



# CASE STUDY

## 9/11 Memorial & Museum

Expanding a  
Museum's Reach

*2015 MAXI Award Winner*



## BACKGROUND

The 9/11 Memorial & Museum invites visitors to learn about the history of the September 11, 2001 attacks and the 1993 World Trade Center bombing through a compelling blend of permanent and temporary exhibits, moving programs and events, and haunting architecture that provides an immersive experience.

# 9/11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

In 2003, just two years after the terror attacks, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum began laying the groundwork for what is today a historic site recognized by the National Register of Historic Places and globally revered as a place of honor and remembrance.

Located on eight acres at the World Trade Center site, the memorial is a quiet place of contemplation insulated from the hustle of New York City. Among hundreds of beautiful oak trees, landscaped paths, and the Survivor Tree are two breathtaking pools that collect the infinite splash of 30-foot waterfalls and drown out the noise of lower Manhattan. The names of all 2,977 people that lost their lives at the World Trade Center, near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon are etched into bronze parapets surrounding the pools.



In 2007, The Lukens Company (TLC) launched the 9/11 Memorial & Museum's direct mail fundraising program to help fund the construction of both the memorial and museum. Responses were strong right from the start and continued to build momentum before hitting an all-time revenue high in 2011 when the memorial was commemorated.

## CHALLENGES

While we were proud of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum 2011 Acquisition Campaign, we understood that a lot of its success was due to the excitement of the memorial opening. With the museum not opening for three more years, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum feared that fundraising efforts would stagnate in the interim. It begged the question: where do we go from here and how do we sustain momentum and interest?

## OBJECTIVE

**Coming off the 9/11 Memorial & Museum's most successful fundraising year in their history, we set out to develop a new direct mail acquisition package that would attract and engage new donors, raise enough revenue to finish building the museum and sustain the memorial, and become a control package for future direct mail acquisitions.**

## TLC SOLUTIONS

We understood that continuous fundraising was essential to completing the museum and maintaining the 9/11 Memorial & Museum's overall success. We also knew that we'd developed a solid direct mail fundraising program that could withstand the ebb and flow of donor attrition, donor acquisition, and renewals.

Digging into our data-backed methodologies, creative reserves, and decades of experience in nonprofit fundraising and membership programs, TLC developed an

award-winning direct mail campaign that established a strong membership base and positioned the 9/11 Memorial & Museum’s membership program to grow for years to come.

The Invitation Acquisition Appeal was broken down into two themes—Charter Members and Inaugural Members—and each evoked a feeling of exclusivity, responsibility, and importance.



Beginning with the Charter Membership Acquisition Appeal in 2012, we created a mail package that invited prospects to become one of the first members of the museum. Arriving in a large announcement carrier, the package included a personalized letter that connected with the recipient through a moving narrative about the 9/11 Memorial & Museum’s mission.

Also included was a Charter Member acceptance form, return envelope, and full-color insert detailing membership benefits and a back-end premium for donations over \$100.

In mid-2013 with about a year until the museum’s grand opening, we shifted messaging to invite prospects to become an Inaugural Member. The package arrived in a similar large announcement carrier, but the letter strategically moved away from a personal narrative to more institutional copy that tied the 9/11 Memorial & Museum’s objectives with the role of membership. Replacing the insert was a full-color brochure that detailed membership levels, associated benefits, and various collections and tributes hosted by the 9/11 Memorial & Museum.

## RESULTS

The direct mail campaign generated results that were above and beyond all expectations.



The 9/11 Memorial & Museum's 2012-2014 Invitation Acquisition package exceeded all goals, generating over 5,400 members—2,241 Charter Members and 3,212 Inaugural Members—and nearly \$80,000 in net revenue in just three years. Moreover, the average gift from this award-winning campaign increased year over year, with the 2014 average gift nearly double the amount of the minimum ask.



▲ **5,453**  
**New Members**



▲ **\$79,280**  
**Net Revenue**

By creating a must-open package that connected with recipients and inspired them to offer their support, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum was able to open the museum in May 2014. Today, the 9/11 Memorial & Museum continues to be a place of remembrance and education that honors those who died in the September 11 attacks and the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.



## **Are you ready to grow your membership, raise more funds, and increase your impact?**

Whether you're refreshing your membership program, ramping up fundraising, or generating support for a new exhibit, we can provide you with dynamic strategies that champion your cause.

Get in touch with our team of experts to begin crafting data-driven, creative, and cost-effective communications that are finely tuned to your audience.

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