

5 things you can do tomorrow

Pragmatic vs Theoretical:
Digital FR & Marketing

**Guy's &
St Thomas'
Foundation**

Investing in a healthier society





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Brand acts as a multiplier to FR performance – it's a 'X' not a '+'

- Digital advertising is most effective when it pursues both brand equity and FR performance
- Avoid viewing brand and FR performance as binary techniques or siloed when campaign planning
- Over investing in FR performance ads, as opposed to a more balanced advertising investment portfolio, can result in diminishing returns
- Brand equity is the sum of the associations people have with your charity and its services

The Reality We Face

- Economic Pressure: Cost of living crisis squeezing disposable income
- Technical Pressure: The decline of 'free' organic traffic and platform fragmentation
- Digital marketing/Paid Media is resetting. Many will have to go back to basics



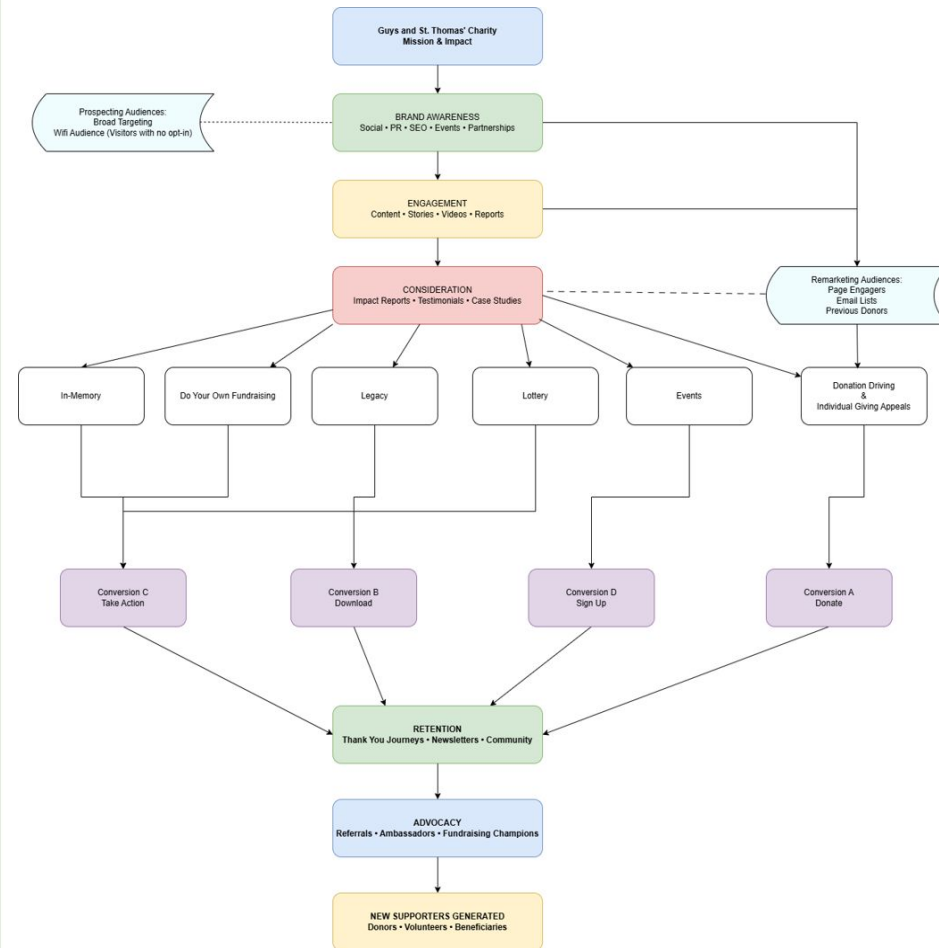
#1: From Search to Answers (AEO)

- The Paradigm Shift: Moving from SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) to AEO (Answer Engine Optimisation)
- The Action: Perform a mobile-first 'GEO Audit' (generative engine optimization) on your core cause



Building the 'smart bridge'

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#2: Creative as the performance driver

- The Signal Shift: Modern algorithms use creative, not manual parameters, to target donors.
- Pragmatic Action: Pivot from "one perfect concept" to a diversified creative portfolio



