

Leveraging Facebook to Encourage and Accelerate Financial Donations For Non-Profit Animal Rescue Organizations

A Case Study

SUMMARY / ABSTRACT:

This case study reports on the effectiveness of using Facebook as a tool to raise funds for Hanaeleh Horse Rescue located in Trabuco Canyon, California.

For the sake of this case study the following research question was posed:

Can Facebook be used as a tool to accelerate donations for non-profit animal rescue organizations?

A campaign with a target goal of \$5,000, was designed to seek donations to purchase feed for the rescued horses at Hanaeleh Horse Rescue. The duration of the event was initially set for August 5, 2014 through August 31, 2014. Facebook posts were crafted to announce the commencement of the fundraiser, subsequent progress updates, and acknowledgment and appreciation of donations, which were communicated on an ongoing basis.

Facebook posts were "Boosted," which improved the campaign's reach and resulted in increased donations. The financial goal of \$5,000 was achieved nine days prior to the end of the campaign and the final tally of funds exceeded expectations with a grand total of \$6500.

The results of the campaign answered the research question affirming that Facebook can be used as a tool to fundraise for animal rescue organizations. Further exploration into Facebook's effectiveness for fundraising is something that should and can be expanded upon to promote other worthy causes.

CHALLENGES FACED:

Fundraising may not be a science, but the complexities of a successful fundraising effort can make or break a group fighting for a cause. Social media provides multiple conduits for communication and these connections are being capitalized upon to solicit essential funding for various projects.

Hanaeleh Horse Rescue in Trabuco Canyon, CA saves abused, neglected and abandoned horses throughout Orange County, CA and surrounding areas. Hanaeleh is 100% volunteer-run by a six-member Board of Directors, a ranch hand and 3-12 weekly volunteers. This operation functions on an annual budget of \$60,000 to \$80,000 designated for essential feeding, boarding, care and medical expenses for twelve horses, three sheep, four cats and four chickens. Without consistently large donations, Hanaeleh struggles to meet the horses' and other animals' basic needs, repairs to the ranch where they are cared for, and other unforeseen expenditures. A great many animal rescue organizations in the US are volunteer-only and have similar difficulties getting and staying funded.

SOLUTION:

Although Hanaeleh has a Facebook presence that has achieved 50-60 new Likes per week soaring to approximately 5,700 by utilizing only \$120 per month in Facebook ads, donations have been inconsistent and unreliable. A Facebook presence alone was not gleaning the financial support that was wanted and very much needed. A well-organized and executed fundraising campaign on Facebook had never been attempted. The desperation of severely dwindling funds inspired efforts to move forward with such a campaign to determine if Facebook could be used as a tool to fundraise for Hanaeleh Horse Rescue.

DESIGN AND EXECUTION:

The goal of the fundraising campaign was to accelerate the frequency and amount of donations from Hanaeleh's Facebook audience. Status Updates and Ads were produced and posted that met the following objectives:

- 1. A clearly communicated need for help and a financial target to be raised.
- 2. A start date and an end date of the campaign.
- 3. Progress reports on accumulated donations.
- 4. Acknowledging and thanking every person who donated.
- 5. Creative content utilizing photographs of the animals in need.
- 6. Facebook Ads extending the reach of and communicating Hanaeleh's fundraising goals.
- 7. Frequency of posts and ads strategically planned throughout each day.
- 8. Content designed to elicit positive emotional responses through heartfelt stories and humor.

The campaign commenced on August 5th, 2014 under the creative direction of Hanaeleh's volunteer Social Media manager, Kathi Kruse of Kruse Control, Inc. with the intent to raise \$5,000 by August 31, 2014. She currently manages the Facebook page, content and Ads creation. A Facebook Ads budget was set for \$200 for the fundraising campaign.

The Facebook Ads strategy involved:

- Promoting posts asking for donations using the "Boost Post" option, which is available on each Facebook post (not ads manager).
- Targeting a specific audience was done by using the "fans and their friends" option which allowed the posts to reach up to a 25 mile radius of Lake Forest, CA, which is relatively close in proximity to Hanaeleh. Additionally, fans and their friends within a 50-mile radius of Riverside, CA were targeted, which is rich with horse and animal enthusiasts.

