



**We
Are
Family**



Integrated Marketing Communications Plan

January 1st, 2023 – December 31st, 2023



EMPACT

Driving impact through empathy

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Agency Philosophy



Mission Statement

Our mission is to empower our clients to do their best work by using powerful marketing strategies to push them forward. We work with exceptional, mission driven businesses and organizations to help them make a difference in their community. By understanding our clients needs, and their customers desires, we bring them together and help our clients do more of what they do best.

Guiding Principles and Beliefs:

1. **Our success is rooted in relationships.** We take the time to develop meaningful relationships, and go beyond expectations to create real connections.
2. **We believe in creating a positive impact.** Our client's purpose becomes our mission as we work together to affect the community for good.
3. **Provide cutting-edge services.** We deliver high-quality execution of innovative techniques, based on powerful research. We don't just use the latest trends, we know when and how to use them, in an integrated fashion.
4. **Create Excess Value.** No matter the client's size or industry, we provide the same level of service. We go above and beyond to create excess value because when we do, we create a positive impact and we gain goodwill and recognition.
5. **Integrity and Communication.** Our clients deserve honesty and integrity in every interaction and in all of our work. Listening to our client and understanding what they need lays the foundation for great work. Constant and clear communication with the client throughout the process, creates better results.

The Impact Difference:

At Empact, we make the processes and techniques used by the biggest companies accessible for companies of any size. We value relationships over contracts and work to understand client needs in order to provide a network of opportunities. We're passionate about engaging customers in creative new ways and never afraid to try new techniques and ideas which are supported by our research.



Meet the Team



Chloe Chambers is a Marketing major with a concentration in Professional Selling from rural Northern Virginia. Chloe is interested in a career involving professional sales and considers herself to be outgoing, optimistic, and hardworking. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her roommates and friends, playing with her cats, listening to music, and off-roading in her Jeep.

Jacob Gooch is a Marketing major at JMU, minoring in Arts. He runs a freelance web development business, helping clients grow their web presence and builds tools for them to operate their businesses. Outside of work and school, he loves spending time with family, SCUBA diving, and making art.



Anna Milne is a junior marketing major at JMU. She is from Leesburg in Northern Virginia. Anna's career aspirations include professional sales or brand marketing management. Anna enjoys snowboarding, horseback riding, fishing, and traveling to the beach. Anna likes participating in sales competitions with the JMU Sales Club.

Margaret Thompson, is from East Greenwich, Rhode Island. She is a junior marketing major with a concentration in digital marketing and a minor in global supply chain management. She's very interested in creative advertising and content creation and hopes to incorporate those into her future business and marketing career.



Annaliese Wan is from Vienna, Virginia, and is a junior Marketing major, minoring in entrepreneurship at James Madison University. On-campus, Annaliese is part of Alpha Phi Omega, an executive member of Club Climbing, and is a Manager at the University Recreation Center. In Her free time, she likes to rock climb, mountain bike, and snowboard.



Executive Summary

This integrated marketing campaign utilizes multiple media to create a consistent message which will achieve Mercy House's Marketing Goals effectively through well supported recommendations. The overall Marketing Goal is to increase donations to the thrift store or building supply store in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.

In support of this goal, the proposed campaign has **5 Communication Objectives:**

1. Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.
2. Increase awareness of the types and quality of donations needed to support homeless families in need by 60% among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023, to reduce items wasted by 40%.
3. Increase interest in donating to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 7,210) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 1st, 2023, measured by click-through rates and response rates.
4. Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.
5. Increase donations to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items) by November 30th, 2023 in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.

Target Audience

The two major target audiences are families who may have interest and are capable of donating, in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, and JMU college students.

Timeline

The campaign will be run over 1 year (12 months) from January 1st, 2023 through December 31st, 2023. Empact Agency will be in contact with Mercy House throughout the duration to provide assistance implementing and evaluating the plan.

Campaign Slogan and Theme

"We are family": The Harrisonburg community is one family, and no child should be homeless. By donating to Mercy House, you can help to keep local families together.

Background

Mercy House faces competition from direct and indirect competitors but has the main advantage of its positive mission and its important role in the local community.

Campaign Budget Total

\$20,000 will be spent on an integrated campaign across multiple media.



Media Plan Summary:

Traditional Advertising

Local radio and print advertising (such as local newspapers and magazines) will be utilized to increase awareness of Mercy House mission and increase donations to the thrift store.

Digital Marketing

A website, email campaigns, and Google Ads will be used in order to increase awareness and interest for Mercy House brand.

Social Media Marketing

Social media advertising through Facebook and Instagram will be utilized to engage our target audience and increase awareness of Mercy House mission as well as increase consumer interest in donating.

Support Media

A combination of transit, place-based, signage, and promotional product advertising will be used to increase brand awareness and reach a larger share of our target audience.

Direct Marketing

Informational postcards, monthly newsletters, and automated text-response systems will be utilized to increase and retain brand awareness for the Mercy House as well as the desire to donate.

Sales Promotion

To increase interest in donating, competitions, punch card reward systems, and local business partnerships will be conducted.

Personal Selling

Partnerships with JMU student housing as well as follow-up communication with Mercy House consumers will be implemented to increase the number of quality donations and retain interest in Mercy House brand.

Public Relations & Publicity

Radio publicity stories and write-ups to local newspapers and publications will be utilized to raise awareness of Mercy House mission and outreach.

Sponsorship

Partnerships with both JMU organizations and Harrisonburg restaurants will be formed. In addition, sponsorship events will take place to increase Mercy House donations and mission awareness.

Measurement & Evaluation

Evaluation of campaign success will be based on an estimate of total awareness and donation and sales numbers. Pretesting and monthly measurement of media plan execution will be monitored to evaluate individual activity success and make changes.



Industry Review

Industry Description:

The Mercy House falls within the thrift/resell industry. This industry is made up of stores that sell donated and used goods. Some stores that fall into this industry donate a certain percentage of profits to charity. This industry is a subcategory of used-goods stores, however this industry excludes stores that sell goods for profit. Stores in this category include antique shops, used book stores, resale or thrift shops, and pawn shops.

Industry Activities

Apparel, books, furniture, household appliances, merchandise, sporting goods, etc.

Industry Size

\$10.3 Billion

6.1% Profit Margin
23,449 Businesses in US

Source [18]

Industry Growth

 **2.7%**

Expected Revenue Increase by 2025

Current Trends:

- There has been a trend in customer-to-customer exchanges through social media platforms, such as Facebook Marketplace. This takes advantage of selling used items online. Apps such as Poshmark and Mercari are gaining popularity as well in terms of customer-to-customer sales.
- Thrifting has become a popular activity amongst younger generations for fashion and style trends, as well as repurposing used items.
- Thrifting has also become more popular since the pandemic due to more household financial instability. This led to a nation-wide increase in second-hand item sales.
- There are positive environmental impacts of shopping for second hand clothing. More sustainable shopping limits carbon emissions as well as energy and water resource usage.

Macroeconomic Factors

Demographic: Income (less than 75,000), Family status (at least one child)

Economic: recession (disposable income), unemployment rate, poverty rate

Technological: E-commerce, Social media

Political: Laws that affect income tax, tax cuts for donations

Legal: Tax, regulation, non profit tax exemptions

Social: community oriented, local business support

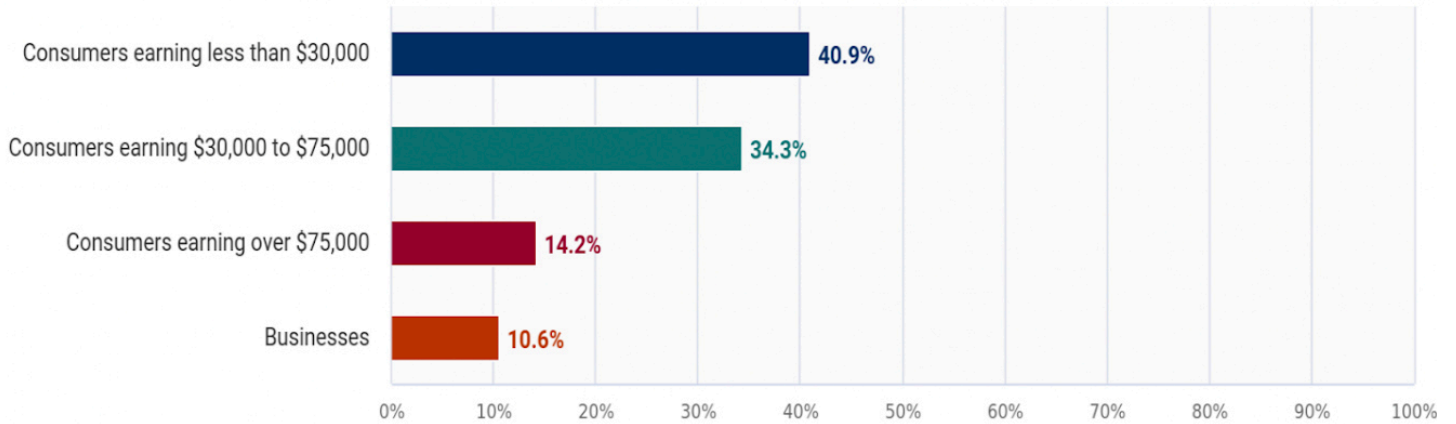
Cultural: norm of donating, bargain hunting

Environmental: Awareness of landfill space, location of stores, re-sold goods

Key Factors

- **Success Factors For The Industry:** management of inventory, accessibility to consumers, compliance with government regulations, access to volunteer labor
- Marketing accounts are estimated to be 1.4% of the industry revenue in 2020
- Competition in the industry is extremely high and continues to increase
- **Major Players:** Goodwill, Salvation Army, The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

Major Market Segmentation



The graph pictured above shows the market segments of consumers that buy from the thrift industry. Each segment is based on the demographic factor of income; the graph shows that the majority of the market is taken up by consumers that earn less than \$30,000 a year. This in turn shows that as income increases, the less these individuals are accounted for in the market industry.



The graph to the left shows the current and projected growth of the industry. Revenues are expected to increase in the years following 2020. There is a predicted increase in disposable income and spending that would result in increased purchases at thrift stores.



Company Description

History and Description:

Mercy House is a non-profit organization in Harrisonburg, VA with the mission of helping homeless families. The organization began in 1988 when Roy Early, Judge John Paul, and Louise Tate led a group of citizens who were concerned with helping families stay together and overcome homelessness. The group rented a house on Country Club Road and housed three families in it. After realizing the needs were much greater, they established Mercy House as a non-profit organization and began to grow the operation with the help of government funding and donations from other citizens who wanted to support the community. Since 1988, Mercy House has acquired many more properties to help more people, but their focus remains on families. This can be summed up in their motto- “changing the world, one family at a time”.

Mercy House’s Present Status

Today, Mercy House is able to help all of these families in need mainly through government funding at a state and federal level and by monetary donations from people who value the work being done. It is also funded by three stores; the Mercy House Building Supplies store, the Mercy House Thrift Store, and the Mercy House Thrift Store Timberville. All three of these stores accept donations of used goods to be sold or to give to the homeless families they are helping. Furniture, clothing, books, light fixtures and more can be found here for a heavy bargain. Clothing is typically priced at \$1, so as to make it affordable to all in need. Donations are very important to the mission of Mercy House as it serves many different roles at once, including giving residents employment at the stores.

Product Lines

Mercy House Building Supplies:

The Building Supplies store accepts donations of building materials and appliances which can be used to renovate Mercy House properties or to be purchased by the public. Items are donated by homeowners who have leftover materials from doing their own renovations/projects, by contractors who have excess materials, or the donation of old appliances which are being removed/replaced. This consists of the following product mix:

- Appliances (dishwashers, refrigerators, etc)
- Doors and windows
- Lumber
- Light fixtures
- Air vent covers

Mercy House Thrift Stores

The thrift stores are the main profit source for Mercy House and accept donations of a range of household and personal items. These stores cater to low income individuals who are seeking affordable goods, and to other Harrisonburg residents looking for a good deal. Items are donated by a wide range of individuals. This consists of the following product mix:

- Clothing (for adults and children)
- Furniture
- Household items
- Books
- Jewelry



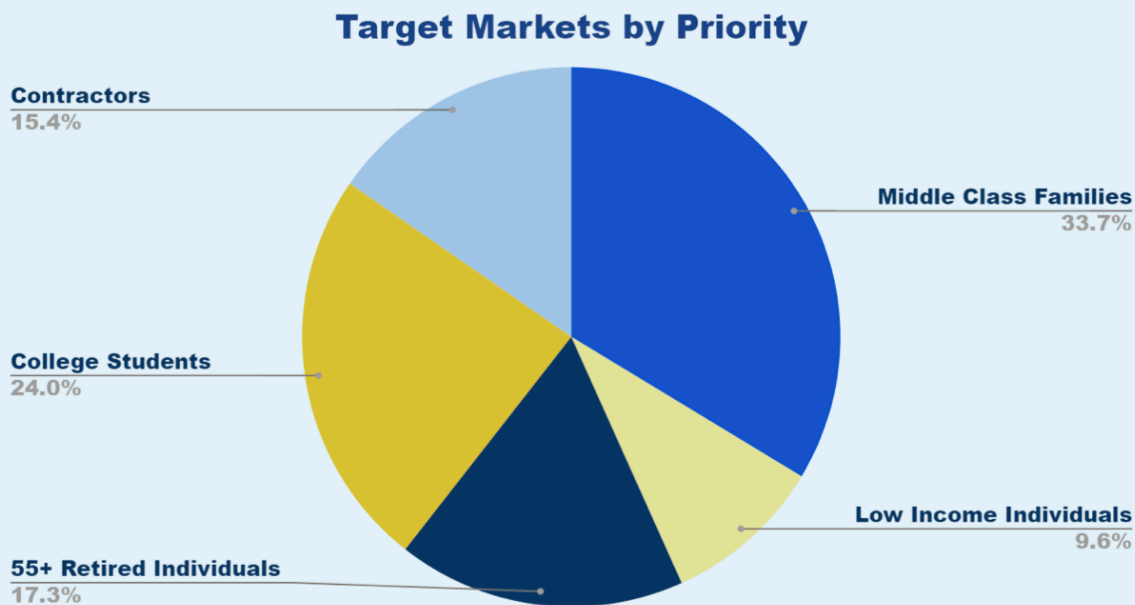
Sales History:

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Annual Sales	\$675,000	\$750,000	\$825,000	\$745,000	\$785,000

Mercy House's sales revenues are directly related to the quantity and quality of donations made. In the fiscal year 2020-2021, Mercy House had sales of \$675,000 with an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 items donated. Mercy House's sales seasonality is noticeable and sales are lowest in the winter months of January and February.

Target Markets:

1. **Middle class families in Harrisonburg and surrounding areas:** This target market both shops at the Thrift Stores and Building Supplies Store and also donates items.
2. **College Students:** This group donates furniture and some household items at the end of the semester. This group may occasionally shop for clothing mostly.
3. **Low-income individuals and families:** This group shops at the Thrift Stores looking for affordable items and are the priority for Mercy House to be able to serve.
4. **55+ Retired individuals:** Older individuals who are downsizing and chose to donate items. These individuals also shop at the thrift store for some items.
5. **Contractors:** Contractors donate excess materials and materials removed from projects to the Building Supplies Store.



