bhagirathi Foundation

India

Optimizes the management of water resources in Rajasthan’s desert communities. charity: water funds their household rainwater harvestings called “tankas”.

Our Partners

continued

Nepal Water for Health

Nepal

Use full name on first reference, shorten to NEWAH thereafter. Implements large-scale piped systems fed by gravity.

Relief Society of Tigray (REST)

Ethiopia

Overseen by A Glimmer of Hope. Use full name on first reference with REST in parentheses; use REST thereafter. In informal or internal copy, just use REST. Our biggest partner by investment, projects and people served. Vision to provide full coverage to the people of Tigray

Splash

Nepal

Always use full name. Previously known as A Child's Right. Provides complex, electrical water filters to schools in Kathmandu.

Water for Good

Central African Republic

Always use full name. Previously known as Integrated Community Development Internationa (ICDI).

Water For People

Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Malawi, Rwanda

Always use full name in external documents. Internally, may be shortened to WFP. Note that "For" in Water For People is capitalized. Mission: 'Water for Everyone, Forever' via co-financing with local communities and governments.

World Vision

Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger

Use full name at first mention. Internally, may be shortened to WV or WVI thereafter. Runs on a child sponsorship model to provide children and communities with water access, sanitation, nutrition and more.

Types of Water Projects

We fund many different types of water projects. Our solutions vary depending on geography, climate, and local economy.



BioSand Filter

This water project filters dirty water through a microorganism-eating layer, then through a layer of sand, and finally dispenses it into a clean container. Each BioSand Filter usually provides clean water for a family, and families often help build their own filters.

drilled well

This is a well drilled when the water table can't be reached by a hand-dug well. They're more expensive, take 3-4 days to drill and require a professional drill team. The term "borehole" is another technical term for this type of well, but we generally just use the term "drilled well."

hand-dug well

This type of well is possible in areas with a high water table. Local communities usually contribute the labor. Refer to any shallow wells dug by hand as simply "hand-dug wells."

improved sanitation, sanitation

Improved sanitation promotes proper disposal of human waste and prevents open defecation; clean toilets that are safe and comfortable

for the user. Where possible, specify that we invest in "improved sanitation" since it's possible to have sanitation that isn't healthy or safe to use (i.e. old, dirty latrines).

latrines, double block latrines

When referring to sanitation projects we've funded, use the term "latrines." Use "toilet" when telling a specific story or captioning a photo of one toilet. To avoid redundancy, you may use "latrines" and "toilets" interchangeably. "Double block latrines" are toilets with separate areas for boys and girls.

manually-drilled well

This is a type of well that is drilled by human-powered low-tech equipment like hand augering. They're quick and cheap to sink, require minimal maintenance, and can only be constructed in areas with soft ground, such as tubewells in India and Bangladesh.

piped system

This is a network of pipes that supplies water from a clean source (well, spring protection, etc.) to a variety of community tap stands. This includes gravity-fed systems, where the force

of gravity feeds water into a community from an elevated source. This type of system is often considered more than just one water project.

rainwater harvesting

Gutters on rooftops direct the flow of rainfall into a sanitary holding tank. This water project collects rainwater and safely stores it for drinking.

spring protection

This water project captures and safely stores freshwater from natural springs before its contaminated, then pipes the water to communities for use.

water purification systems

Installed treatment systems that remove contaminants from existing water supplies. This includes UF/UV filtration systems and filters, which remove bacteria, viruses and pathogens from groundwater.

Brand Terminology

From our colon-punctuated name to our approach to charity, we refuse to be strictly conventional. Before you write in our voice, get to know some of the terms we use frequently.

100% model

Our fundraising model that allows 100% of public funds to go directly to the field. When describing our 100% model, always use “100%” (not “a hundred percent” or “every dollar”).

501(c)(3)

Our tax-exempt status. charity: water is a 501(c)(3) organization; therefore, all donations made straight to charity: water within the US are tax-deductible.

charity: ball

Never capitalize, always put a space after colon, add yyyy for date: charity: ball 2009.

charity: water

Never capitalize, always put a space after the colon. Don’t be shy about telling people how to format our name.

Charity Global, Inc.

Our official corporate name, filed with the IRS. If someone asks how to look up our information, give them that, but we’re charity: water everywhere else.

completion report

The final report on water projects that includes details of each water project funded by charity: water from a particular grant. We use this info to generate a donor completion report (either for individual donors who gave \$10,000 or through Dollars to Projects).