The Canva app was used to create and design the images. Canva allows uploading of your own images and is the "Photoshop for those that don't get Photoshop." Using Hanaeleh horses' images was a crucial part of success.

It is important to note that the ad images were designed to accommodate Facebook Ads' 20% rule: "Boosted" posts must not exceed 20% text content on any given post. Here's how to make sure an ad is acceptable:

https://www.facebook.com/ads/tools/text_overlay

All fundraising posts were scheduled using the PostPlanner app and were published 3-4 times per day (on average) between the hours of approximately 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. These posts were in addition to the page's regular posts (2-3 per day) covering adoptions, wild horse and burro advocacy, anti-slaughter advocacy, local events and many other brand-related subjects.

Daily record keeping of donations was accomplished by using a spreadsheet on Google Drive.

CAMPAIGN DETAILS:

This is the first post of the campaign August 5th, 2014. This one didn't meet the guideline of 20% text once it was, "boosted". Tamahome and Rio were our "Spokeshorses."

NOTE: each post below is in date order.





Posted by Post Planner [?] August 5 · Edited @

We desperately need your help to feed our rescued horses.

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Hanaeleh is a non-profit horse rescue operating in Southern California since 2004. We rescue all breeds and ages of horses, and after we rehabilitate them we work to find them new homes, providing sanctuary for the horses who are unable to be adopted.

Our Summer Fundraiser is on! We need to buy hay for the rest of the year- hay prices are continuing to rise, and we need your help to continue to save the horses who come in. Often the horses we take in are severely malnourished, and it costs 2-3 times as much to feed those horses until we are able to get them to a healthy weight. All of our horses are fed high-quality alfalfa, orchard and timothy hay/pellets to get them back to health (and to stay healthy).

Can you help? Our goal is \$5,000. Even a small amount will allow us to continue to help the horses! Click HERE to donate: http://bit.ly/HelpHanaelehHorses



The next day, the revised post below was posted. It met the 20% rule and was Boosted for 6 days, at a total cost of \$56.

The Audience targeted:

Boosted By	Kathi Kruse
Other	Location - Living In: United States
Gender	Male and Female
Age	13-65+
Target Group	Fans and friends of fans
Ad Stopped	August 12th, 7:50am

Results: 7,852 664 \$55.99 Paid Reach [?] Actions [?] Budget Spent Actions People Countries 75 Photo Clicks 1 16 Link Clicks 1 12 Page Likes 1 463 Post Likes 1 10 Comments 1 100 Shares 1 Hide details 1





Hanaeleh Posted by Post Planner [?] Liked - August 6 @

We desperately need your help to feed our rescued horses.

Hanaeleh is a non-profit horse rescue operating in Southern California since 2004. We rescue all breeds and ages of horses, and after we rehabilitate them we work to find them new homes, providing sanctuary for the horses who are unable to be adopted.

Our Summer Fundraiser is on! We need to buy hay for the rest of the year- hay prices ar... See More

Like · Comment · Share

 Lianne St Andre, Kaitlin Agee, Top Comments -Anne Kruse and 542 others like this.

🗊 125 shares

Teri Love Sent and shared! Unlike · Reply · 🖒 1 · August 10 at 10:38am

Hanaeleh Thank you very, very much Teri. We appreciate it!

Like · Commented on by Kathi Kruse [?] · August 11 at 7:16pm

Write a comment...

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The Post below was Boosted for 2 days, total spend \$20.

Audience:

Ad Stopped	August 11th, 4:45pm
Target Group	Fans and friends of fans
Age	13-65+
Gender	Male and Female
Other	Location - Living In: United States
Boosted By	Kathi Kruse

Results:







Hanaeleh

Posted by Post Planner [?] Liked · August 9 @

We're at 12% of our goal! We desperately need your help to feed our rescued horses. Can you help?

Our goal is \$5,000. Even a small amount will allow us to continue to help the horses! CLICK HERE to donate: http://bit.ly/HelpHanaelehHorses

Or send your check to: P.O. Box 291, Trabuco Cyn, CA 92678... See More

Like · Comment · Share

🖞 Kaitlin Agee, E.z. May and 131 Top Comments others like this.

