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COMPLETE

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
**Started:** Monday, April 01, 2019 11:33:23 AM  
**Last Modified:** Thursday, April 11, 2019 8:59:30 AM  
**Time Spent:** Over a week  
**IP Address:** 209.222.213.68

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Page 2: Tell us who you are!

**Q1** Contact Information

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Page 3: Award Categories

**Q2** Select a category. **Membership**

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Page 5: Membership

**Q9** Project Title

Grow Together: New members, new gifts, new methods.

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**Q10** What was the overall goal of project, problem it sought to solve or opportunity it sought to leverage? (suggested word count 100-250)

Maine Public's 2019 Grow Together campaign was conceived at the intersection of two needs:

1. The release of a new strategic plan outlining the organization's sincere interest in recruiting new members that represent the state's growing diversity in race, age, and class; and
2. Advice from Carol Rhine at DonorCentrics noting that Maine Public needed to add 11,000 new and rejoining members to the file in FY19 in order to improve the health of the file.

At the same time, Maine Public's membership department had just experienced significant turnover, ushering two long-term leaders into hard-earned retirement and hiring fresh minds eager to have an impact on the dual-licensee station. The Grow Together concept began taking shape as new staff was fully onboarded and had returned from PMDMC 2018 with enthusiasm and ambition to reach big membership goals in new ways. The team was focused on fundraising across channels in a way the station had not tried before. Staff focused on using an integrated campaign strategy to access new members and increase the giving of existing members.

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## 2019 Development Awards - Application Form

**Q11** Describe the activity, what it achieved, and why it was successful. (suggested word count 200-400)

### AN OMNICHANNEL APPROACH

Historically, membership campaigns at Maine Public focused on a single pledge-drive, and were largely limited to on-air and email promotion, and entirely separate from marketing strategy. For Grow Together, we expanded our reach to include tv, radio, and web promotions, setting out in the fall to message Grow Together for the full fiscal year at a minimum. We invested in visual branding and worked the campaign onto all fundraising platforms, including events, social media and email, mail, TV and radio, as well as creating a physical "Pledge HQ" in a high-profile location and T-shirts, backpacks, stickers and other outreach tools. The central message was, "You grow with Maine Public. Maine Public grows with your support. Let's grow together."

### EARLY SUCCESS

The Fall Membership Drive in November was the first milestone event for the Grow Together campaign. A three-day pledge drive was a particularly jarring change for our radio audience, which has enjoyed six years of four one-day drives a year. We re-introduced a longer drive by leaning heavily on the Grow Together theme. If our audience could join us in the project of growing new members and increasing revenue, we could deliver more of the enriching programs they count on for personal growth.

We welcomed 858 new members in that drive, received only minimal push-back about the increased drive length, and raised \$283,646, surpassing revenue and new member goals.

### THE RIGHT MESSAGE, EVERYWHERE

We needed an audience-centric message that would be relevant to TV and radio fans, as well as existing, lapsed, and prospective members. Grow Together allowed us to speak simply and clearly to audiences on-air, online, and in the mail, often in a single promotional piece. We could easily urge long-term members to upgrade sustaining memberships in the same breath we compelled non-members to join, and we were able to use the campaign's strong visual branding (See attached) to make the most of every impression.

### STAFF BUY-IN

We introduced the idea of longer pledge drives and adaptive fundraising across channels as organization-wide initiatives, rather than challenges confined to membership. We shared the campaign's goals and strategy with the entire organization and invited feedback. This fostered productive collaboration across marketing, underwriting, major giving, digital services, and TV and radio production departments, and significantly strengthened the campaign.

### REACHING NEW AUDIENCES

Campaign-themed testimonials specifically targeted new members and showcased younger listeners and viewers. See: <https://vimeo.com/299033945>

### COMMUNICATING IMPACT

The Grow Together campaign required communicating growth that truly mattered to members. Throughout the year, we were able to report the expansion of a local call-in radio show, extended local programming on our classical station, and the purchase of new classical music signal. These big examples of station growth helped keep the campaign focused on meeting audience needs.

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**Q12** Tell us any metrics or benchmarks that show the success of project. Please consider quantitative and qualitative data. (suggested word count 100-250)

By adjusting our messaging to focus on the need for new members and setting the course early with a year-long campaign, Maine Public has welcomed 6,400 new members and 4,818 rejoining members as of March. In December, we met an all-time high of 50,657 station members. As of April 2019, membership revenue is tracking 1% ahead of 2018- our biggest year ever- and we're hopeful we'll see a 2% increase by the close of the fiscal year.

Qualitatively, we've saw the power of uniting an organization behind a fundraising goal, both in terms of cohesive, organic messaging and increased cooperation between invested departments. By presenting a long-term campaign to staff with messaging that they helped shape, on-air and online messaging echoed the campaign throughout the year. It was a step toward a culture of fundraising and a more unified approach to membership drives.

The campaign normalized a cross-departmental approach to fundraising, and we've been excited to see staff outside development embracing the role of using new platforms for revenue generation. From podcasts to digital and traditional design to content development and events, we see professionals in many departments adopting the look and language of the Grow Together campaign. Previously, developing podcasts wouldn't have included much discussion about fundraising, but we've seen fundraising incorporated in early discussions about podcasts, as well as other projects.

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**Q13** Tell us how the project leveraged national or local content (primetime, KIDS, pop-out, etc). (suggested word count 100-250)

We were especially proud of linking Grow Together with the airing of Won't You Be My Neighbor on PBS. In a new step for Maine Public, we used a radio pledge to tie-in to the documentary pledge event a couple days later. We created promotions for web, TV and radio that connected the beloved TV program with the Grow Together campaign theme, most notably in a promotional video with a specially-composed theme song for the radio drive, (see: <https://vimeo.com/313879226>) which aired on TV and online leading up to the drive. The result was not only a successful radio pledge drive, but the television pledge event generated more than twice its revenue goal.

We also ran promos with national radio personalities throughout the year (Lulu Garcia Navarro: <https://youtu.be/GzxJxVocj1Q>, Rachel Martin: <https://youtu.be/nkwfzug15HY>) and placed campaign branding on the slideshow at PBS.org.

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**Q14** Do you have any supporting materials or items to upload? (optional) **Yes**

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Page 10: Additional Items

**Q31** Please upload all materials as a single document.

**Grow Together Visual Sampler.pdf(927.6KB)**

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Page 11: Tell us more!

## 2019 Development Awards - Application Form

**Q32** The Development Awards are a key annual project of the Development Advisory Committee (DAC). Please let us know how else the DAC can serve you, your station or the system as a whole.

I'd love to see an award that explicitly acknowledges inviting greater diversity into station success, whether it be in terms of programming, culture and staffing, etc.

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