This pie chart represents the priority of each Mercy House target market. Mercy House should focus their promotional efforts towards Harrisonburg area middle class families and college students because these markets are more likely to donate good quality items.



Current Marketing Mix:

Product:

Mercy House's physical stores offer a range of lightly used, secondhand products that are donated by individuals in the community and by contractors or businesses. A majority of their products is apparel which includes women's, mens, children, and baby's clothing. The apparel is a big part of their thrift store as well as their boutique shop. The main thrift store also holds furniture (couches, desks, tables, etc.) and a range of kitchenware. They also have books, games, and other miscellaneous products. Mercy House also has a home store that holds home repair items. These items include paint, sinks, toilets, tiles, PVC, lights, etc.

Place:

Mercy House's main location is in Harrisonburg on South High Street. This is just a short distance from JMU's campus and from downtown Harrisonburg. It is within 15 minutes of the Target, the Valley Mall, and Goodwill. The store is on a fairly busy road, but it is not a big shopping area. Mercy House easily found but does not have a large parking lot. The stores are plain and not heavily catered toward aesthetic appeal. The two stores organize the items into clear sections. There is not a lot of visible signage or messaging in the stores. Employees are friendly but do not engage with customers too much. Lastly, while there is ample window lighting, the stores are dimly lit. Overall, the stores feel more like a warehouse or an antique store than they feel like a retail store. This gives the customer the feeling they are getting a deal on moderate to low quality goods.

Price:

Mercy House sells almost all of their clothing for \$1, so as to make it affordable to all. Most of the items in the stores are very low priced, however some items are sold for closer to full price. The pricing depends on the item's condition and the item category. For instance, furniture is often sold for close to the resale value, but still inexpensive compared to new items. Sale prices on household items are comparable to other thrift stores but less than antiques stores.

Promotion:

To date, Mercy House hasn't engaged in much promotional efforts. They have worked with Chipotle to receive donations from customers and brand awareness and have had other sponsorships at events. Mercy House also has relationships with JMU organizations, the local government, and with local Churches including personal selling. In addition, they have had publicity on NPR news, Channel 3, and The Citizen. Mercy House has not done any advertising, direct marketing, digital marketing or sales promotion. There is an opportunity to start using paid promotions in order to capture more of their current target markets as well as new segments. Mercy House ran a sales promotion in 2017 where customers could buy whatever they fit in a bag for only \$5.



Strengths

- Local to Harrisonburg
- Focus' on families with children
- Easy pickup service
- Allows items to gain longer life

Weaknesses

- Location is not a busy area
- Not much promotion

Opportunities

- Attract more college students to donate and shop
- Grow awareness in Harrisonburg community
- Build better selection and higher quality inventory

Threats

- Lack of donations due to online selling options
- Donations redirected to other thrift stores/secondhand outlets
- Buyers redirected to online stores
- Buyers redirected to other thrift stores/second hand outlets

This SWOT Analysis chart depicts the Mercy House's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in terms of their products. The strengths include their location in Harrisonburg, the focus on family goods, pickup services, as well as the resale concept to enforce sustainability of goods. The weaknesses include the low foot traffic to their store front and lack of paid promotions. Mercy House has the opportunity to attract donations from college students, promote within the Harrisonburg community, and organize their storefront to sell more high-quality goods. Threats to the Mercy House include the donations going to other thrift stores, secondhand outlets, and online resale sites.

Positioning:

Mercy House is currently positioned between two different categories. The first being a charity for donation and the second being a thrift store for purchasing. Among the first category of donation, Mercy House is differentiated from others because they help homeless families in Harrisonburg as opposed to organizations such as Goodwill which are a national chain and don't focus on specific groups in need. Mercy House is positioned in this category as a local, high-involvement charity. The second category is thrift stores. Mercy House is competing not only with other thrift stores, but also antiques stores, and online re-sales platforms. Mercy House has extremely low prices on some of their items which makes it a low-cost option in this category. It also provides some goods which others don't sell including the building supplies and appliances. Mercy House is positioned in this category as low-cost but with a wide selection.

Brand Review:

Mercy House is a thrift store that sells low-priced consumer goods to low-income Harrisonburg residents. Mercy House has a focus on providing and serving their community. The brand emphasizes the importance of giving back to and helping those in need.

Other Factors Making the Company What It Is Today:

One factor that has impacted Mercy House's product inventory is the type of donations that they are receiving. They like to sell quality items at an affordable price for their clientele, however, they accept nearly all donations that they are offered. This means that Mercy House is responsible for handling any goods that may not be able to sell. The quality and quantity of items in their inventory is entirely reliant on the donations that they receive.



Mercy House Thrift Store Review

Thrift Store Description:

Mercy House thrift store offers a variety of products within their shop including furniture, kitchen appliances, household items, books, clothes, and more. All of these items are low priced products that a wide range of market segments can afford. Mercy House emphasizes that all of their clothes, excluding premium brand items, are priced at \$1. A premium brand item may be a North Face winter jacket. There is not only a high breadth of products sold at Mercy House, but a high depth as well within the different sections being displayed at the thrift store. For instance, there is a large variety of books, apparel, and kitchen items. All donations received are thoroughly checked to assure they meet quality standards before being approved for resale within the shop.

Thrift Store Sales History:

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Annual Sales	\$675,000	\$750,000	\$825,000	\$745,000	\$785,000

Mercy House's sales revenues are directly related to the quantity and quality of donations made. In the fiscal year 2020-2021, Mercy House had sales of \$675,000 with an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 items donated. Mercy House's sales seasonality is noticeable and sales are lowest in the winter months of January and February.

Strengths

- Low prices
- Variety of products
- Age/gender ranges for products
- Quality standards for donations

Weaknesses

- Some sections unorganized (perceived dirty to some)
- Hard to find certain items
- Poor quality donations

Opportunities

- Young generation thrifting trends
- Promote variety
- Reorganize to promote clothes
- JMU students/JMU facilities can donate old items & clothes

Threats

- 'Good Will' affecting brand awareness
- Profit over donations
- Perceived quality vs actual
- Online competitors (Facebook Marketplace)

Key Benefits:

- Affordable, low priced
- Associated with a local charitable cause and has a strong community impact
- Large variety of quality-inspected products
- Has built relationships with local organizations, businesses, etc. to create potential/future opportunities for fundraising and bringing awareness to cause



Brand Image:

The Mercy House brand image is centralized around their local community impact in Harrisonburg, VA and surrounding areas. Mercy House is primarily known for its two thrift stores that are located next to each other, but they also operate and provide a fully-functioning homeless shelter that supports many local Harrisonburg families that are in need. The current perception of Mercy House is a local, small non-profit that uses its thrift store sales to support families in need by providing housing, job opportunities, child-care, and more. The store is run by a small group of individuals that want the best for the Mercy House organization as well as the community. For low-income individuals, Mercy House represents a place to purchase anything from clothing to books to household goods and supplies at a very affordable price. For homeless families in need, Mercy House is a welcoming, secure, temporary-home to stay at in times of need. They offer safety and physiological needs free-of-cost. These include food, water, clothing, hygiene products, and whatever else the family may need to get well-adjusted. For higher-income families and individuals, Mercy House serves as a place to donate goods or money, which satisfies individuals' esteem needs. Mercy House is also perceived by many college students as a place to shop for clothes, house-hold goods, etc. as well as an opportunity to complete volunteer work.

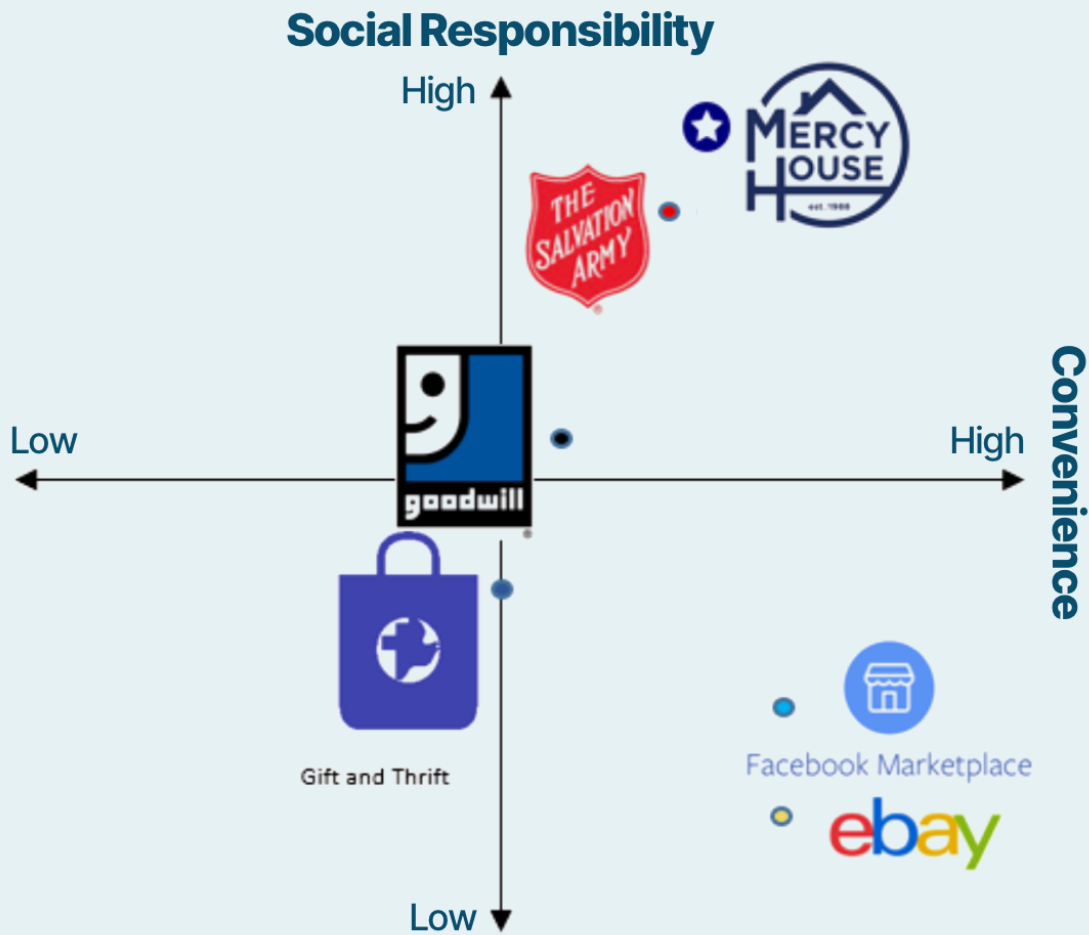
Positioning:

Mercy House thrift shop products are positioned by two main categories, the first being price and product user, and the second being selection variety. The first positioning for products is the price/product user because the main goal of Mercy House is to keep their items at low prices for lower-income families/individuals. They do this by keeping a consistent price of \$1 across the majority of clothing offered, and most, if not all kitchenware items are also \$1 or less. The second way Mercy House differentiates themselves from their competitors is by focusing on selection variety; multiple other competing thrift shops in the Harrisonburg area offer a similar selection of items such as clothes and house/kitchenware which is the most in-demand category being sought for by consumers within the local thrift stores. What differentiates Mercy House from their competitors in this area is their positioning in regards to product breadth and depth within their category sections in their store (in terms of clothing and house/kitchenware offered).

Additional Factors:

Mercy House has a substantial emphasis on serving their immediate community: Harrisonburg and surrounding areas. They receive donations from residents directly located in Harrisonburg and from neighboring cities and towns. They also shelter Harrisonburg families in need. By making a positive and substantial impact on the local community, Mercy House sets themselves apart from many of their other non-profit competitors by allowing individuals who may have donated or purchased from the store to see the positive impact they have made on their local community. Competitors such as Goodwill don't give donors the opportunity to see the impact of their donations. By creating a more personal, close-to-home, community-based atmosphere, Mercy House creates more opportunities to gain awareness and empathy from consumers, customers, and donors.

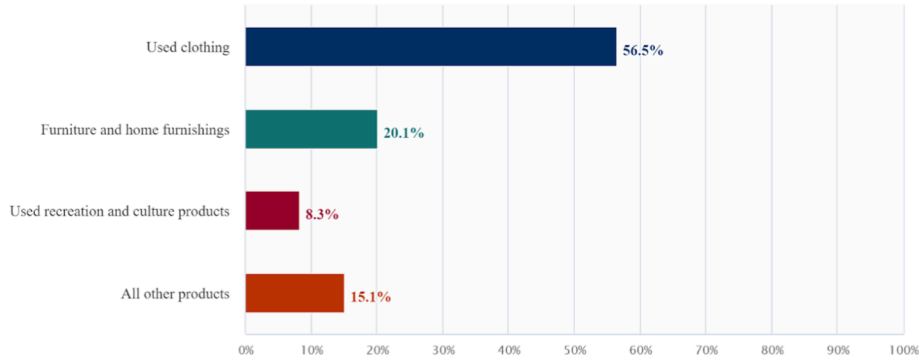
Perceptual Map



Positioning Statement

Positioned on the map above, Mercy House, in comparison to its direct competitors, is in the median area for the attributes of 'Social Responsibility' and 'Convenience'. The attribute of 'Convenience' was chosen as a significant factor of competitiveness because consumers value a quick and convenient place to donate, especially if they are unaware of the organization's social impact. Location convenience is also tied to a second significant attribute: 'Social Responsibility'. When consumers are choosing where to donate items, knowing how the organization helps the local community will make a difference. Creating a high rate of brand awareness among Harrisonburg residents of Mercy House's purpose and actions of donation profits is very important. The strategy is to grow Mercy House's brand awareness tied to its local social responsibility therefore creating desire in local residents to donate for a significant cause. In addition, the goal is to emphasize the convenience of donating items which includes the pick-up service Mercy House offers.

Products and Services Segmentation



2020 INDUSTRY REVENUE

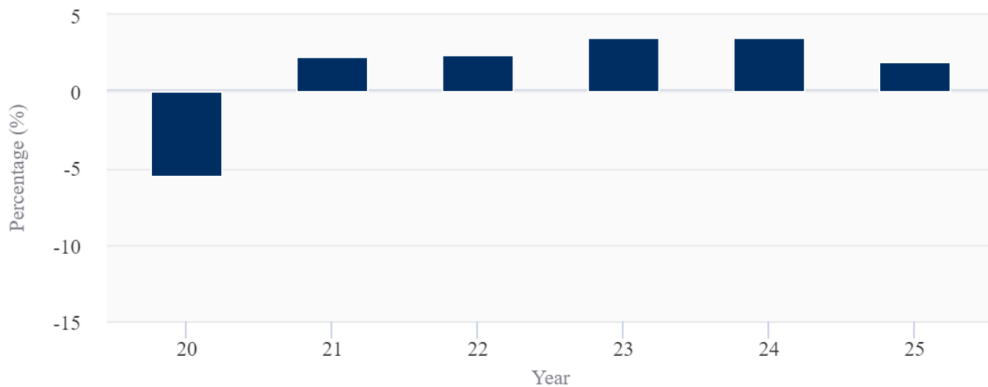
\$10.3bn

Thrift Stores
Source: IBISWorld

The graph pictured above visualizes how used clothing is the most in-demand product category within thrift stores, and also generates the highest amount of revenue at 56.5% [18]. Mercy House can use this to their competitive advantage as they offer an extremely wide variety of clothing products for all ages, styles, genders, seasons, etc. while also offering an extensive amount of options within each clothing sector in their thrift store. Local competitors, such as Goodwill, Gift & Thrift, etc. cannot offer the depth of products that Mercy House does, especially due to their current locations not having the capacity to do so.