🕞 69 shares

- Dianne Stocks Do I make a check to Hanaeleh's ? I don't use pay pai or do I know how. I would like to make a donation. I read what you do on Facebook and I think you people are wonderful. Like · Reply · 🖒 2 · August 9 at 12:15pm

Hanaeleh replied · 3 Replies

Stephanie Foulger Id like to donate too! I've been to your rescue 3 years ado. You do a great Write a comment... 0 The Post below was Boosted for 6 days, total spend \$56.

Audience:

Ad Stopped	August 19th, 9:18am
Target Group	Fans and friends of fans
Age	13-65+
Gender	Male and Female
Other	Location - Living In: Lake Forest (+25 mi),
	California, United States
Boosted By	Kathi Kruse

Results:

3,980 Paid Reach [?]	312 Actions [?]	\$56.00 Budget Spent
Actions People 0	Countries	
43 Photo Clicks		
13 Link Clicks		
9 Page Likes		
188 Post Likes		
4 Comments		
64 Shares		
Hide details		



This post simply kept tabs on the progress. This was an integral part of keeping the momentum going.



This post (created with Canva app) is an example of the "Thank You" messages that were posted:



People were asking about Hanaeleh's physical address (to send donations to) even though it was included in the posts. So, this post was created just to let people know about where to send their checks:



This post is another reminder of how things were going, and communicating a "Thank You". It was important to keep everyone in the loop, which kept the crowd cheering:





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Emilie Albert-Mott for helping feed our horses! If you'd like to donate to our goal of \$5,000, even a small amount will allow us to continue to help the

horses! CLICK HERE to donate: http://bit.ly/ HelpHanaelehHorses

Or send your check to: P.O. Box 291, Trabuco Cyn, CA 92678... See More



Here is an example of a "Thank You" post below. Steve West (a commenter) shared a picture of his Mom's horse, Tamara (in the comments). Steve's Mom had become unable to care for Tamara and had to give her up. Using Facebook, Hanaeleh was instrumental in getting Tamara adopted. Steve West continues to be one of Hanaeleh's biggest fans.



Keeping the momentum going, this post was Boosted for 2 days, spend \$20.

Audience:

Boosted By	Kathi Kruse
	California, United States
Other	Location - Living In: Lake Forest (+25 mi),
Gender	Male and Female
Age	13-65+
Target Group	Fans and friends of fans
Ad Stopped	August 20th, 1:07pm

Results:







Posted by Post Planner [?] Liked · August 18 @

WE MADE IT HALFWAY TO OUR GOAL OF \$5,000 to feed our horses.

Please donate...even a small amount will allow us to continue to help the horses! CLICK HERE to donate: http://bit.ly/HelpHanaelehHorses

Or send your check to: P.O. Box 291, Trabuco Cyn, CA 92678... See More

Unlike · Comment · Share



Not all posts had images. We posted Thank You's like this with good results:

Hanaeleh Y	495 People Reac	495 People Reached 18 Likes, Comments & Shares		
August 18 at 6:31pm · @	18 Likes, Commer			
DOUBLE THANK YOU to our new volunteer, Jeff Fergusson, for giving his time to help out at the ranch AND for donating to our fundraiser to help feed our horses!	18 Likes	18 On Post	0 On Shares	
495 people reached Boost Post	0 Comments	0 On Post	0 On Shares	
Like · Comment · Share · 🖒 18	0	0	0	
	Shares	On Post	On Shares	
	O Post Clicks			
	0 Photo Views	0 Link Clicks	0 Other Clicks	
	NEGATIVE FEEDBA	ск		
	0 Hide Post	0 Hide	e All Posts	
	0 Report as Spam	0 Lini	ke Page	

Here's Rio saying, "Thank You."





Hanaeleh Posted by Post Planner [?] Liked - August 18 @

THANK YOU Deanna Rector, Sue Baldwin, Stephanie Foulger, Arlene Caliendo & Joyce Proteau for helping feed our horses!