Dollars to Projects

A *mycharity: water* feature that ties every dollar raised to the project it funded in the field. May be referred to internally as D2P.

Jerry Can

Jerry Cans were first brought to Africa during WWII as containers for gasoline; they’re now used all over the continent for collecting and carrying water. The Jerry Can is our icon and it’s a major part of our brand. For more info, see [logo guidelines >](#)

grants

For internal use only. “Grant” refers to the pool of funds granted at one particular time to a partner in the field.

Live Auction

Refers to the one at charity: ball.

money terms

“water” = amount raised for water projects
“operations” or “ops” = amount raised for operational costs
“gross” = total raised for water and operations

mid-term report

A report sent to donors halfway through the water project implementation process. Midterm is usually used for academic or political terms; mid-term refers to specified arbitrary or indeterminate terms (like ours).

mycharity: water

Italicize “my” and put a space after the colon.

Brand Terminology

continued

mycharitywater.org

When referring to the URL, don't use italics or a colon.

My Projects Page

The D2P page for *mycharity: water* fundraisers and donors. This is an overview of all the projects they've funded.

Pipeline

Pipeline is a monthly giving program that supports the long-term sustainability of *charity: water* projects around the globe. Pipeline is a proper noun (like Starbucks, or Scott), and should not be referred to as "the Pipeline." For more information, see [pipeline guidelines >](#)

Project Detail Page

A D2P page for the *mycharity: water* donors and fundraisers of a completed water project. Basically, a completion report published online as a part of D2P. Includes the photos, GPS coordinates, population and other details about the community and water source.

Project ID

Used to identify the specific water project funded by *charity: water* donors; shown on the completion report.

September Campaign

The original birthday campaign used to start *charity: water*, which runs every year for *charity: water*'s anniversary in September. Capitalize both words. If you're including a year, put it at the end: September Campaign 2010. When referring to fundraisers for September, do not capitalize "campaigners": September Campaign is our biggest effort of the year. We're hoping to get 2,000 new September campaigners on board. Always capitalize "September," since it's a month.

sponsor, water project sponsor

Someone who donates or raises at least \$10,000 for a water project. They receive virtual recognition on a water project and receive a completion report.

water projects

This is the safe umbrella term for all the water technologies and systems we fund. *charity: water* funds BioSand filters, drilled wells, hand-dug wells, manually drilled wells, piped water systems, rainwater harvestings, spring protections and water purification systems.

For more information, see [types of water projects >](#)

Waterwalk

A charity: water fundraiser that asks people to carry Jerry Cans a specified distance to simulate the long walk many people in developing countries make each day to collect drinking water.

well, wells, hand-dug well, drilled well

We rarely refer to anything as simply "a well." Instead, specify either a hand-dug or drilled well. When referring to more than one type of well, use "water projects" instead.

The Well

A private group of donors that fund the operating costs of *charity: water*. For more information, see [The Well guidelines >](#)

wristband

Our event wristbands are not bracelets.

Words Not to Use

Word choice is important. To respect the people we serve, we're careful to use appropriate terms when we talk about them. Here's a quick list of words *not* to use and some options to use instead.

aim

Avoid. Use "hope" or "plan" instead.

bush, the bush

Acceptable only occasionally. Generally use "rural" or "remote" instead.

coup d'etat

Use just "coup" and make sure it's accurate for your use by checking country background on

[UNICEF's website >](#)

fetch

Never use when talking about water collection. Say "collect" or "gather" water instead.

the Ivory Coast

Use Cote d'Ivoire instead. If you're writing to a broad audience unfamiliar with international issues, you can use "also known as the Ivory Coast" in parentheses after Cote d'Ivoire on first reference.

mankind

Use "humanity" or "people" instead.

Third World, third-world countries

Use "developing nations" or "developing countries" instead.

villagers

Use "locals" or "people" instead.

Some Boilerplate Language

We're a nonprofit on a mission to bring clean, safe drinking water to every single person on the planet.

Here at charity: water, there are a few things that make us different: 100% of public donations fund clean water projects, we prove every project we build, and we work with strong local partners to build and maintain projects.

100% of every public donation goes straight to the field.

When someone makes a donation to build water projects, we don't take a single penny for overhead. Generous private donors fund our operating costs. With the help of the members of The Well, we even pay back credit card fees, which are inevitably incurred when donors support us online. When we say 100%, we really mean 100%.