The graph below shows the thrift store industry is projected to steadily increase by 2024, but will potentially decline in 2025 [18]. Mercy House can use this to their advantage to adapt to the current industry as well as the future status of the industry by increasing their campaigning, promotions, and brand awareness.

Industry Outlook 2020–2025



Thrift Stores
Source: IBISWorld



Competitive Review

Mercy House Competitors Overview:

Direct Competitors

- Goodwill
- Gift and Thrift
- Salvation Army
- Big Brothers Big Sisters

Indirect Competitors

- Facebook Marketplace
- Ebay
- Plato's Closet
- Landfill
- Craigslist
- TJ Maxx
- Antiques Stores: Rolling Hills Antique Mall, Villager Antiques, Heartworn Vintage

Mercy House faces a number of direct and indirect competitors within the thrift and resale industry. In the Harrisonburg-Rockingham area, competitors were chosen based on location and accessibility to potential donors and customers. Humanitarian based thrift stores in the area are direct competitors with Mercy House, while Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist, landfill and profit based stores are all indirect competitors. These indirect competitors serve the same needs for the consumer as Mercy House for both getting rid of items and buying used items. Indirect competitors including resale platforms represent a growing concern for Mercy House as the resale market is growing faster than thrift & donation markets and are projected to overtake thrift and donations in total sales by 2023 [65].

Direct Competitors Analysis

Goodwill

Goodwill is a charitable, non-profit organization which takes donations of clothes and household items. The brand is well known nationally and has two locations in Harrisonburg, both in convenient and busy areas. Goodwill has a very high level of awareness and is the sixth largest charity organization by revenues as of 2019 [66]. Because of Goodwill's size and similar activities, Goodwill is the most significant direct competitor for Mercy House.

Product:

Goodwill stores accept donations and sell a wide range of items including clothing, electronics, books, and household items. The selection of items offered by Goodwill and which they accept for donation is very similar to that of Mercy House.

Sales:

Goodwill had sales in Virginia of \$47.6 million in 2017 [63]. Growing at a rate of 3% per year would give an estimated sales of \$53.6 million in 2021. Goodwill has 36 locations in Virginia and two are in



Harrisonburg, therefore it is estimated that 5.6% of sales came from the Harrisonburg locations, equalling \$3,001,600 in sales generated from the two Harrisonburg locations.

Market Share:

Goodwill is searched for in Google Search 3.6x more than Mercy House in Harrisonburg, VA over the last 12 months [34]. 'Goodwill' is also searched for 4x more than the generic term 'thrift store' including in Google Maps searches [34].

Growth:

Goodwill shows annual growth of 3% in Virginia. [10]

Key Benefits:

- **Convenient Location:** Goodwill's locations make it easy for customers to visit the store to shop while they are out for other goods. It is also a convenient location for donating while someone is already out for their errands.
- **Easy Donation Process:** Goodwill will pick up furniture items from the customer's house. Goodwill also will occasionally have box trucks in more locations to accept donations. Their retail location accepts donations and has a drive up area to make the donations.

Positioning:

Goodwill is positioned against other retailers based on price. Compared to typical retailers like Target, Goodwill has much lower priced goods. Against other thrift stores, Goodwill is positioned by product class as the market leader and because they have a mission behind what they do. From a donating perspective, Goodwill is positioned by product class as the market leader as well based on their brand awareness and the ability to easily donate to them. In addition, the mission that Goodwill stands for helps to separate them from other competing thrift stores.

Advertising and Promotion Budget:

Goodwill spends an estimated \$60,000 on advertising and promotion.

Promotion Program Mix:

Goodwill International engages in digital marketing across many social networks and the Harrisonburg locations benefit from that promotion. The Harrisonburg locations do not have their own social media accounts or their own website. They occasionally have sales promotions to incentivize shopping. They also advertise their cause asking for donations of both money and items.

Message and Media Strategies:

Goodwill's messaging focuses on the people they help and the ways they are improving their community.

Strengths:

- Very well known brand
- Great merchandising in the stores
- Support of the international organization
- Good location
- Online sales

Weaknesses:

- While trying to impact the community, the brand is not local
- As a national organization and corporation, they may feel impersonal



Gift and Thrift

Gift and Thrift is a faith based thrift store in the Harrisonburg area. They accept donations for and sell the same range of products as Mercy House and donate a portion of their profits to Menonite Central Committee relief to encourage peace in 60 countries.

Product:

Gift and Thrift sells and accepts donations for clothing, household items, jewelry and much more. They also have a Booksavers store which offers a selection of books.

Key Benefits:

- High Quality Items Selection
- Ability to Shop Online

Positioning:

Gift and Thrift is positioned as a higher end thrift store with a good selection of items which are of high quality.

Advertising and Promotion Budget:

Gift and Thrift spends an estimated \$20,000 on advertising and promotion.

Promotion Program Mix:

Gift and Thrift engages in publicity through local faith organizations and engages in digital marketing through their Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as their website. They also offer a number of sales promotions all year and some seasonally.

Message and Media Strategies:

Their messaging has a very clean aesthetic and focuses on the products they have to offer. While they are a thrift store, their social media accounts portray a more high-end aesthetic. They also have messages encouraging people to donate as opposed to throwing an item away and these are often tied to seasonal events such as asking for wrapping paper near the holidays.

Strengths:

- Great store design and merchandising
- Local to Harrisonburg
- Social media promotional media
- Ability to buy books online

Weaknesses:

- Location is not convenient
- Limited donation drop-off hours
- Mission is not strongly connected to local community

Salvation Army

Salvation Army is an international faith-based service organization. They are the 11th largest charitable organization by total revenues [66]. Salvation Army has many volunteering opportunities year round and accepts donations of money and of goods. While they accept donations of goods, these are mainly given directly to those in need and they have a minimal thrift store presence. While there are no Salvation Army thrift stores near Harrisonburg, Salvation Army is a competitor to Mercy House in the donation of items and money.



Product:

Salvation Army has a wide range of products/activities for consumers to engage in. In addition to taking monetary donations, consumers can volunteer their time to the organization and can donate goods. Salvation Army accepts clothing, furniture, cars, household goods, and appliances. Items can be donated at drop-off locations, or via a free pickup service.

Key Benefits:

Connection to a good cause

Items donated directly to those in need

Positioning:

The Salvation Army is positioned as a rigorous and exceptional charity. They are positioned as an organization that acts at a local level while having a presence all around the world. Their positioning in donations is that they are going to be the best stewards of your donation compared to others.

Advertising and Promotion Budget:

The Virginia Salvation Army has an estimated promotional budget of \$90,000 which does not include the volunteer labor provided for their promotions.

Promotion Program Mix:

Salvation Army engages in advertising, digital marketing, and personal selling. Perhaps their most effective promotional activity is having a volunteer outside of Walmarts and other stores during the Holidays ringing a bell asking for donations.

Message and Media Strategies:

The message in their marketing efforts is to show how they make a difference and what makes them different. What makes them different is their level of organization and the amount of programs that they have to help people at both the local and international level.

Strengths:

- Exceptional volunteer workforce
- Effective promotional program
- Seasonal products that engage consumers

Weaknesses:

- Breadth of services and programs
- Bad publicity in recent years
-

Indirect Competitors Analysis

Facebook Marketplace

Facebook marketplace is a part of the Facebook app where people can post new or used items they want to resell - to other people searching on market. People can browse items listed by their area and search for specific items. The seller and buyer decide on prices and delivery methods.

Market Share:

FB Marketplace is used by 71% of internet users in the U.S. [58].

Growth:

Between 2019 and 2020, Facebook Marketplace doubled in consumer participation. In a survey done in 2019, 6% of respondents reported having bought from Facebook Marketplace. In 2020, that



number doubled to 12% of respondents reporting having bought on Facebook Marketplace [74].

Key Benefits:

- **Established Core Brand Recognition:** The Facebook app has an average of 1.88 billion daily active users as of March 2021 [29]. Many people are very comfortable, interactive, and trusting with the original social media app which made the Marketplace extension very easy to advertise. The Facebook Marketplace section option is incorporated on the home screen of FB so it's very easy to introduce to loyal users.
- **Choice of Sale Type:** FB Marketplace holds a variety of online sales. It can be B2C or C2C; one can have a business account and/or a personal account. People can choose to use shipping as delivery or coordinate delivery between buyer and seller.
- **Easy search:** FB Marketplace has options of categories and filters which makes it easy and convenient for users to find what they need.

Positioning:

FB Marketplace is known for a variety of items available on the online market and for the convenience of finding what they want and need through easy search and filter features on the app. It has options for people and businesses from all over the country/world to choose from; buyers can choose between new/used items, a variety of items including clothes, furniture, cars, sports gear, house/kitchenware, and many other goods.

Advertising and Promotion Budget:

Facebook (not specifically FB Marketplace) spent roughly 2.99 billion on advertising in 2021 [58].

Promotion Program Mix:

Facebook Marketplace is promoted inside of the Facebook app as the owners of the platform. Marketplace listings are promoted in the Facebook app and target users Facebook knows might be interested.

Message and Media Strategies:

The Facebook app incorporated the Marketplace feature on the main home screen, therefore, it is very apparent and easily accessible to any current Facebook user on the app. As of March 2020, 16% of Facebook users activities in the U.S. involved shopping on FB Marketplace [58].

Strengths:

- Excellent search experience
- Easy and convenient as it's integrated into an app people already use
- Strong market for sellers
- Good selection and prices for buyers

Weaknesses:

- Consumers distrust in the other party
- App cluttered with advertising in search results

eBay:

eBay is an online, e-commerce site for B2C and C2C sales. eBay has a variety of new and used items and can be sold through auctioning on the site. Their site has a variety of categories for buyers to browse through and find what they need at a scale of pricing options.



Sales:

eBay had sales of \$10.3 million in 2020.

Market Share

In 2017, eBay U.S. market share was 8% [74]

Growth

Reported growth of 3.4% in 2021 [74].

Key Benefits:

- Easy for consumers to navigate & find desired items
- Very wide variety of goods available

Positioning:

Ebay is the market leader in online consumer-to-consumer sales and auctions. They position themselves as having higher quality goods in great or even new conditions.

Advertising and Promotion Budget:

“The increase in sales and marketing expenses during the nine months ended September 30, 2021 compared to the same period in 2020 was primarily due to an increase in online and offline advertising expenses of approximately \$140 million.” [74].

Promotion Program Mix:

EBay sales and marketing expenses include advertising with coupons and rewards. Other marketing expenses include paid search, display ads, brand campaigns, and seller/buyer communications [74].

Message and Media Strategies:

EBay’s messaging strategy is mainly focused on hot items which are available on eBay such as Yeezy’s, new iPhone’s and PS5. These are marketing eBay as a place to buy premium items which are hard to find in traditional retailers. While antiques and secondhand items are found on eBay, these are not part of their advertising messaging.

Strengths:

- Brand awareness
- Strong variety & assortment of goods
- Easy to use

Weaknesses:

- Shipping times and shipping cost
- Trust of seller or buyer

Landfill

City of Harrisonburg Public Works as well as the Rockingham County Landfill are the two main entities in the area which accept trash and unwanted goods. In 2018, 3.2 million tons of clothing were thrown away in the United States [28]. This option for disposal is easy and for many people is the first-instinct because so many other items are thrown away. While many of the items thrown away would not be of a quality acceptable for donation to Mercy House, many items are thrown away which could be donated and resold making this a significant indirect competitor.

Product:

Consumers can throw smaller items into their normal trash cans and have them picked up with all other trash, or can visit their county’s dump to throw out larger items.



Sales:

The EPA reports 3,200,000 tons of clothing are thrown away each year. Assuming an equal distribution among the population, Rockingham represents 0.025% of the US population (83,757 [3] / 331,002,647 [74]) and thus an estimated 800 tons of clothing are thrown out per year in the Rockingham area.

Growth

Landfilled clothing (by weight) grew by 11% from 2010 to 2018, but slowed since 2015 to a growth rate of 3% per year [28].

Key Benefits

- **Throwing Away is Easy:** Throwing an item into your trash bin is far easier and more accessible to many people than donating or selling. Compared to other options, throwing an item away requires less effort. Many people are not aware of donation options and so throwing an item away is the only option they think of.
- **Throwing Away is Quick:** It only takes a few seconds to throw an item into a trash can and then the item is out of mind. Compared to other options, this speed creates instant gratification in the mind of the consumer for getting rid of items they don't want.

Positioning:

As a public utility, the landfill and public works are positioned on their product characteristics. They are differentiated based on the fact that trash is picked up regularly and conveniently. While Mercy House offers a pickup service, it requires planning and coordination separate from the weekly habit of trash pickup. This means that trash pickup is still easier than any other pickup service.

Advertising and Promotion Budget:

Rockingham County budgeted \$354,651 for promotional activities and actually spent \$311,257 in 2021 [63]. It is an estimated \$6,225 or 2% of all promotions would have been allocated to Public Works based on Public Works' total expenses as a proportion to all expenses.

Promotion Program Mix:

Signage and brochures make up the majority of the promotional mix.

Message and Media Strategies:

As a public utility, the messaging and media strategies are quite minimal and focus on brand awareness and image.

Strengths:

- Public awareness and frequency of use
- Ease
- Pickup service infrastructure

Weaknesses:

- Growth of environmental concerns
- Consumer's feeling wasteful
- Perceived as dirty or gross
- Lack of substantial promotion



Buyer Analysis

Market Segments

College Students

Demographic: 18-25 year olds

Geographic: Harrisonburg

Behavioral: Loyal to organizations and clubs

Psychographic: Value local college town experience, seeks community involvement

Young Middle Income

Demographic: 22-35 years old, income of about \$45,000, single, white-collar

Geographic: Harrisonburg or Rockingham County area

Behavioral: Brand-name shopping

Psychographic: Social media active, early in career

Local Residents

Demographic: 22-50 years old, income of about \$35,000, single, blue-collar jobs

Geographic: Harrisonburg or Rockingham County area

Behavioral: Stay local

Psychographic: Saves money

Upper Middle-Income Families

Demographic: 38-65 years old, average income \$50,000-\$120,000, married with kids, college degree

Geographic: Harrisonburg or Rockingham County area, nice neighborhoods

Behavioral: Brand-name shopping

Psychographic: Established career, planning for retirement

Low-Income Families

Demographic: 35-55-year-olds with children, Income less than \$61,000

Geographic: Rockingham County, Harrisonburg

Behavioral: Bargain shopper, shops paycheck to paycheck

Psychographic: Religious, seeks community events

Environmentalists:

Demographic: 18- 35 years old

Geographic: Rockingham County, Harrisonburg

Behavioral: Recycle regularly, loyal to activist organizations

Psychographic: Seeks environmental events, volunteers

User Profile

Demographic

- Age: 22-50 years old
- Gender: Male and Female
- Income: \$30,000- \$100,000
- Family status: Married or single

Behavioral

- Loyal to community engagement and events
- Active members of social organizations
- Favorites particular brand-names

Geographic

- Rockingham County
- Harrisonburg

Psychographic

- Volunteers regularly
- Early to established career

Customer Decision Process

1 Problem Recognition:

A customer recognizes that their furniture, clothing, home goods and other items are no longer useful to them. They feel obligated to get rid of these unused items from their homes.