If you'd like to donate to our goal of \$5,000, even a small amount will allow us to continue to help the horses! CLICK HERE to donate: http://bit.ly/ HelpHanaelehHorses

Or send your check to: P.O. Box 291, Trabuco Cyn, CA 92678

Hanaeleh is a non-profit horse rescue operating in Southern California since 2004. We rescue all breeds and ages of horses, and after we rehabilitate them we work to find them new homes, providing sanctuary for the horses who are unable to be adopted.

We need to buy hay for the rest of the year - hay prices are continuing to rise, and we need your help to continue to save the horses who come in. Often the horses we take in are severely malnourished, and it costs 2-3 times as much to feed those horses until we

Write a comment..

Amy Meister (one of our loyal supporters) LOVES Delilah and has no means to keep a horse. She "sponsors" Delilah so a special "Thank You" was posted just for Amy:





More "Thank You's" from Tamahome and Rio:



Gratitude was shown to another business for their donation by posting a link to their site:



The two posts below are examples of a simple THANK YOU text post. Great organic reach (reach without having to pay Facebook to promote/boost it):

Hanaeleh ~	585 People Reached	t	
August 19 at 6:50pm · 🚱	22 Likes, Comments	& Shares	
HANK YOU Connie Harada, Tina Baglama, and Lisa Lanzarotta for your enerous donations to help feed our horses! Your contributions are making difference.	21 Likes	20 On Post	1 On Shares
B5 people reached Boost Post	0 Comments	0 On Post	0 On Shares
nlike - Comment - Share - 🖒 20	1 Shares	0 On Post	1 On Shares
	0 Post Clicks		
	0 Photo Views	0 Link Clicks	0 Other Clicks (i)
	NEGATIVE FEEDBACK		
	0 Hide Post	0 Hide	e All Posts
	0 Report as Spam	0 Unli	ke Page



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A special "Thank You" from Tamahome:



Post below was Boosted for 4 days for \$46.10 (because we reached our goal early).

Audience:

 Ad Stopped
 August 26th, 9:23am

 Target Group
 Fans and friends of fans

 Age
 13-65+

 Gender
 Male and Female

 Other
 Location - Living In: - United States: Lake Forest (+50 mi), Riverside (+50 mi) California

Boosted By Kathi Kruse

Results:







Posted by Post Planner [?] August 20 @

We desperately need your help to feed our rescued horses.

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Our Summer Fundraiser is on! We need to buy hay for the rest of the year- hay prices ar... See More

Like · Comment · Share

 La dillin Agee, E.z. May, Connie Top Comments -Speed-Biven and 219 others like this.
 J 32 shares
 Michael Parra Americans treat their pets better

than many countries treat their own children. Like · Reply · 🖒 1 · August 21 at 7:48pm

Ruth Ashcraft Please donated, I just did...... Hay!!!! Like · Reply · 🖒 1 · August 21 at 4:49pm

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Write a comment...

A special THANK YOU from Quixote and Maggie:





Hanaeleh Posted by Post Planner [?] Liked · August 20 @

HUGE THANK YOU to Cindy Sherrill for your generous recurring donation to Hanaeleh! Quixote and Maggie wanted to chime in too.....





This was posted on August 20th and later the next day the \$5,000 goal was almost achieved. The sense was that the closer it got to the goal, the more people start rooting for Hanaeleh.



WE ARE 70% TO OUR GOAL OF \$5,000! We're almost there!!

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C THE COLUMN

Please donate - even a small amount will allow us to continue to help the horses! CLICK HERE to donate: http://bit.ly/HelpHanaelehHorses

Or send your check to: P.O. Box 291, Trabuco Cyn, CA 92678

Hanaeleh is a non-profit horse rescue operating in Southern California since 2004. We rescue all breeds and ages of horses, and after we rehabilitate them we work to find them new homes, providing sanctuary for the horses who are unable to be adopted.

We need to buy hay for the rest of the year - hay prices are continuing to rise, and we need your help to continue to save the horses who come in. Often the horses we take in are severely malnourished, and it costs 2-3 times as much to feed those horses until we are able to get them to a healthy weight. All of our horses are fed high-quality alfalfa, orchard and timothy hay/pellets to get them back to health (and to stay healthy).

Write a comment...