We prove every project we build.

We believe in showing people exactly where their money goes. Every time we complete a water project, we post GPS coordinates, photos, and a brief description of the project on Google Maps. It's just one of the ways we're changing charity—holding ourselves accountable to the highest level of transparency.

Right now, 663 million people on the planet don't have access clean and safe drinking water. That's one in ten of us.

Water changes everything.

When you take a good look at all the challenges facing the global poor, one thing stands out. There's one basic human need that, when met, sparks prosperity and productivity faster than any other single fix: access to clean, safe water.

Clean water can prevent unnecessary deaths, save time, and improve health. It enables people to be energetic members of society and to escape the cycle of poverty.

Our goal at charity: water is simple. We want everyone to have access to clean, safe water in our lifetime.

Why did we chose to focus on water? Because we're on a mission to change everything. And we believe, now more than ever, that changing everything starts with clean water.

You can do just about anything to raise money for clean water.

The craziest thing we can do is nothing.

When we first started charity: water, some people called us crazy. It was crazy to believe that we could solve the water crisis in our lifetime. It was crazy to give 100% of public donations to the field. And it was crazy to show people where every single donated dollar went.

But we've met real people living without clean water. And we think standing by and letting them live without this basic need would be the craziest thing of all.

Style Guide

We believe in good grammar. We proofread everything.
If you're not confident in your grammar, check with our Creative Department (or the *Chicago Manual of Style*). You might also take a look at [this article](#) for some great basic writing guidance.

addresses

Always write out Road, Drive, Court, Square, Lane, Alley and Terrace. Abbreviate Boulevard (Blvd.), Avenue (Ave.) and Street (St.) only with exact numbered address: She lives at 101 Maple St. She lives on Maple Street. Abbreviate directions on exact numbered address: She lives at 101 N. Maple St. Always use numbers in address, even if it's less than 10: She lives at 1 Maple St.

amounts / comparisons

Use "more than" when referring to amounts; never use "over" unless something is physically located above something else or to avoid redundancy.

ampersands (&)

Don't use them. Always write "and." Sometimes we use ampersands to conserve space (especially online), but they should not be used in body copy.

apostrophe ('')

Used in contractions or to show possession.

For plural nouns ending in s, add only an apostrophe at end (not an extra s): *the residents' well*.

For singular common nouns ending in s, add 's: *that glass's water is dirty*.

For singular proper names ending in s, add only apostrophe at end: *Chris' website*.

For singular proper names ending in s sounds (x, ce, z), use 's: *Max's well*.

For plurals of a single letter, add 's: *Village A's water point*.

Don't use 's for plurals of numbers or multiple letter combos: *1980s, IMs*.

area

Use square inches, square feet, square yards and square miles if possible; spell out terms.

1 square inch = 6.452 square centimeters

1 square foot = 929 square centimeters

1 square yard = about .8361 square meters

1 square mile = about 2.590 square kilometers

capitalization

Capitalize staff titles and department names, unless otherwise advised: *Vik, our VP of Creative, oversees our Creative Department*.

coed

Don't hyphenate.

co-finance

Hyphenate.

Style Guide

continued

colon (>:

Used after a phrase that can stand by itself for a list or explanation.

Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it's a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: *We promise this: We will send you GPS coordinates of your well after it has been built.*

Colons go outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quoted material: *It's the "issue of our generation": the water crisis.*

comma (,)

Use varies. Err on the side of using less commas as long as your sentence makes sense without them.

At charity: water, we do not use the Oxford Comma (also called a serial comma). Format lists as follows: *red, white and blue.*

complete, completed

Use either "has been completed" or "is complete," never "is completed." We report back to you when the project is complete.

contaminate, is contaminated, contaminant

Use "contaminate" as a verb, "contaminant" as a noun.

contractions

Use them often.

dashes

When describing length of time, use a dash instead of "to": *You'll receive information about your well in the next 12-18 months.*

The event is from 7-9 p.m.

dates

Always use numerals without st, nd, rd or th:

January 4, 2010

When a month is used with a specific date, you may abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.: *Jan. 4, 2010*

When a month is used only with a year, don't use a comma: *January 2010*

If a date includes year and is in a sentence, use a comma after the year: *Jan. 4, 2010, was a productive day at charity: water.*

directions

Lowercase, unless referring to a specific global region such as West Africa or the Caribbean.

distance

Use inches, feet, yards and miles when possible; spell out terms.