2 Information Search

Consumers then begin to search for ways to get rid of their unwanted items. Their information search may include recalling stores and/or charities that take donations. Search can consist of asking family and friends, looking online or searching on social media.

3 Alternative Evaluation

The consumer then evaluates all give away options; there are generally a lot of alternative options for people to get rid of their unwanted items. Donations, selling, giving away and throwing away are all possible options.

4 Purchase Decision

The customer decides on an alternative based on accessibility, convenience and their impact

5 Post Purchase Evaluation

After the removal of unwanted goods, the individual evaluates whether they are either satisfied or dissatisfied with their actions taken to get rid of their items. If satisfied, their action is repeated when the same problem arises.



Who Donates?

Mercy House has two target markets that donate goods to the organization. These two markets are Families and college student. The overall profile has an income between \$30,000-\$100,000. Families and students that have a mid to high disposable income and are more likely to donate than those with very low incomes. Millennials and Gen-Z generations are both high contributors to donation efforts. The top donors are adults aged 18 - 35 year of age and millennials were more likely to donate clothing to... stores such as Goodwill and the Salvation Army [78].

Who Influences the Donation Decision?

The convenience and accessibility are big influences to a person's motivation to donate. If the opportunity cost of processes other than donating become large the individual may not donate at all. Understanding, or having the knowledge of the benefits of donating can also be a primary influencer for individuals to donate. This influencer can also trump other factors against the donation process.

Who Makes the Decision?

The consumer or the person willing to donate. After information search and evaluation a customer may be more inclined to donate to an organization with a defined cause.

Factors that Influence the Donating Decision

Demographic:

- Income
- Household Size
- Age / Birth Era
- Race/Ethnicity

Geographic:

- Density (urban, suburban, etc.)
- Neighborhoods with well-established homes
- Donation location (location)

Psychographic:

- Values (believers)
- Lifestyle (sustainable, charity-oriented, etc.)
- Needs (low priced yet quality products)
- Opinions (religious, more empathetic towards charity causes)

Behavioral:

- Repeated volunteering/ community involvement
- Loyal to organizations

Decision Making

Customer behavior is characterized by limited problem solving. Choosing to donate is most productive when they do not require high involvement or extensive research.

Donation can be both low-involvement and high-involvement decision making. The physical act of donating is typically low-involvement, however finding items to donate and deciding to donate them is typically high-involvement.

Buyer Personas

General Buyer Persona

Student Sarah



Background / Demographics

Full Time SMAD student at James Madison University

- Sarah is 20 years old and a sophomore in college.
- Sarah lives in an off-campus apartment with 3 friends.
- Sarah works at a local restaurant a few nights a week where she makes minimum wage plus tips.
- Sarah is also the vice president of her sorority on campus.

Real Quotes

About goals, challenges, etc.

- "I love helping other people and giving back to the community."
- "I love to be creative, so I hope to get a graphic design job out of college."
- "I love buying new clothes, but I really need to save my money."

Identifiers

Communication preferences?
Social media platforms?

- Sarah prefers to communicate with friends and family via text message
- Instagram
- Tik Tok
- YouTube

Goals / Challenges

What does this person struggle with in relation to meeting goals? What serves as a roadblock for this person's success?

- Sarah has a busy schedule and sometimes forgets to take time for herself.
- Sarah loves to shop so she often over-spends.
- Sarah is a busy student with a part time job.

What can we do?

...to help our persona achieve their goals?
...to help our persona overcome their challenges?

- We can make Sarah aware of the low prices that Mercy House offers.
- We can promote the Mercy House foundation and where the profits of the thrift store go to.
- We can promote the easy donation process.

Marketing Message

How can you describe your solution to have the biggest impact on your persona?

- We can encourage Sarah to donate goods during "spring cleaning" season. Sarah is very organized, and likely to purge at the end of a season.
- We can emphasize Mercy House's charity because Sarah loves to help other people and give to her community.
- We can promote how easy it is to donate to Mercy House.
- We can encourage students to shop at Mercy House because of the very affordable prices.

General Buyer Persona

Julia Jones



Background / Demographics

Part time BIS student at James Madison University, part time waitress

- Julia is 28 years old and lives in a Harrisonburg apartment.
- Julia grew up in Harrisonburg and enjoys playing tennis with her friends on her days off.
- Julia struggles financially because she makes \$20k/year while paying for school.

Real Quotes

About goals, challenges, etc.

- "I know money is tight now, but my hard work will pay off soon"
- "I grew up next to JMU, I'm happy I'm finally a Duke"
- "I want to give back to Harrisonburg because this is my community"

Identifiers

Communication preferences?
Social media platforms?

- Facetime/texting
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Youtube
- Local News TV

Goals / Challenges

What does this person struggle with in relation to meeting goals? What serves as a roadblock for this person's success?

- Julia doesn't have enough money to do fun things she enjoys.
- Julia doubts herself in succeeding in school.
- Julia doesn't have time to help give back to her community and feels guilty,

What can we do?

...to help our persona achieve their goals?
...to help our persona overcome their challenges?

- Tell Julia about Mercy House's items including clothes, school supplies, and furniture so she can save money.
- Tell and show Julia about how Mercy House gives back to the community that she values.

Marketing Message

How can you describe your solution to have the biggest impact on your persona?

- Create advertisements for Mercy House to educate Julia of the variety of items Mercy House offers at low prices.
- Promote Mercy House's brand and purpose to the Harrisonburg community – so Julia could be satisfied with giving back to her home community,
- Promote how the donation process is simple and easy – Julia doesn't need to sacrifice time.

Gabriel - Father



Background / Demographics

Full-time employee for Harrisonburg Construction

- 34 year old and has been doing construction in Harrisonburg for 3 years
- Married, father of three
- Gabriel and his family live in a small, single-family apartment located 10 minutes from downtown
- Gabriel often feels as if he's struggling financially, as he only makes around \$30,000 annually.

Real Quotes

About goals, challenges, etc.

- "My children and family are the most important thing in my life, and I would do anything for them"
- "I want to ensure that my kids don't miss out on opportunities in life due to financial reasons"

Identifiers

Communication preferences?
Social media platforms?

- Gabriel communicates with his managers, co-workers, etc. through text and calling
- Email
- Facebook
- LinkedIn

Marketing Message

How can you describe your solution to have the biggest impact on your persona?

- We can bring more awareness to the Mercy House and their vision to make Gabriel aware of the local thrift store by promoting more within family environments
- Emphasize Mercy House's involvement with children and the wide variety of products (clothing, toys, sports equipment, books) they offer at a low price to allow families to still maintain quality while staying affordable

Goals / Challenges

What does this person struggle with in relation to meeting goals? What serves as a roadblock for this person's success?

- Gabriel feels as if he often doesn't have enough time to spend with his kids after work and other tasks in his daily life
- He wants to provide his kids with a quality lifestyle while also being financially stable

What can we do?

...to help our persona achieve their goals?
...to help our persona overcome their challenges?

- Bring awareness of the variety of quality products offered at the Mercy House to meet Gabriel and his families' needs
- Promote Mercy House's consistently low prices (i.e., most items \$1)



Primary Research



Rating

4 Reviews

“The prices were awesome!!”

“Quite a good selection on knickknacks and furniture... Associates are very friendly”

“Prices are very reasonable. However, a lot of the items are very worn or in poor condition”

“Best if you’re looking for nick nacks and clothes”

“Y’all need to go! This little store has some treasures at the right price!”

“Whoever does the displays, great job!!! They always look so nice and then I end up buying the display outfit when I ONLY came in to look.”

“Our first time there yesterday. It’s a very nice store; well organized and reasonably priced.”



2,426

Likes

193 Reviews



Rating

193 Reviews

“Usually find something to buy”

“I enjoy going to the store, the lady that works there is very friendly and helpful”

“Very nice had a lot of good things to look at”



FOURSQUARE

“This is the best thrift store in Virginia. Best prices, best finds and a good cause!”

“Tons of glassware. I could have spent another hour or two in here”



World Orgs

“Love the items, includes clothes, furniture, household items and decorations, children’s clothes. Everything is reasonably priced.”

“I have Mixed Feelings about Mercy House that Will be kept within me.I think they are an Okay Non Profit organization ... needs More Help within the Staff.”



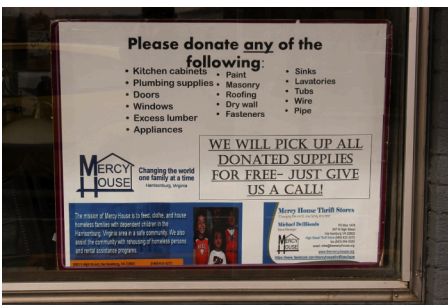
Promotional Program Situation Analysis

Mercy House has had limited promotions in the past. Their past and current promotional mix is largely social media, sponsorship and traditional media. They've also received publicity through news articles. They have not spent a significant amount of money on promotions in the past. Their promotions have used a rational messaging strategy, sharing information and relatable messages. Their media strategies include the use of social media in order to create awareness and interest in donating as well as shopping, the use of traditional advertising in order to create awareness of Mercy House's mission, and the use of sponsorship to raise money and to build awareness of Mercy House.

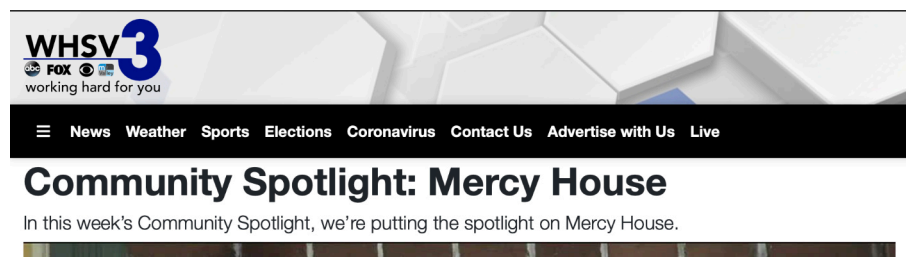
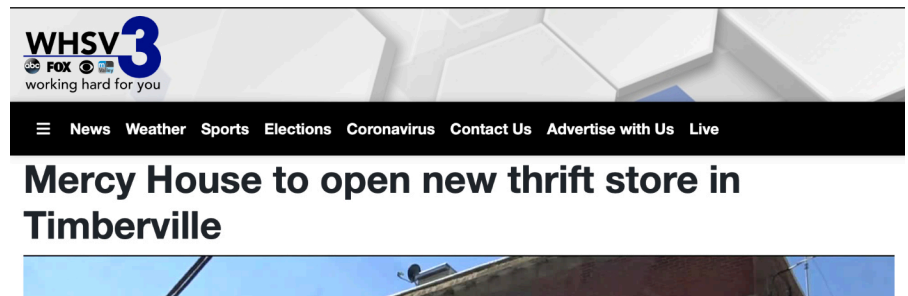
Social Media



Traditional



Public Relations and Publicity





Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning

Primary Segment

Families who have an interest in helping the community and are capable of donating goods or money. They live in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, VA.

- **Demographics:** 40+ years old couples with older children. These families have one or more children that attend schools in the local area. They are middle/upper middle class with a household income over \$50,000.
- **Psychographics:** Families are active community members, participate in local events, and attend school gatherings. The families love their community and like to give back.
- **Behavioral:** Shops for name brand products and don't go to secondhand stores for clothing or furniture (Buy new rather than used).

This segment was chosen as our primary target market because this segment makes up 58% of the area served by Mercy House [57]; and, this segment is responsible for the majority of charitable donations [57]. In 2018, the average family with household income of \$50,000 and more, gave anywhere from \$3,296 to \$21,364 to charity in a year [32]. Furthermore, 69% of Americans donate to charity, and 18% of all Americans that donate prefer to give to family and youth causes [70]. The Mercy House would fall under family and youth causes because of the support they provide to homeless families in need. Each year, Americans produce 16 million tons of clothing waste, which is about half of total plastic waste [77]. This is a prime opportunity for advertising more sustainability as well as promoting a charitable cause.

Secondary Segment

College students that live off of campus.

- **Demographics:** 18-25 year old JMU students. These students come from middle and upper-middle class families but have lower personal incomes.
- **Psychographics:** Students who are active in university based organizations and clubs. They have a local community pride and consider Harrisonburg their second home/ home away from home.
- **Behavioral:** These students follow trending brands of clothing and have impulsive purchase decisions. They often buy off-brand items to save money. They spend money mostly on temporary, short-term wants and needs.

This segment was chosen as our secondary market as research suggests that people with more discretionary income donate more [72]. Because this segment does not have very much discretionary income [45] compared to our other target market, so this a secondary target market. This market is still a very important segment as our research showed that this segment comprises nearly 30% of the population in the area served by Mercy House [57]. This segment is also more likely to get involved with community events due to their involvement in on-campus organizations and clubs.



Positioning

Positioning by Attributes and Benefits

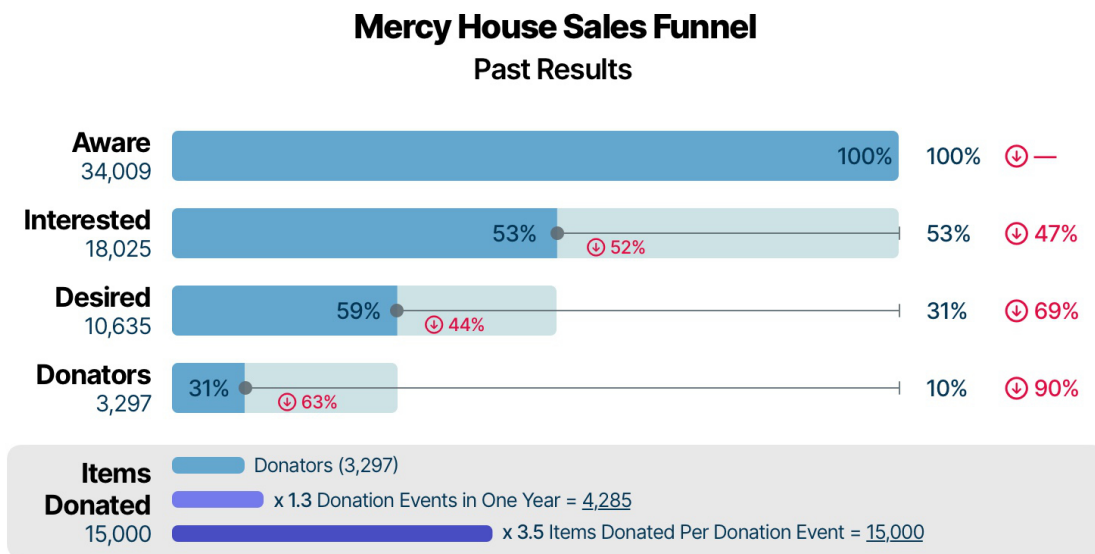
Positioning Mercy House by product attributes and benefits will enable our marketing efforts to drive customers to donate. Customers will receive personal benefits, provide resources to help the community, and spread the word about Mercy House.