R.A.C.E Framework

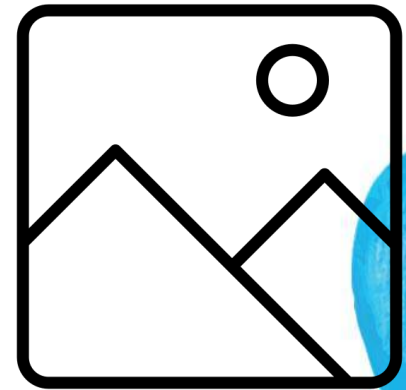


2. Increasing engagement and CTR

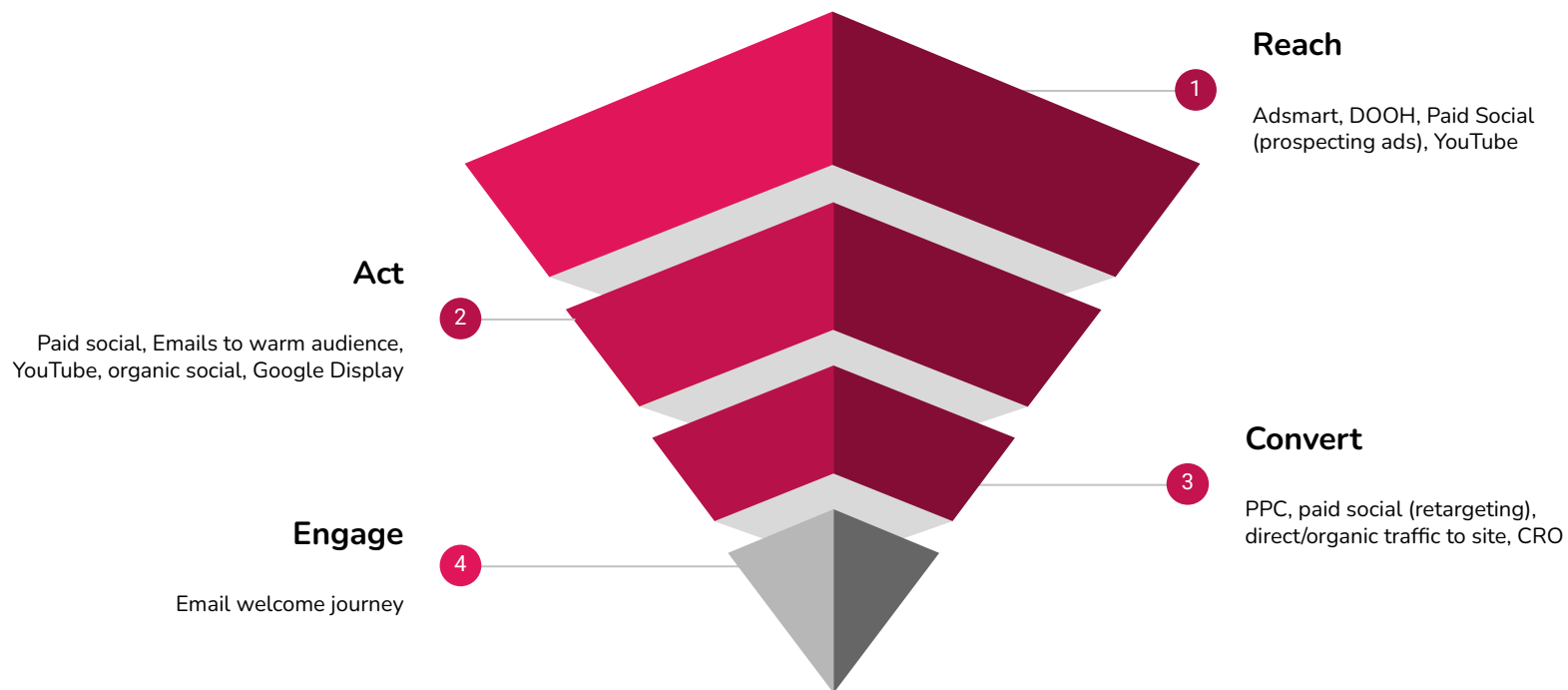
This is where we can test creative, formats and messaging

Some of these are planned for 'always-on', but we would like to test more of the following styles of ads:

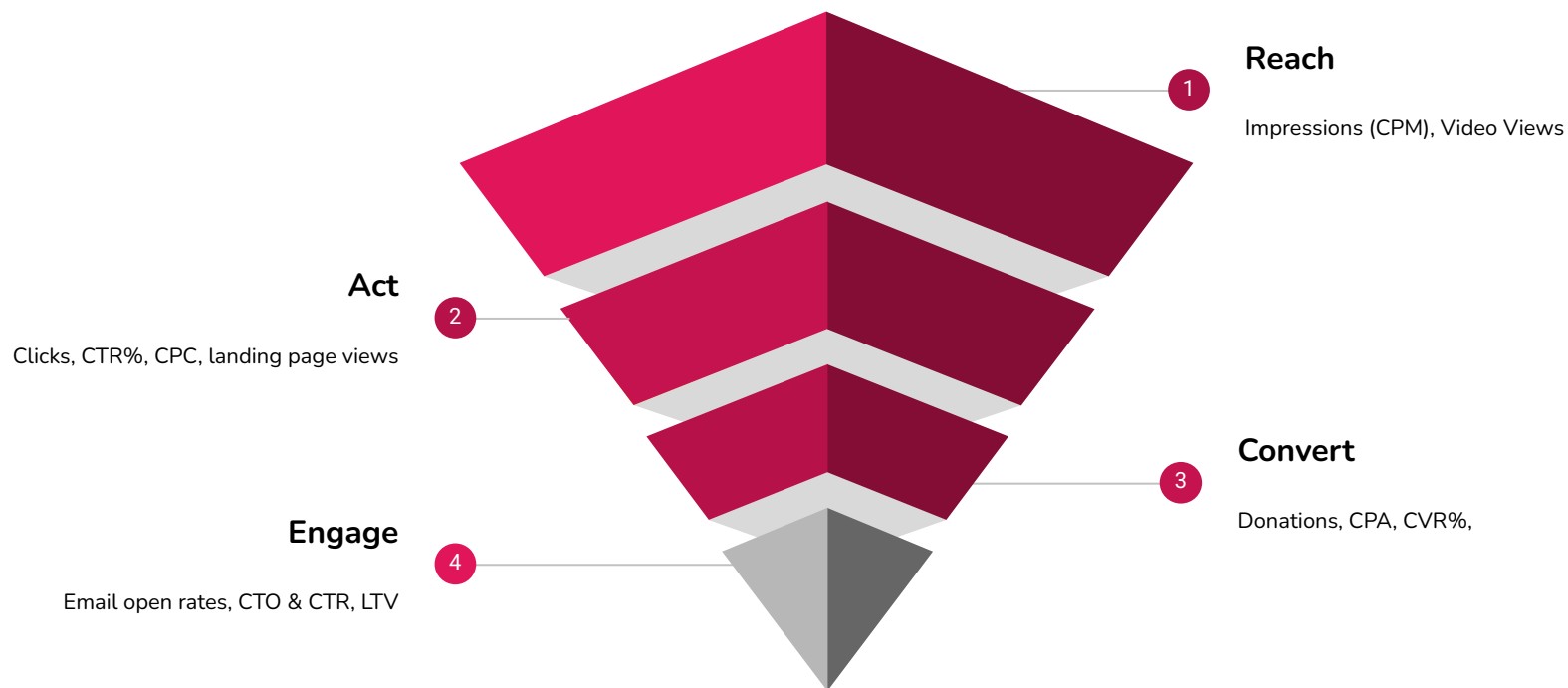
- Statistics
 - Stats that demonstrate urgency and the NEED for our services
 - Stats that demonstrate impact
- Quotes
 - From the parents of children we've helped
 - From the children themselves (our beneficiaries)
 - From the staff who treat our beneficiaries
- Image styles
 - Text on plain backgrounds
 - Text over images of people
 - Text over empty scene imagery
- Case Studies
 - TBC
- Cost of living
 - It could be both positive and negative for donor behaviour. Let's test it and find out.



R.A.C.E Framework (channel mix)



R.A.C.E Framework (measurement strategy)



#3: Frictionless Giving

- The Retail Metric: Commercial e-commerce experiences dictate your donor's expectations
- Conversion Killers: Mandatory accounts, fiddly sliders, and manual credit card entry on mobile



Tooling Maturity Matrix

Maturity Phase	Phase Focus	Recommended Tooling Strategy
Phase 1: Explorers (Early stage; focus on behavioral insight)	"What are people actually doing on our site?"	Hotjar (Focus on heatmaps and session recording to identify friction points before changing anything).
Phase 2: Experimenters (Mid-way; focus on low-cost optimization)	"Can we test simple variations to improve conversion?"	Convert.com or GA4 Integrations (Focus on simple A/B tests with an SME-friendly, lower-cost price point).
Phase 3: Optimizers (Advanced; focus on deep personalization)	"How can we scale experimentation across the journey?"	Optimizely or VWO (Focus on complex, multi-variable journeys and enterprise-grade governance).

#4: Unpolished Authenticity

- The Organic Social Trap: Treating organic pages as an extension of paid broadcast ads
- Community-Led Storytelling: Leaning into User-Generated Content (UGC) as social proof



Brand guardrails & operational scaling

- Brand 'Lite' Approach: Style guardrails rather than creative straitjackets
- Operational Infrastructure: Consolidating community management to protect team capacity



#5: Email Reality Check

- A single email (no matter how good) is not a firework
- The Skepticism Hook: Ditching long-term transformation lectures for immediate channel wins
- The Technical Reality: Deliverability, list hygiene, and algorithm filters dictate visibility



The Email Action Plan

- Step 1: Aggressively segment out unengaged subscribers (12–18 months).
- Step 2: Build a simple 3-part automated welcome sequence
- Step 3: Conduct a subject line audit

TL:DR

1. AEO & 'Smart Bridges'
2. Creative is the performance driver
3. Frictionless E-commerce Journeys
4. Cultivating Authentic Communities
5. List Hygiene & Automated Sequences
 - Bonus: Shift from planning/viewing Brand and FR performance as siloed teams – integrate all creative assets within one campaign to reinforce each other.

TL;DR

TOO LONG; DIDN'T READ

What is TL;DR?

- Used to indicate or request a summary
 - Originated on Internet forums
 - Now common in digital communication
-



Thank you

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