1 inch = 2.54 centimeters

1 foot = 30.48 centimeters

1 yard = 3 feet = .9144 meters

1 mile = 1,760 yards = 5,280 feet

Doctor, Dr.

Always use "Dr." instead of Mr./Mrs./Ms. if the person is a doctor. Don't include titles at the end of the name such as M.D. or Ph.D.

dollar amounts

Use \$ and numerals (instead of writing out "dollars"): *\$30 can provide clean, safe water for one person.* For millions or billions, write out "million" or "billions" and use up to two decimal places: *We raised \$3.63 billion in one night.*

drilling rig

Not "drill rig." In informal copy, use "drilling rig" on first reference and just "rig" thereafter.

Earth, earth

Capitalize when referring to our planet, don't capitalize when using as synonym for "ground."

Style Guide

continued

email

Don't hyphenate.

em dash (—)

Used to break in with an abrupt thought, show an example or set off a series of comma-separated items within a comma. Create using option+shift+hyphen.

Note: In print, use an em dash without spaces on either side: *We fund many types of water projects—drilled wells, hand-dug wells, BioSand Filters, spring protections, etc.* For emails and the web, use an en dash (see below).

en dash (–)

Used to separate numbers: *From 7–9 pm.* Create using option+hyphen.

Note: For emails and web, use an en dash with a space on either side to set apart lists or to break in with an abrupt thought: *We fund many types of water projects – drilled wells, hand-dug wells, BioSand Filters, spring protections, etc.* For print, use an em dash (see above).

Fahrenheit (F)

Even though many countries we work in use Celsius, convert temperatures to Fahrenheit when writing for donors and supporters, since they're mostly US-based. $F = ((9/5) \times C) + 32$

for-profit

As in businesses, corporations. Avoid using as an adjective for businesses or corporations because it's redundant (most businesses and corporations are for-profit), but use alone to reference the business sector: *We're a nonprofit that markets like a for-profit.*

fractions

Spell them out with a hyphen: One-third of Haitians did not have access to clean, safe drinking water before the earthquake.

fresh water

Use when describing water.

freshwater well

Use when describing a freshwater well.

handheld, hand-held

Use "handheld" (without a hyphen) for the noun and "hand-held" for the adjective.

handwashing

Don't hyphenate.

hyphen (-)

Used to combine compound adjectives before a noun: *well-known community, 10-year partnership*

Don't use a hyphen when the compound adjectives come after the verb: *The community was well known. It was a partnership of 10 years.*

info, information

In general, use "info" (especially online): *For more info, email creative@charitywater.org.*

Kolkata

Not Calcutta.

Koran

Not Qu'ran or Quran.

links

Embed links simply by linking out on "here" without including "go" or "click." Learn more about our partners here. (Instead of *To learn more about our partners, click here.* or *To learn more about our partners, go here.*)

Style Guide

continued

microbial

Not “microbacterial.”

microfinance

Don’t hyphenate.

microorganism

Don’t hyphenate.

might vs. may

In informal copy, use “might.”

miles per gallon (mpg)

Use “miles per gallon” on first reference, “mpg” thereafter.

miles per hour (mph)

Just use “mph.”

names

In general, refer to people by their full name on first reference. Only use middle initials by request, or if someone commonly uses it. Use Mr./Ms. in formal writing, but first names are generally sufficient for charity: water materials.

nondenominational

Don’t hyphenate.

non-governmental organization (NGO)

Use “NGO” (no periods) unless writing formally to someone unfamiliar with the term.

nonprofit

Don’t hyphenate.

numbers

Write out numbers one through nine. Use numerals for 10 or more: *I stole four apples off Robin’s desk. Lane stole 13 apples.*

When a number comes at the beginning of a sentence, always spell it out, even if it’s more than 10: *Forty people helped at Volunteer Night.*

Spell out first through ninth. Use numerals with “nd,” “rd,” or “th” after that: *This is Mike’s first year at charity: water, his 26th year of life.*

For millions and billions, write out numbers one through nine and use numerals for 10 or more: *We want to serve 10 million people. Let’s start by serving three million.*

When describing length of time, use an en dash instead of “to.”

When writing dates, don’t use “nd,” “rd,” or “th”; just write the date.

offline

Refers to fundraising or communications that are not online. Use sparingly.

ok

Lowercase without periods, not “okay” or “O.K.”

parentheses (())

Use sparingly, as they disrupt momentum and look clunky.