This strategy was chosen because of its effectiveness in relation to a cause based organization and because of how it will interact with our competitors. Linking the Mercy House brand to it's purpose will make consumers more likely to become involved at each stage of the AIDA model. Mercy House can differentiate from these competitors by using this positioning strategy because direct competitors do not use this.

Mercy House's Current Sales Funnel

Mercy House currently receives 10,000 to 15,000 items donated annually. Industry data tells us that each person who donates, donates 1.3 times in a year and each donation is on average 3.5 items [43]. Therefore, for each person who has moved to action, they can be expected to donate 4.6 items over one year. Based on this figure, the 15,000 donated items come from roughly 3,300 donors (individuals in the 'action' stage of the consumer journey).

Based on these numbers, Mercy House's sales funnel has been estimated and is shown in the following figure:



Industry sales conversion data was used to estimate the amount of consumers in awareness, interest, and desire stages of the sales funnel. An estimated 34k people are currently aware of Mercy House. 53% of those people are interested, equaling ~18k people. 59% Of those interested, develop desire, equaling more than 10k. And finally, 31% of individuals with a desire to donate, actually follow through, which is our initial figure of 3,297 individuals.

These represent a baseline when creating goals and measuring success



Marketing Goal

Increase donations to the thrift store or building supply store that will result in an increase of sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.

Campaign Theme

We are Family

The campaign will communicate the vital mission of Mercy House, to help homeless families with children. The focus will be to connect the target audience to their community and create empathy for the members of the community who are going through a rough time. Focusing on families and children will create empathy and show how important Mercy House's work is. Having grabbed the audience's attention and created a perceived sense of need, the campaign will be focused on donations and how donations will help support their community. Community and family create the core foundation of this campaign

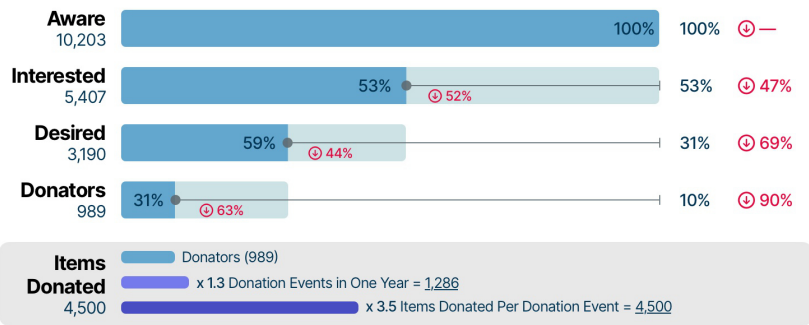
Communication Goals and Strategies

Communication Goals

1. Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. *This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.*
2. Increase awareness of the types and quality of donations needed to support homeless families in need by 60% among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023, to reduce items wasted by 40%.
3. Increase interest in donating to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 7,210) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 1st, 2023, measured by click-through rates and response rates.
4. Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.
5. Increase donations to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items) by November 30th, 2023 in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.



Mercy House Sales Funnel Campaign Goal (2023) - Increases



The chart to right shows the communication goals in terms of a sales funnel. Starting with the goal of ~10k people awareness, and ending with a total increase of 4,500 items donated, reaching the goal of a 40% increase in sales compared to current.

Communication Strategies

Traditional Advertising

Local radio and print advertising (such as local newspapers and magazines) will be utilized to increase awareness of Mercy House mission and increase donations to the thrift store.

Digital Marketing

A website, email campaigns, and Google Ads will be used in order to increase awareness and interest for Mercy House brand.

Social Media Marketing

Social media advertising through Facebook and Instagram will be utilized to engage our target audience and increase awareness of Mercy House mission as well as increase consumer interest in donating.

Support Media

A combination of transit, place-based, signage, and promotional product advertising will be used to increase brand awareness and reach a larger share of our target audience.

Direct Marketing

Informational postcards, monthly newsletters, and automated text-response systems will be utilized to increase and retain brand awareness for the Mercy House as well as the desire to donate.

Sales Promotion

To increase interest in donating, competitions, punch card reward systems, and local business partnerships will be conducted.

Personal Selling

Partnerships with JMU student housing as well as follow-up communication with Mercy House consumers will be implemented to increase the number of quality donations and retain interest in Mercy House brand.

Public Relations & Publicity

Radio publicity stories and write-ups to local newspapers and publications will be utilized to raise awareness of Mercy House mission and outreach.

Sponsorship

Partnerships with both JMU organizations and Harrisonburg restaurants will be formed. In addition, sponsorship events will take place to increase Mercy House donations and mission awareness.



Creative Brief

Basic Problem to Address

There is a lack of awareness of Mercy House within the target audiences. The two segments that have been identified have little-to-no knowledge of Mercy House as a place to donate goods, a place to shop for resold goods, or of Mercy House's mission.

Communication Goals

1. Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. *This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.*
2. Increase awareness of the types and quality of donations needed to support homeless families in need by 60% among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023, to reduce items wasted by 40%.
3. Increase interest in donating to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 7,210) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 1st, 2023, measured by click-through rates and response rates.
4. Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.
5. Increase donations to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items) by November 30th, 2023 in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.

Target Audiences

Primary: Families in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County.

Demographics: 30+ years old couples with older children and are middle/upper-middle class.

Psychographics: Families are active community members, participate in local events, and love their community.

Behavioral: Shop for name-brand products and don't go to secondhand stores for clothing or furniture (Buy new rather than used).

Secondary: College students within the Harrisonburg area.

Demographics: 18-25 year old college students in the Harrisonburg area. These students come from middle and upper-middle-class families but have lower incomes.

Psychographics: Students are active in university-based organizations and clubs and call Harrisonburg home.

Behavioral: Students who follow trending brands of clothing, impulsive purchase decisions. Buys off-brand items to save money. Spends money mostly on temporary, short-term, wants/needs.

What They Currently Think

The target audience wants to help their community, but isn't sure how. Even if they've heard of Mercy House, many don't know what Mercy House does or how easy it is to help. When getting rid of items, they think of Goodwill and of Facebook Marketplace

What We Want Them to Think

The goal is to have them know about Mercy House's mission to help homeless families, to feel empathy for that cause, and to know that Mercy House needs donations of quality items in order to fulfill its mission. They would know that by donating, they are helping homeless families.

Product Positioning

Emphasize the local social responsibility of Mercy House, which is the main competitive advantage for attracting donations, and the convenience of the donation process.

Campaign Theme

We Are Family

Family Sticks Together. When members of your community go through hard times, you can help Mercy House give these families with children a home, goods that they need, and a path to employment.

Our Story

Focus on the idea of family, emphasizing the perspective of a family in need and on the child who doesn't deserve to be homeless. Mercy House has helped many homeless Harrisonburg families through difficult times. This will encourage the target audience to empathize and take action through donation.

Creative Considerations

Tone

Inspiring and serious tones to convey trust and personability to the audience.

Colors

Blue to convey trust and purpose. Yellow to convey hope. Green to signify kindness, generosity, and compassion.

Copy Text

- "No child should be homeless. Help keep families together."
- "Make the Difference – Donate"
- "Donate clothes, furniture and other household items in resellable condition. The sale of your donated items helps Mercy House give a family a home"

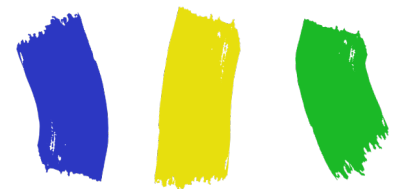
Advertising Appeal

Empathy and Unity

The advertising appeal of empathy is to convey a situation that allows the audience to understand the homeless families' situation that they'll probably never experience, and how they can create a positive impact to help those families. The appeal of unity is to make the target audience connect to their purpose within the Harrisonburg community.

Message Strategy

Mercy House creates opportunities for individuals and families to donate to Mercy House, which supports homeless families. Incorporating emotions of community unity and empathy into the messages while also promoting the easy donation process will strengthen the interest and desire for potential donors to contribute





Creative Executional Framework:

Straight-sell / factual message and slice-of-life advertising will be the best choice of framework for Mercy House's audience. Strait-sell advertisements would be useful for print and radio advertisements to inform the audience of Mercy House's actions with donation proceeds and what the donation process is. Slice-of-life advertisements would be included in social media posts and video ads of current and past Mercy House to help the audience visualize the real problems of the homeless families.

Rationale

Strait-sell and Slice-of-life are the best choices because of the industry Mercy House is in; also because the emotional appeals and advertising information will be effective when connecting to the target audience. Using strait-sell is necessary to form strong brand awareness of Mercy House's community impact and convenient donation process. Using Slice-of-life will be effective for creating awareness of the real problems of homeless families and drive interest and desire to donate to help the cause.

Creative Tactics:

Traditional Advertising

- Print Ads (posters, brochures, business cards, newspapers, magazines)
- Radio

Digital Marketing

- Emails
- Increase website interaction
- Google search and display ads

Social Media Marketing

- Facebook & Instagram posts, stories, hashtags to expand awareness and enforce promotions

Support Media

- Harrisonburg bus and Bridgforth Stadium ads
- Short-stories
- Posters in Mercy House
- Stickers, pens, t-shirts

Direct Marketing

- Direct mail (postcards, letters)
- Email newsletters and text messages

Sales Promotion

- Partner with local businesses
- Give-aways and rewards (punch cards, t-shirts, stickers)

Personal Selling

- Connect with local housing complexes (Harrison, Squire Hill, Hills, and on-campus living)
- Calling and texting potential donors to build and enforce relationships

Public Relations and Publicity

- Success stories in "Daily News Record" and radio interviews
- Events promoted in local businesses, "Valley Weekender", "Rocktown Weekly", "The Breeze", "Potty Mouth".

Sponsorship

- College organizations and clubs
- Jack Browns, Bella Luna, Village Juice & Kitchen
- Events with other local non-profits



Media Plan: Traditional Advertising

Traditional advertising will be used to achieve the following two communication goals:

- Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. *This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.*
- Increase interest in donating to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 7,210) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 1st, 2023, measured by click-through rates and response rates.

Traditional advertising is an important marketing tool that Empact will utilize in order to achieve the Mercy Houses' desired impression and awareness levels. The use of traditional advertising will also accomplish the campaign's communication goals.

Empact will achieve these goals through a combination of radio and print advertising. Advertising will focus on reaching a wide audience to introduce the Mercy House and their mission. There will also be an emphasis on the need for donations in an effort to gain awareness.

Following the campaign theme, We are Family, advertisements will be centered around the emotional appeal of families in need and relating that to a local community's responsibility to help. The stories told through traditional advertising efforts will relate this theme and use appeals to gain viewer's attention. Traditional Advertising focus within local outlets which will allow Empact to target audiences geographically. Advertising will primarily target families that live in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County.

Traditional Advertising Objectives

Objective 1: Utilize print and radio advertisements targeted towards the local community to reach 4,000 people and increase awareness of Mercy House and their mission by 6% (by 2,160 people) by October 15th, 2023.

- **Strategy 1:** implement radio advertisements with local Harrisonburg stations to bring awareness to Mercy House's mission, news, and upcoming events
 - **Tactic 1:** Engage in bi-weekly interview sessions that communicate the need for help and donations within the community on WKCY Harrisonburg radio station for 15 minutes bi-weekly on Monday mornings.
 - **Tactic 2:** Implement monthly advertisements that promote recent Mercy House happenings, upcoming events, and ways to donate on WSVA News/Talk.
 - **Tactic 3:** Promote bi-weekly radio advertisements using an empathic appeal that communicates the implications of the community not taking action to help out those in need on Rewind 105.1
- **Strategy 2:** Create print advertisements to be placed in local community restaurants to promote Mercy House and their mission.
 - **Tactic 1:** create poster advertisements to be placed on restaurant walls or bulletin boards
 - **Tactic 2:** create informational brochures to be placed in newspapers and at the register within the restaurant
 - **Tactic 3:** provide Mercy House business cards to be placed at the host stand and register within restaurants



Objective 2: Promote Mercy House’s mission and need for donations through newspapers and magazines to reach 3,500 people in order to increase awareness of Mercy House and their mission by 6% (by 1,890) by November 1st, 2023.

- **Strategy 1:** Communicate recent Mercy House news and the need for donations through The Daily News Record in Harrisonburg
 - **Tactic 1:** Place advertisements within the newspaper that provide information on how readers can make donations
 - **Tactic 2:** provide columns that contain personal stories of those positively impacted by Mercy House, their mission, and the community
 - **Tactic 3:** promote upcoming fundraising and awareness events hosted by Mercy House
- **Strategy 2:** Make a monthly appearance in Downtown Magazine of Harrisonburg to promote Mercy House and inspire viewers and readers to donate
 - **Tactic 1:** create visually appealing ads using yellow and blue colors
 - **Tactic 2:** Have readers text “MERCYHOUSE” to 22801 to learn more
 - **Tactic 3:** utilize photographs of children and families impacted to create strong feelings of emotion within readers

Budget

Traditional Advertising has been allocated \$1,800 of the total \$20,000 budget. Spending here represents 9% of total spending.

Medium	Media Vehicle	Total \$	% of Traditional Advertising Budget	% of Total Budget
Radio Ads:	WKCY	\$300	16.7%	1.5%
	WSVA News/Talk	\$350	19.4%	1.75%
	Rewind 105.1	\$300	16.7%	1.5%
Print Ads:				
	Posters	\$100	5.6%	0.5%
	Brochures	\$150	8.3%	0.75%
	Business cards	\$50	2.8%	0.25%
	The Daily News Record	\$250	13.9%	1.25%
	Downtown Magazine	\$300	16.7%	1.5%
Total Traditional Advertising		\$1,800	100%	9%

Rationale

Objective 1

The traditional advertising objectives, strategies, and tactics specified will aid Mercy House in achieving their communication goals for a variety of reasons. By promoting through radio advertisements, Mercy House will reach their target audience of families in the Harrisonburg and Rockingham County area who



possess the traits, demographics, and characteristics found in potential donors.

Objective 2

Through advertising posters, brochures, and business cards in local restaurants, Mercy House will gain the awareness and interest of local community members who have the resources to make a positive difference within the community by making donations. Through The Daily News Record and Downtown Magazine, Mercy House can communicate personal, emotionally heartwarming or heart wrenching stories and information to assist in achieving their communication objectives of increasing their awareness by 40% as well as their donations by 40%.

Budget

The majority of the traditional advertising budget has been allocated to radio advertisements as they will be executed more than once a week between the combination of the three radio stations. The rest of the budget will be allocated to print media, with the majority funding the advertisements, columns, and promotions in The Daily News Record and Downtown Magazine to establish a high frequency of reach within the target audience of families in the community.