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A special THANK YOU from Gypsy, Hanaeleh's rescued Wild Mustang:





Posted by Post Planner [?] Liked · August 21 @

THANK YOU Karen Hopkins for your generous donation in our fundraiser to feed our horses. Gypsy loves ETI and thanks you for your ongoing support to keep her happy!

🗣 Tag	Photo	Add Location	🖋 Edit	
Like · Cor	nment ·	Share		
🖒 Kaitl	in Agee	E.z. May and 25 oth	ners like this	3.
	Write a (comment		0



415 members

+ Join

In the home stretch:





Hanaeleh Posted by Post Planner [?] Liked · August 21 @

We are so close we can taste the hay! Only \$1,236 left to go 'til we reach our goal of \$5,000 to feed our horses.

Please donate - even a small amount will allow us to continue to help the horses! CLICK HERE to donate: http://bit.ly/HelpHanaelehHorses

Or send your check to: P.O. Box 291, Trabuco Cyn, CA 92678... See More

Tag Photo	Add Location	/ Edit
Like · Comment ·	Share	
Danielle Aro and 22 other	mando Hall, Tracy C 's like this.	harles, Kaitlin Agee
🗊 3 shares		
Write a d	comment	Ø

See All

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Ulysses can "taste the hay right now!"





This was a gift made from Kaitlin's (our Volunteer Coordinator) Grammie. Everyone was talking about it:



A special THANK YOU from Brutus:





Hanaeleh Posted by Post Planner [?] Liked · August 23 @

We're almost to the finish line in our fundraiser to feed our horses...a few hundred dollars away from our \$5,000 goal!

Please donate - even a small amount will allow us to continue to help the horses! CLICK HERE to donate: http://bit.ly/HelpHanaelehHorses

Or send your check to: P.O. Box 291, Trabuco Cyn, CA 92678... See More



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Another special THANK YOU from Gypsy.







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See All

Recommended Pages





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Hanaeleh reached their goal of \$5,000 on Friday, August 22nd, 2014. The weekend was kept open waiting for it to all settle in. This was posted on Monday August 25th. The goal was reached and exceeded by \$1,500! Total donations: \$6,500.



RESULTS:

There is always the possibility that fundraising efforts will fall flat. The staff at Hanaeleh was prepared for certain realities. They hoped to raise at least half of their financial goal. They expected to spend more than \$200 on Facebook Ads. They also knew that if history served, they would increase their Likes and engagement, which they did.

The total Facebook Ads budget spent was \$198.

There were things they didn't expect too. They reached their goal of \$5,000 on August 22, 2014 (9 days early), and even exceeded their goal by \$1500 for a total of \$6500. They received 63 total donations averaging \$104 per donation. They were ecstatic when they received the two largest donations of \$1500 and \$1000, and even received extra donations from their monthly donors; one from a married couple who are out of work.

Donations came in on a frequent basis and accumulated as follows:

Donations as of:August 9th\$590August 14th\$1,350August 20th\$3,620August 22nd\$5,000August 25th\$6,500

It was also evident that as the \$5,000 goal got closer, the audience seemed to rally for the cause and donate. The closer it got the more they donated. This may speak to the competitive nature of humans and to their desire to help those in need.

CONCLUSION:

Heading out with a plan to raise funds for the horses at Hanaeleh Horse Rescue brought many welcome surprises. Achieving financial support from compassionate Facebook friends is a gift that transcends beyond the obstacles and fears experienced when trying to rescue animals in need. Without Facebook Hanaeleh would not have reached those people.

Social media is a fantastic way to connect with like-minded individuals. Facebook, at its best, can be used to shout for those without a voice.

Based on the fundraising campaign detailed above, it can be concluded that **Facebook can be used as a tool to accelerate fundraising.** The need for financial support will always be present in the world of rescue organizations. Based on the case study results, Hanaeleh plans to use Facebook to run four fundraisers per year to cover the cost of hay and medical needs for the horses of Hanaeleh. This will help further explore the effectiveness of Social Media and its impact in the non-profit animal rescue organization sector.

For more information, contact Kathi Kruse of Kruse Control Inc. email: Kathi@krusecontrolinc.com Phone: 714.251.6440