If the material is part of the sentence, put the period outside the parentheses: *We were there for the live drilling (which took place on Tuesday).*

If the material is its own sentence, put the period inside the parentheses: *We were there for the live drilling. (It took place on Tuesday.)*

political titles

Capitalize before a name, otherwise lowercase.

public-private partnership (PPP)

A service financed by both the government and private sector, usually to implement a new technology or service for an area that didn’t have it before. Use public-private partnership on first reference, shorten to PPP thereafter.

Style Guide

continued

quotation marks ("")

Start a new paragraph if quoting a new person:

"I hate coffee," said Bill.

"I love it," said Vik.

Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks: *"Get out of here," said Erica.*
"Just go."

Dashes, semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go inside quotation marks when they're a part of the quoted material, outside when they apply to the whole sentence: *Tyler asked me, "Have you tried the Waterwalk?"* Tyler asked me, had I "walked for water"?

Use single quote marks within quotes:
"Our partners said, 'We love working with you,'
Scott told us at the meeting.

ranges

When describing length of time, use a dash instead of "to": *You'll receive information about your well in the next 12-18 months.*

rig

Use "drilling rig" on first reference and just "rig" thereafter.

RSVP, RSVP'd

Uppercase, no periods.

Saint (St.)

Use "St." in most cases (including country names: *St. Lucia*).

seasons

Lowercase spring, summer, fall, and winter unless part of a formal name.

socioeconomic

Don't hyphenate.

SoHo

Capitalize only the S and the H.

SOS

Distress call (literally means "save our ship"); use without periods.

staff positions

Generally capitalize staff titles: *Robin Jones, Senior Accountant*

states

Spell out names in text when they appear alone: *We love our donors in California.* Abbreviate with conjunction with a city, town, village, county or military base: *Buffalo, NY;* *Mecosta County, Mich.*

Sudan

Not "the Sudan."

SUV

Never use "sport utility vehicle," just SUV.

tax-deductible

Hyphenate.

tax-exempt

Hyphenate.

tax receipt

Our 501(c)(3) certificate cannot be used by donors as a tax receipt; we send them a tax receipt after they donate directly to us. Offline donors receive a formal tax receipt within four weeks of making a donation. Online donors get a tax receipt within 12 hours of making a donation.

Style Guide

continued

technologies

Another word for water projects. charity: water funds BioSand filters, drilled wells, hand-dug wells, manually drilled wells, piped water systems, rainwater harvestings, spring protections and water purification systems.

time

Use figures except for noon and midnight, always use a.m. or p.m. (not o'clock). Separate hours from minutes with a colon: 2:30 a.m.

toward

Not "towards."

toilets

When talking about projects we've funded, use "latrines." Use "toilets" when telling a specific story or captioning a photo of a specific toilet.

URLs

Omit "http://www." when referring to a website in copy: *Visit charitywater.org for more information.* If a link is longer or more complicated than just charitywater.org/blah, use an embedded link instead of writing it out.

volumes

Use ounces, cups, quarts, and gallons when possible; abbreviate ounce to "oz." and spell out other terms.

1 fluid oz. = about 30 milliliters

1 cup = 8 fluid oz. = .2366 liters

1 quart = 4 cups = 29.57 milliliters

1 gallon = 16 cups = 4 quarts = 3.785 liters

water crisis

Use "the water crisis," "the world water crisis" or "the global water crisis"; not "the world's water crisis."

weights

use ounces, pounds, and tons if possible; abbreviate ounce to "oz." and spell out other terms.

1 oz. = about 28 grams

1 pound = 16 oz. = about .45 kilograms

1 ton = 2,000 pounds = about 907 kilograms = about .91 metric tons

which vs. that

Use "that" only where it's essential to the meaning of the sentence (essential clauses); use without commas: *I remember the time that Paull said "Hunky dorey," on national news.*

Use "which" where the pronoun is less necessary (nonessential clauses) and include commas: *The show, which was on a Thursday, was really awesome.*

TIP: if you can drop the clause and not lose the meaning of the sentence, you need to use "which;" otherwise, use "that."

A photograph of a dark night sky filled with stars. In the lower portion of the image, the silhouettes of trees and hills are visible against the dark background. A single, very bright star is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the frame.

If you ever have questions, just ask:
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