Deliverables

Print



You can help.





Radio

“No child should be homeless. That's why the Mercy House is dedicated to helping families in need from the Harrisonburg area. We think of our community as one big family, and you can help. By donating your used items in good condition, you stock the shelves of our thrift store, allowing us to provide families with items they need and fund our operations. Visit us online www.themercyhouse.org and donate to one of our stores this spring season.”

Item	Description
Gender	Male
Length	15 seconds
Target Demographic	Families in Harrisonburg
Character/Narrator	Mercy House employee
Vocal Direction	Empathetic, encouraging, serious
Suggested Music	Soft, mellow
Suggested Sound Effects	Kid's voice "thank you"

Item	Description
Gender	Male
Length	25 seconds
Target Demographic	Harrisonburg families and college students
Character/Narrator	Dad
Vocal Direction	Enthusiastic, upbeat, dramatic
Suggested Music	upbeat
Suggested Sound Effects	cheery, nature sounds; dramatic blizzard

(cheery, nature sound FX playing) Happy Spring! Birds are chirping, the sun is shining, and the days are getting longer. Except... (dramatic blizzard sound FX start)... remember all of those winter purchases you made? The tall stack of sweatshirts in your closet... the old winter boots cluttered by the front door... the heavy jackets filling up your coat rack... (upbeat tone of voice & happy music starts) Well, the Mercy House offers a free pick up service to rid you of all your clutter. Donate lightly worn clothes, household goods, and more to help families in your local community! Happy spring cleaning, Harrisonburg. Visit www.themercyhouse.org for more information.

Media Plan: Digital Marketing

To effectively reach the target audience in a cost effective manner, Digital Marketing is the primary method of advertising for the campaign, accounting for 20% of total spending.

Digital Advertising will be used in order to achieve the following three communication objectives:

- Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. *This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.*
- Increase awareness of the types and quality of donations needed to support homeless families in need by 60% among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023, to reduce items wasted by 40%.
- Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.

These objectives will be accomplished through a combination of email marketing, Google search ads, and Pay-per-click ads. In order to efficiently increase awareness, advertising will be targeted using demographic and behavioral variables. To accomplish the goal of increasing desire, retargeting will reach consumers who already have awareness in order to move them through desire, and further in the consumer journey.



Digital Marketing will allow for precise targeting, allowing for more effective and cost-efficient advertising. Advertising will be targeted geographically to Harrisonburg and surrounding areas, previously defined as the target of this campaign.

Centered around the campaign theme of family, these advertisements will use emotional appeal to grab attention and create desire in the consumer's mind. Effective storytelling will be employed through the use of strong imagery and effective copy. In order to create awareness, the story should focus on the needs of families and create an emotional link between their need, and the consumer's ability to donate. In order to create desire, the story should focus on the positive aspects of donation and the practical connection between a consumer's action and its consequence for the community.

Digital Marketing Objectives

Objective 1: Create digital marketing advertising campaigns that reach 5,000 new and potential customers in our target market in order to increase awareness of the Mercy House mission by October 15th, 2023

- **Strategy 1:** Increase website interaction by 50% by launching and amending the exciting website platform.
 - **Tactic 1:** Make the website more user-friendly by decreasing the number of external links that connect to other Mercy House websites
 - **Tactic 2:** Create interactive visuals in which customers can participate in the website experience
 - **Tactic 3:** Having the Mercy House be presented with a search is made for thrift stores within the geographical area
- **Strategy 2:** Develop informational mail campaigns to existing and potential customers about donation needs using a pulsing strategy
 - **Tactic 1:** Customer outreach to those that currently shop at any of the Mercy House Stores or have expressed interest
 - **Tactic 2:** Provide website links and informational pamphlets about the quality of donations that are needed by Mercy House
 - **Tactic 3:** Call to action for email content and communications in regards to Mercy House

Objective 2: Reach 4,000 consumers in the secondary target market (college students in Harrisonburg area) from March 1st, 2023 through November 23rd, 2023 (Thanksgiving) using a pulsing strategy to increase awareness

- **Strategy 1:** Use Google Search Ads to reach consumers who are searching terms related to Mercy House and drive them to the Mercy House landing page
 - **Tactic 1:** Use Google Ads tools to target searches for competitors and related topics. These should include search terms for “goodwill”, “gift and thrift”, “donate clothes”, “donate items”, and more.
 - **Tactic 2:** Use Google Ads tools to target searches for behavioral factors such as searches related to “help my community”, “homelessness”, “clean my house”, “clean my closet”, and more.
 - **Tactic 3:** Create strong copy which will quickly create an emotional appeal, and have a strong call-to-action which directs users to a custom landing page on the Mercy House website in order to drive the customer further through the consumer journey.
- **Strategy 2:** Advertise using Google Display Ads to reach consumers and drive them to the Mercy



House website

- **Tactic 1:** Use Google Ads tools to target consumers who meet the geographic, demographic and behavioral criteria in order to only advertise to those who are likely to engage. This should include targeting students of JMU and Bridgewater as demographic factors, and students who are moving, engaged in community service projects, or are interested in making a positive impact, among others.
- **Tactic 2:** Use contextual targeting to present display ads on sites which mention charities, sites with topics of donations and homelessness, and sites about cleaning and organizing.
- **Tactic 3:** Use remarketing to present display ads to consumers who had recently searched for Mercy House, recently visited Mercy House’s website, or who searched for related terms recently.
- **Tactic 4:** Create a visually appealing display ad with colors and imagery that connects with the audience to quickly create an emotional appeal and have a strong call-to-action which directs users to a custom landing page on the Mercy House website.

Objective 3: Direct all advertising to a custom landing page designed to move people from awareness and interest to desire and action, boosting ad conversions by 15%

- **Strategy 1:** Provide information which develops the need for Mercy House donations and Mercy House’s work
 - **Tactic 1:** Landing page should show the featured story from Mercy House blog about a family which was helped by Mercy House and the page should explain how donation made that possible
 - **Tactic 2:** Create a clear call to action which encourages donation, through an emotional appeal related to the campaign theme
- **Strategy 2:** Create opportunities to connect with Mercy House and develop a desire to donate
 - **Tactic 1:** Prominently display a phone number to text or call to engage with Mercy House through our Personal Selling plan
 - **Tactic 2:** Allow visitors to find Mercy House on social media and sign up for the newsletter

Budget

Digital Advertising has been allocated \$4,750 of the total \$20,000 budget. Spending here represents 23.75% of total spending.

Medium	Media Vehicle	Total \$	% of Total Budget
Google Ads	Search Ads	\$1,775	8.9%
	Display Ads	\$1,775	8.9%
Email Marketing	MailChimp	\$1,200	6%
Total Digital Marketing	-	\$4,750	23.75%



Rationale

Objective 1

The decision to increase Mercy House's website interaction was chosen because 86% of consumers prefer actionable, visual content (41 interactive marketing statistics (+ trends to watch for)). The engagement on videos with interactive links is double compared to those that are not interactive (41 interactive marketing statistics (+ trends to watch for)). To ensure that the target market is finding the Mercy House website, SEO will be used based on geography. Out of all mobile searches, 30% pertain to a specific location, and 76% of individuals visit a searched local business within 24 hours (Ong). Furthermore, between 2017 and 2019, searches that include "near me" or "where to..." have increased over 200% (Ong). Informational pamphlets will be used to promote awareness and understanding. According to Venngage, about 33% of respondents stated that they read infographics over any other visual element (Khoja). For Mercy House, email marketing will be used as it has been proven effective for many companies. According to HubSpot, \$42 is generated for every \$1 spent by marketers on email ad campaigns (Kirsch). More so, 78% of marketers reported that there have been recent increases in email engagement in the past year (Kirsch).

Objective 2

In order to ultimately increase donations to the Mercy House, it is important to start with increasing awareness of the Mercy House. Digital Marketing is a great means for increasing awareness of a brand [24]. The two target markets are sufficiently different that the secondary market of college students needs its own set of objectives. This is why objective 2 is centered on this market. Objective 2 is targeted to college students in the Harrisonburg area as supported in the Target Market selection previously. This geographic area is important as that makes donation more practical, and thus more likely. The figure provided for the objective's reach is calculated based on budget allocation and a cost-per-click of \$0.12, which was based on industry research [24]. It is also supported by the sales-funnel estimates and how much awareness needs to be generated in order to increase ultimate donations. The schedule for this objective was chosen to begin two months before students move out. This gives time for awareness to build and convert to action before students move out, which is when they have items to donate [22]. A pulsing strategy throughout the year will be utilized in coordination with other marketing tasks such as events, and around seasonal trends. With the goal of increasing awareness, a pulsing strategy is more effective than other schedules [48]. These activities will run through November 23rd, Thanksgiving, because this is the last major holiday and a good time for people to consider charities. This also is because awareness generated after this point will not contribute meaningfully to donations in 2023, which is the campaign's goal.

Strategy 1 is to use Google Search ads which are great for generating awareness. According to a Harvard Business Review article, modest spend can increase awareness by 30% [27]. Tactics for this strategy are critically important to reaching that figure. Targeting based on different factors (tactics 1 and 2) can greatly increase the effectiveness of search ad spend. Additionally, using a custom landing page on the Mercy House website will allow for an optimal consumer experience and move the consumer along the consumer buying journey [75]. Strategy 2 is to use Google Display ads which are also great for generating awareness and interest. Again, using Google's tools for targeting will greatly enhance the effectiveness of ad spend here, which is the focus of tactics 1 and 2. Tactic 3, remarketing, is important as remarketing can increase conversion from awareness to interest by 43% [61].

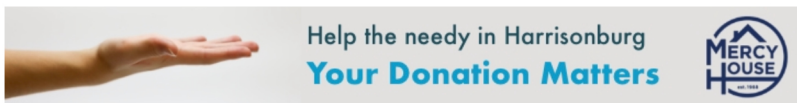
Budget

Advertising spend on Digital Advertising is 23.75% of the total campaign budget, representing a large slice of total ad spend. This allocation is because of the effectiveness of digital advertising [30]. Within

this budget, the majority will be spent on Google Ads, almost evenly between search ads and display ads. As the goal is to increase awareness and desire, these two types of ads are the most effective at achieving these goals [35,22]. Search ads are especially effective for small businesses according to Harvard Business Review with the ability to boost consumer engagement significantly [27]. Targeting a cost-per-click of \$0.12, a spend of \$3,550 on Google Ads will result in a reach of 25,833 consumers, making it a highly effective advertising tool [24]. In addition to Google Ads, Email Marketing campaigns through MailChimp will allow us to further drive desire through retargeting campaigns and a pulsing newsletter.

The high spending on Digital Advertising will create results in a cost effective manner because of its ability to target consumers who are more likely to become interested in Mercy House and ultimately donate.

Deliverables





Media Plan: Social Media

Social media will be one of the prioritized marketing mediums for the campaign. Social media platforms will aid Mercy House in exceeding their marketing and communication goals and strategies.

Social Media will be utilized to communicate Mercy House's mission, as well as communicate the type and quality of donations they desire. By creating a strong social media presence for Mercy House on Facebook and Instagram, advertisements, event promotion, and content marketing, the donation objectives can be achieved.

The campaign theme will remain consistent throughout the social media efforts. Using emotional appeals Impact will create a call to action for individuals to donate to Mercy House. Social media marketing will be targeting both families in the Harrisonburg and Rockingham areas and JMU students.

Social Media Advertising will be incorporated into the campaign to achieve the following two communication goals:

- Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.
- Increase interest in donating to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 7,210) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 1st, 2023, measured by click-through rates and response rates.

Social Media Objectives

Objective 1: Reach 5,000 people in the target audience through social media advertising from January 1st, 2023 through October 15th, 2023 to increase awareness of Mercy House's mission and need for donation.

- **Strategy 1:** Advertise on Facebook at least once a week with visually pleasing ads which attract the viewers attention to Mercy House's mission
 - **Tactic 1:** Create sponsored advertisements with links that are displayed on Facebook's home page columns; include medium-sized Mercy House logo with a link embedded that leads the viewer to Mercy House's "Mission & Faith" page.
 - **Tactic 2:** Develop lead form ads that allow audience members to be directed to a form created by Mercy House where they can read a brief summary of Mercy House and opt to sign up for weekly email newsletters, containing information about their current happenings, events, potential needs (specific items that have a higher demand, volunteer opportunities, etc).
 - **Tactic 3:** Post events and/or fundraisers Mercy House is hosting on their business page and promote them through Facebook's Event Ads to enable the audience to learn more about the event(s) and enable attendance responses (attending/not attending), as well as provide the opportunity for viewers that are interested to learn more about Mercy House on their Facebook Page, website, etc.
- **Strategy 2:** Promote advertisements on Instagram that are visually attractive and engaging towards Harrisonburg family members as well as establish a stronger presence to generate awareness of Mercy House.
 - **Tactic 1:** Promote video advertisements that provide a link to the Mercy House landing page on their website



- **Tactic 2:** Pay to promote the Mercy House posts of the store, items, and families. These advertisements will be targeted towards family members in the Harrisonburg area and will include very colorful videos/pictures to stop people from scrolling. The ads will be focused to create/strengthen brand awareness and Mercy House purpose. There will be an option on these posts to “learn more” linked to Mercy House’s website.
- **Tactic 3:** Use a pulsing pattern to align with season changes. During season transitions including March, Mercy House will allocate more resources on Instagram advertising. This is to target families who are cleaning out their closets, or their children's closets, at the times it is popular to do so.

Objective 2: Reach 1,800 people in the target audience through social media posting from January 1st, 2023 through November 23rd, 2023 to increase interest in donating.

- **Strategy 1:** Create Facebook and Instagram posts and stories to generate awareness of the Mercy House brand and their mission
 - **Tactic 1:** post motivational quotes and items for sale in store daily on social media “stories”
 - **Tactic 2:** create weekly posts presenting Mercy House residents or families directly impacted by their mission
 - **Tactic 3:** make seasonal and holiday-specific posts to encourage donations related to the season and/or holiday
- **Strategy 2:** Create desire to donate by engaging the Mercy House audience through social campaigns
 - **Tactic 1:** Weekly Facebook and Instagram posts centered around gratitude and asking people to share a story of gratitude with the #HburgFamily hashtag
 - **Tactic 2:** Have JMU organizations and local organizations repost Mercy House stories to reach a wider audience and see engagement in the community.
 - **Tactic 3:** Engage the Mercy House audience when sharing posts about Mercy House families by saying how donations directly led to the families success.

Budget

Social Media Advertising has been allocated \$4,750 of the total \$20,000 budget. Spending here represents 23.75% of total spending.

Medium	Media Vehicle	Total \$	% of Total Budget
Facebook	Advertisements	\$1,350	28.4%
	Event Promotion	\$2,000	42.1%
Instagram	Advertisements	\$1,400	29.5%
Total Digital Media	-	\$4,750	23.75%



Rationale

Budget

Social Media Advertising has been allocated 23.75% of the total campaign spending due to its high rate of effectiveness in generating purchases and donations from the target market audiences. Events will be promoted 10 days in advance at a cost of \$48 a day, reaching 305-882 people in the specified target market a day, totaling between 3,050-8,820 viewers per event and a total of 12,200-35,280 potential viewers during the entirety of the campaign. In regards to Instagram medium, Fortune discovered that Instagram maintains a click-through-rate that is 2.5 times higher than any other social media platform [51]. Having a vast majority of the campaign budget allocated to social media marketing will yield positive, effective results in obtaining more customers and donors for Mercy House as well as relaying their message in a more impactful and memorable way to the target audience.

Objective 1

Advertising on Facebook and Instagram will be able to reach a large segment of the campaign’s target audience. Facebook and Instagram is the preferred social media for ages 35-44, which aligns with the campaign’s target market, and ads on Facebook reach nearly 64% of all Americans over 13 years old [6]. Media-native advertisements on Instagram will achieve better CPM through the visually appealing ads and videos which can better attract attention. Video on both Facebook and Instagram is also a highly effective form of advertising which will be able to generate an emotional appeal and lead to higher CTR.

Objective 2

Content marketing on Facebook and Instagram with media-native posts will help to create authentic connection and generate desire. While the reach of these posts won’t be as high as paid advertising on social media, their effectiveness is much higher as people are less skeptical and choose to see the content. Creating posts designed for the audience to repost will help spread awareness in an authentic way. Posts which engage the audience to participate creates a sense of community, which creates interest in donating. Having JMU organizations and local Harrisonburg organizations repost Mercy House content on Facebook and Instagram helps to increase reach in an authentic way.

Deliverables

Mercy House Sponsored · 🌱

Come join us for our first ever Annual Family Fun Day fundraiser!

Come spend time with your local Harrisonburg community and enjoy a live band, food and drinks while the kids enjoy face paint, bouncy-houses, and more.

By hosting this community event, we hope that families will consider bringing donations to the event to give to Mercy House so you can make an impact on your community, too.

Mercy House
1st Annual Family Fun Day

JOIN US
SATURDAY, JUNE 3RD, 2023
1PM-5PM @ HILLDALE PARK,
HARRISONBURG VA

- Family Event - Food Provided - Games & Fun for Kids



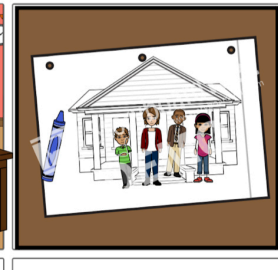



Mercy House's Family Fun Day Fundraiser at Hillandale Park






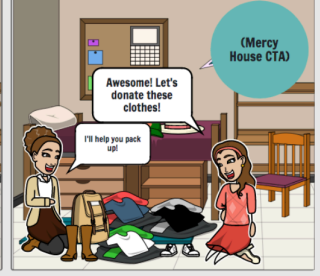
Sign Up

Facebook & Instagram Ads



Video Ads

<p>Scene 1 : School</p>  <p>Can you pass me a blue crayon?</p> <p>Two kids coloring. Boy (left). "Can you pass me a blue crayon"</p>	<p>Scene 2 : School</p>  <p>What did you draw?</p> <p>The girl hands the boy a blue crayon Mom walks in and asks "What did you draw"</p>	<p>Scene 3 : School</p>  <p>Kid responds and shows the drawing. "It's you daddy, Lucy, and me in our new house."</p>
<p>Scene 4 : Mercy House</p>  <p>No child should be homeless. You can help</p> <p>Student donating a box of stuff at Mercy House Voice Over from Mike: "No Child should be homeless. You can help"</p>	<p>Scene 5 : Mercy House</p>  <p>Mercy House is dedicated to helping families in need in the Harrisburg area</p> <p>Mike walking through thrift store "Mercy House is dedicated to helping families in need in the Harrisburg area"</p>	<p>Scene 6 : Family in House</p>  <p>donate your used items in good condition, and lets us keep families together</p> <p>Family in House opening a box of stuff Mike Voice Over: "donate your used items in good condition, and help us keep families together"</p>

<p>Scene 1</p>  <p>How am I supposed to pack all of this stuff?</p> <p>A JMU college student is preparing to move out at the end of the school year. She realizes that she has a lot more clothes than she thought she had.</p>	<p>Scene 2</p>  <p>Oh, wow! That is a lot of stuff!</p> <p>Her friend shows up to her dorm and also realizes that she has way too much to pack.</p>	<p>Scene 3</p>  <p>Do you even wear all of this stuff?</p> <p>Hmm... I guess I don't...</p> <p>Her friend is trying to help her solve her problems.</p>
<p>Scene 4</p>  <p>Have you ever thought about donating it?</p> <p>Oh! I guess I've never thought of that.</p> <p>Her friend remembers that she has donated clothes in the past, and starts to suggest she gets rid of some of her clothes.</p>	<p>Scene 5</p>  <p>I know of a really great place here in Harrisburg! I donated my clothes there last year when I moved out.</p> <p>(Mercy House Logo)</p> <p>The student and her friend are excited to donate her clothes.</p>	<p>Scene 6</p>  <p>Awesome! Let's donate these clothes!</p> <p>I'll help you pack up!</p> <p>(Mercy House CTA)</p> <p>The two students begin packing up the clothes to donate to the Mercy House.</p>



Media Plan: Support Media

Support Media will be used to strengthen brand awareness and increase donations for Mercy House in the Harrisonburg and Rockingham county area. The use of Support Media will also accomplish the campaign's communication goals.

Empact will achieve these goals through out of house support media and in store media. The placement and message will be oriented around the theme of family and community unity. Individuals will be targeted with messages that highlight the positive effects of their donations and how quality donations can help efforts to fight homelessness and poverty in their communities.

Support Media will be used in order to achieve the following communication objectives:

- Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.
- Increase donations to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items) by November 30th, 2023 in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.

Support Media Objectives

Objective 1: Increase the awareness by 25% by reaching 2,000 people by using out of home support media from the third week of January, 2023 through the second week of May, 2023 and from the third week of August, 2023 through the second week of December, 2023.

- **Strategy 1:** Transit and place-based out of house support media will be used in order to reach more of the desired target market within the Harrisonburg area.
 - **Tactic 1:** Place advertisements on the Harrisonburg bus system (HDPT) in order to reach both families in the Harrisonburg area as well as college students at JMU.
 - **Tactic 2:** Place advertisements on the HDPT bus shelters to further expose the community to the Mercy House.
 - **Tactic 3:** Place an advertisement in Bridgeforth Stadium to increase reach.
- **Strategy 2:** Use advertainment support media in order to increase the reach to the primary target markets.
 - **Tactic 1:** Create a short video highlighting the families who have been supported by the Mercy House in order to better illustrate the purpose of this foundation.
 - **Tactic 2:** Create a short story book with Mercy House references about the importance of donating/ supporting the homeless within your community for children. This book can be presented to local elementary schools.
 - **Tactic 3:** Have a local influencer create a video/post with product placements of Mercy House purchases.

Objective 2: Use in-store media and have promotional products to increase desire to donate by 15% (an increase of 1,500) in the Harrisonburg area by November 23rd, 2023.

- **Strategy 1:** Have in store ads and signage that reinforces the message of Mercy House and where the proceeds go towards, as well as the need for quality donations
 - **Tactic 1:** Banners around the store with the Mercy House message and area of the store, efforts



to make the overall layout of the store more inviting

- **Tactic 2:** Large posters near checkout with examples of quality donations and the needs of items that Mercy House is looking for. It will also show the step by step process of how to donate
- **Tactic 3:** In store advertisements for events to promote community involvement such as fundraisers
- **Strategy 2:** Create products that customers can interact with in order to increase brand awareness and customer retention by 30% by October 15th, 2023.
 - **Tactic 1:** Create stickers that are placed at check out for purchases over \$10 and for anyone donating items
 - **Tactic 2:** T-Shirts with the Mercy House logo and mission given out at fundraising or special events
 - **Tactic 3:** Creating pens that customers interact with at checkout

Budget

Digital Advertising has been allocated \$1,500 of the total \$20,000 budget. Spending here represents 7.5% of total spending.

Medium	Media Vehicle	Total \$	% of Total Budget
Out of Home Ads	HDPT	\$300	1.5%
Out of Home Ads	Bridgeforth Stadium	\$560	2.8%
In House Ads	Posters	\$90	0.5%
Branded Product	Stickers	\$30	0.2%
Branded Product	Pens	\$20	0.1%
Branded Product	Shirts	\$500	2.5%
Total Support Media		\$1,500	7.5%

Rationales

Objective 1

Empact will utilize transit advertising on the HDPT bus system because it runs throughout the entire city of Harrisonburg as well as the JMU campus. The bus advertisements will be exposed directly to both of the primary target markets: families in the Harrisonburg community and JMU students. Stadium at JMU's Bridgeforth Stadium Advertising because out of house ads are increasing in popularity more than any other non-digital advertising method [53]. Furthermore, about 70% of individuals can identify a brand advertised to them during a sporting game [47]. Empact will also use advertainment marketing because media in this category gets many more views and shares than traditional advertising (What is advertainment? definition and meaning). In fact, viewers have been 20x more likely to send an advertisement when it evokes a positive reaction [14]. This is crucial, especially when it comes to increasing the reach.

Objective 2

In-store media and promotional products will be used in order to retain the current customer base. A study showed that 82% of purchasing decisions are made while in a store, 62% of shoppers make an impulse buy while shopping, and 16% of unplanned purchases are driven by in-store promotions. While the goal is not necessarily to influence shoppers' impulse buying, in-store advertisements are shown to be greatly effective to shopper interaction. With positive influence to purchase products, customers are receptive to signage on the store's floor. This will make it an effective strategy to show Mercy House's mission and the needs for donations. Promotional products allow people to become a part of the brand. With Mercy House's community perspective and philanthropy scope people can represent the brand proudly. According to the ASI study, 85% of consumers remembered advertisers who gave them a shirt or hat. These promotional products will be effective on brand awareness that will create more memorability of the mission and Mercy House efforts.

Budget

direct marketing will be allocated \$1,500 out of the total \$20,000 budget for the campaign. This represents a total of 7.5% of total spending. The majority of these funds will be allocated on out-of-home ads in the HDPT buses as well as Bridgeforth Stadium on JMU's campus. According to a study conducted by the COMMB, bus advertisements reach 81% of riders which is a strong factor in obtaining interest from the target market of college students located in Harrisonburg and surrounding areas. A study conducted by CAB Abstract identified that 70% of those who were exposed to an advertisement in a football stadium were able to recall what the advertisement was and the information it contained. The rest of the direct marketing budget will be allocated towards Mercy House stickers, pens, and t-shirts as 90% of word-of-mouth communications occur offline, making these branded products an excellent way to establish not only reach within the target market but frequency, as well.

Deliverables





Media Plan: Direct Marketing

This section will present the objectives and strategies used to increase awareness of Mercy House's efforts for increased quality of donations and overall customer engagement by 30% in the time period of June 2022. Efforts will be targeted to develop a variety of different direct mail advertisements that communicate Mercy House's mission to those living in the Harrisonburg and Rockingham County area. There will also be Newsletters and automated text messages sent to potential and existing customers/donors to increase frequency.

Direct marketing will be used in order to achieve the following communication objectives:

- Increase awareness of the types and quality of donations needed to support homeless families in need by 60% among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023, to reduce items wasted by 40%.
- Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.

The messages sent out through newsletter, direct mail and text message will be oriented around the theme of community support. Individuals will be targeted with messages that highlight the positive effects of their donations and how quality donations can help efforts to fight homelessness and poverty in their communities; while also being more personal and engaging.

Direct Marketing Objectives

Objective 1: Develop different forms of direct mail to communicate Mercy House's mission in order to generate interest that leads to an increase in donations of 10% by November 23rd, 2023.

- **Strategy 1:** Create postcards to send to potential donors once a month that provide a way for the receiver to learn more and/or respond.
 - **Tactic 1:** Postcards will be visually-appealing using graphics containing blue and yellow colors to easily and quickly communicate information.
 - **Tactic 2:** Each monthly postcard will include a picture and testimonial featuring a family positively impacted by Mercy House
 - **Tactic 3:** All postcards will include Mercy Houses' mailing address, website, phone number, and social media platforms
- **Strategy 2:** Create monthly letters to send to current or former Mercy House donors to aid in generating more donations.
 - **Tactic 1:** Letters will express Mercy House's gratitude for past donations as well as their reliance on them to continue to donate
 - **Tactic 2:** Letters will contain a reply-card where receivers can fill out the necessary information being asked for and complete a monetary donation to Mercy House.
 - **Tactic 3:** Letter will include a short testimonial displaying the positive effects donations make on the Harrisonburg community.

Objective 2: Reach 2,000 people in the target market with email newsletters and text and phone messaging in order to increase desire in donating by 1,118 people by November 23rd, 2023.

- **Strategy 1:** Send out monthly newsletters to prospect donors as well as any members of the target



market who enroll to be on the newsletter list to increase awareness.

- **Tactic 1:** Briefly include Mercy Houses’ mission and vision for the community to develop a general form of awareness within the target market
- **Tactic 2:** Include a testimonial given by a family/family member that’s been positively impacted by Mercy House and their mission
- **Tactic 3:** Announce all future and upcoming events such as fundraisers, parties on announced donation days at Mercy house, and more.
- **Strategy 2:** Run an automated text-response system that will be sent to families currently within Mercy House’s system along with those who have signed up for Mercy House texts by texting “Harrisonburg Mercy House” to a specified number.
 - **Tactic 1:** Send out weekly texts containing information about upcoming events, fundraisers, and more.
 - **Tactic 2:** Allow receivers to interact by providing a list of acceptable responses they can submit to learn more, make a donation, or speak with a member of Mercy House.
 - **Tactic 3:** Sound out seasonal texts around the beginning of spring, end-of-the-school year, 4th of July, Halloween, etc. to inspire donations revolving around Mercy House’s needs for the current season.

Budget

Direct Advertising has been allocated \$1,500 of the total \$20,000 budget. Spending here represents 7.5% of total spending.

Medium	Media Vehicle	Total \$	% of Total Budget
Direct Mail	Mercy House Postcards	\$1275	6.375%
Email	Mercy House Email	\$200	1%
Phone	Texts	\$25	0.01%
Total Direct Marketing	-	\$1,500	7.5%

Rationale

Objective 1

Postcards will be used as a form of direct mail advertising. When using direct mail advertising, the packaging used has a great effect on consumers. Postcards have one of the highest response rates compared to other direct mail methods [4]. In addition, monthly letters will be sent to keep the target markets aware of the Mercy House. 59% of U.S. respondents said that they enjoy receiving mail about products or services [4]. Furthermore, 92% of millennials were reported to have been influenced to make



purchases after receiving direct mail [26]. This generation is included in one of the target markets.

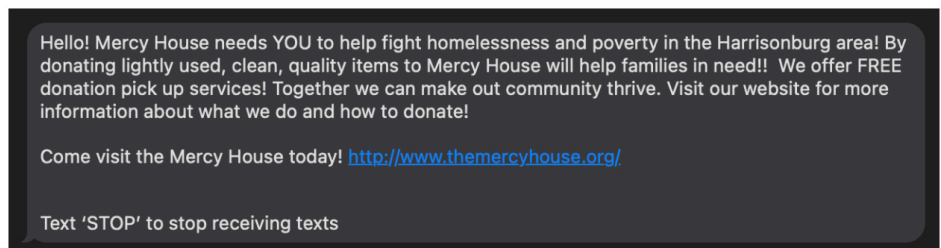
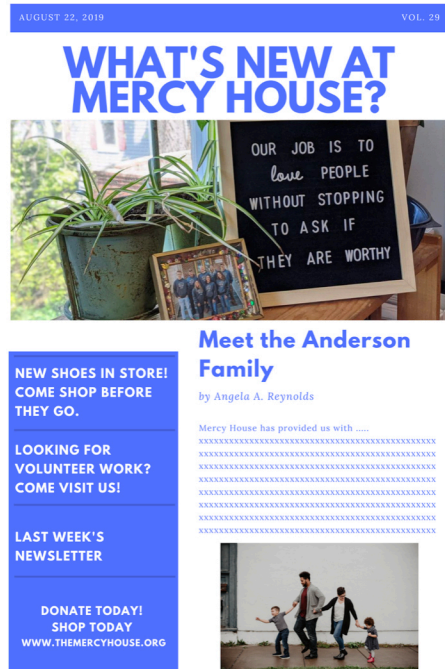
Objective 2

Weekly newsletters will be used as a method to keep the target audience engaged with the Mercy House. Newsletters are a popular method of reaching target audiences and 79% of B2C companies rely on it for advertising [1]. Emailed newsletters have over a 90% penetration rate [1]. This will increase the reach and keep the target audience interested in the Mercy House. Text message advertising will also be utilized as it has become more popular in recent years. Almost 100% of all respondents have stated that they read every text message they receive [8]. This increases the reach within the target markets. 85% of all adults own a smartphone and 96% of generation Z owns a smartphone [8]. That includes both of the target markets.

Budget

Direct Marketing is 7.5% of the total campaign budget totaling to \$1,275. This allocation is because of the concentrated efforts of direct mail and email advertising. Within this 7.5%, the majority will be used towards direct mail totaling to 6.375% of the total budget. This is because we've found that postcards have one of the highest response rates compared to other direct mail methods, and 92% of millennials were reported to have been influenced to make purchases after receiving direct mail. A small portion of the budget will be allocated to email newsletters and automated text-messages. Allocation of \$200 towards direct email advertising is in place because it is a less costly way to keep the market engaged with Mercy House. We're incorporating text messaging advertising because, along with the other supporting statistics from Objective 2 rational, 58% of people say texting is the ideal way for businesses to reach them. Text messaging is also a less costly way of marketing to reach the local community, which is why only \$25 will be allocated.

Deliverables





Media Plan: Sales Promotion

This section will present the objectives and strategies used to increase customer reach and brand awareness for Mercy House in the Harrisonburg area. Sales promotions will focus on the quality of items that are being donated to Mercy House. Promotional punch cards and competitions will extend a community wide reach as Mercy House will partner with other local shops, restaurants and breweries in downtown Harrisonburg. This partnership is used as a lesion for both primary and secondary target markets. In store BOGO and “all you can grab” promotional events encourage customer engagement that will add to the experience of Mercy House while prompting donations and sales. These efforts have a goal to raise brand awareness by 25%, quality donations by 30% and overall sales by 25% by June 2023.

Sales Promotion will be used in order to achieve the following two communication objectives:

- Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.
- Increase donations to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items) by November 30th, 2023 in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.

Sales Promotion Objectives

Objective 1: Partner with local businesses within downtown Harrisonburg in order to promote quality donations and raise Mercy House awareness by 25% by June 2022.

- **Strategy 1:** Partner with local breweries downtown to reach both JMU students and residents within the Harrisonburg community
 - **Tactic 1:** Create a beer that highlights Mercy House and has a percentage of proceeds go to the donation service element (pick up services, etc.) The “Hop to Donate” Mercy House IPA.
 - **Tactic 2:** For every quality donation you could have a punch card, every 20 quality donations get a free beer at a selected brewery
 - **Tactic 3:** Have a trivia night that does trivia about Mercy House to increase knowledge and awareness. Winner receives a free beer and Mercy House T-shirt.
- **Strategy 2:** Donation competition, scan a QR code every time you donate and a picture to be entered into a contest. The more you donate, you could win gift cards to local downtown (partnered) restaurants/stores/breweries
 - **Tactic 1:** Have donation boxes at local restaurants and breweries that will promote donations, and drop off areas
 - **Tactic 2:** Have a live ranking of who donates the most live on the website and have it posted in participating local shops/restaurants/breweries
 - **Tactic 3:** Winner can be featured within the Mercy House store, website and participating local shops/restaurants/breweries

Objective 2: Increase repeat donations by 15% (to 5.23 average donated items per person in one year) by December 30th, 2023

- **Strategy 1:** Create a great donation experience that people will remember
 - **Tactic 1:** When someone comes in to donate, give them a Mercy House sticker
 - **Tactic 2:** Have a Mercy House employee thank the person and tell them how their donation will



help a homeless family

- **Tactic 3:** When someone donates, encourage them to sign up for the text message list and engage on social media
- **Strategy 2:** Encourage multiple donations and high quality donations from an individual
 - **Tactic 1:** Use a punch card system associated with phone numbers in order to track how many donations an individual has made.
 - **Tactic 2:** When an individual reaches 6 donations, they receive a Mercy House t-shirt.
 - **Tactic 3:** When an individual donates furniture, they are given a sweatshirt.

Budget

Sales Promotion has been allocated \$500 of the total \$20,000 budget. Spending here represents less than 1% of total spending.

Medium	Media Vehicle	Total \$	% of Support Media Budget	% of Total Budget
Brewery partnership	Craft beer [23]	\$180	72.9%	0.9%
Loyalty	Punch card, T-Shirt, Sweatshirt	\$270	6.9%	1.35%
Loyalty	Stickers	\$50	20.2%	0.25%
Total Sales Promotion		\$500	100%	2.5%

Sales Promotion Rationales

Objective 1

The best way to promote Mercy House to the local community is to be in the heart of it. A partnership with local downtown shops, restaurants, and breweries. Using local businesses as a medium to promote fun and engaging promotions. The punch card reward system allows customers to be involved and thoughtful when donating to Mercy House. There becomes a higher filter when ensuring quality in order to receive a punch. A competition is also a way for donors to increase their efforts of donating and keeps them involved in the local community as well. JMU and local residents see downtown as a leisure and town pride oasis. Setting up promotions will reach out to both target markets.

Objective 2

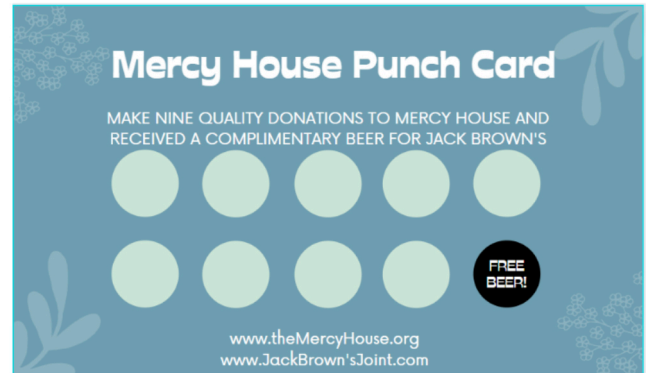
It is much less costly to have a repeat customer than to gain a brand new customer. For this reason, it will be valuable to encourage people to come back and donate again. In order to increase the number of donated items from an individual, Mercy House can incentivize repeat donations as well as make sure their initial donation is a positive experience. Giving people stickers when they donate will show them the appreciation Mercy House has and will also allow for increased awareness and word of mouth when the person uses the sticker. Tactics 2 and 3 help to create a positive experience and build a relationship with the person which will last and bring them back the next time they have something to donate. Using a punch card to incentivize 6 donations with a t-shirt will set a goal for the consumer which is realistic and offers a reward. The reward of the t-shirt will further build a connection with the brand and increase awareness when worn. Similar to the t-shirt, a sweatshirt given to those who donate a piece of furniture

will encourage higher quality donations.

Budget:

To effectively promote Mercy House through sales promotions, spending will be focused mainly on a brewery partnership to create a craft beer. This partnership will be highly cost effective costing only \$180. Printing of punch cards will cost \$17 from VistaPrint and the cost of shirts and prizes will be \$50. Spending on sales promotion is small, because many of the activities will support the objectives at no cost.

Deliverables



Media Plan: Personal Selling

Personal selling will play an important role in this marketing campaign in order to create personal connections with customers and move customers from awareness and interest, to desire and action.

In order to efficiently increase action, sales interactions should focus on sharing Mercy House’s mission and creating an emotional connection through conversation as well as storytelling. Personal selling tasks will largely be through phone and text communications, with some additional, in-person situations. Most of the sales leads will be coming from the digital, social, and traditional advertising which will generate awareness and interest. Since personal selling will be happening with this same group, the target market for personal selling will be largely the same as those. This includes Harrisonburg and surrounding areas as described in the target market selection. For the additional personal selling outreach, that will target the JMU community in Harrisonburg.

Centered around the campaign theme of family, these advertisements will use emotional appeal to establish a connection to the person’s personal values and build a relationship. Effective storytelling will be employed in each conversation by sharing how donations impact real families.

Personal Selling will be used in order to achieve the following two communication objectives:

- Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.
- Increase donations to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items) by November 30th, 2023 in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.



Personal Selling Objectives

Objective 1: Build relations in the community through community outreach to local organizations and housing complexes at the end of academic semesters to generate at least 200 items donated by December 31st, 2023.

- **Strategy 1:** Develop partnerships with off-campus housing that primarily rent temporary fully furnished housing options to students. These apartment complexes are typically furnished and throw away furniture after unit moves out
 - **Tactic 1:** Contact the “Harrison” apartment complexes
 - **Tactic 2:** Contact the “Hills– Northview and Southview” apartments
 - **Tactic 3:** Contact “Squire hill” apartments
- **Strategy 2:** Develop partnerships with on campus housing to set up a donation option for students that are moving out of dorms that do not wish to take their belonging with them, to be sent directly to Mercy House
 - **Tactic 1:** Connect with JMU residence life and on campus living, offer donation pick up after move out day
 - **Tactic 2:** Have Mercy House volunteers come help students move out and help choose what can be donated and what should not be donated
 - **Tactic 3:** Connect with Bridgewater and EMU on campus living

Objective 2: Move prospective clients from awareness/interest to desire/action by engaging them in conversation over phone and text with the goal of increasing conversion rates from awareness to action from 10% to 15%.

- **Strategy 1:** Follow up with people who express interest in Mercy House in order to talk about what value Mercy House can add to their life
 - **Tactic 1:** On the landing page, a client can initiate a text or phone conversation with Mercy House. This will be initially answered by an automated message which will share a brief message about Mercy House’s mission and how important that mission is to the client.
 - **Tactic 2:** Then a sales representative from Mercy House will respond in a conversational way and ask whether they have any items they feel are cluttering up their home or that they don’t need anymore
 - **Tactic 3:** The sales representative from Mercy House will respond with a message telling them how much good that item could do for their community and that they can easily dispose of the item at the same time, so it’s a win-win.
- **Strategy 2:** Build a personal connection in order to relate the Mercy House’s mission
 - **Tactic 1:** The Mercy House employee should share their name and say if they are a recipient of Mercy House’s help.
 - **Tactic 2:** The sales representative should share a story of how Mercy House has helped a family and how donation directly contributed to that story
 - **Tactic 3:** The sales representative should encourage the client to come donate, and to say hello to the sales representative at the store when they come in. By doing this, a very personal experience can be created and can deliver a great donation experience.



Personal Selling Budget

Personal Selling has been allocated \$900 of the total \$20,000 budget. Spending here represents 4.5% of total spending.

Medium	Total \$	% of Personal Selling Budget	% of Total Budget
Text/Call	\$400	44.4%	2%
Community Outreach	\$400	44.4%	2%
Sales Training	\$100	11.1%	0.5%
Total Personal Selling	\$900	100%	4.5%

Rationales

Objective 1

By developing personal relationships with off campus and on campus housing allows Mercy House access to higher quality furniture donations with more control on what can be resold at Mercy House and what can be used for homes. Students have shorter term leases because they mainly use them for temporary housing throughout college. This means that there are fast turnarounds in furniture that need to be thrown out due to students leaving.

Objective 2

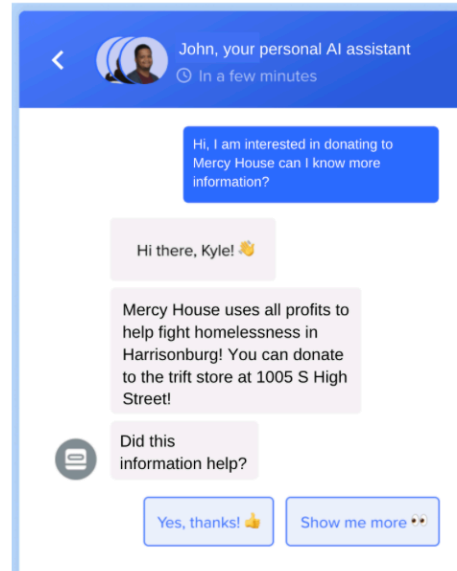
Customers will be able to find information about the Mercy House online on the landing page, but to create action, a personalized conversation with someone affiliated with Mercy House will be very effective in creating desire and converting to action. Because this selling opportunity will be initiated by the customer, there will be less wasted time from sales representatives. Using a plan for the conversation will enable sales representatives to minimize time. By talking to the customer about their values and how Mercy House could fit into them, Mercy House will be able to create more desire in that customer. By sharing a story about the direct relation between families in need and donating to the Mercy House the emotional story a customer had previously seen in advertising will feel more real and personal and will help move them to action and to donate. Throughout all of this, a personal connection will be made which will make the customer more likely to return and share the experience with friends.

Budget

In order to create an impact with personal selling while maximizing cost effectiveness, the use of current Mercy House employees and volunteers is recommended. This will allow Mercy House to engage with customers without much cost. By using an outlined script and a predefined plan for conversations, time will be minimized per conversation. Community outreach will be conducted throughout the year by volunteers which will minimize costs. The plan to spend \$500 on phone and text conversations will create connections with customers at a great value. The community outreach will run about 25 hours over the year with the representatives paid \$15 an hour. Sales training will cost \$100 to produce and distribute via a written document.



Deliverables



Media Plan: Public Relations and Publicity

Public relations will be utilized in order to create legitimacy and raise communal awareness and interest. These publicity efforts will try to promote a call to action in which individuals are encouraged to donate, buy from and visit Mercy House's stores.

These objectives will be accomplished representing the campaign theme of community togetherness. Stories of families that have been able to get support by Mercy House will be publicized to show what Mercy House efforts have done for the community. The use of News and radio will share the stories of selected families. Interactions should focus on sharing Mercy House's mission and creating an emotional connection through conversation as well as storytelling. For the additional public relation outreach, publicity outreach will also work with JMU publications. These efforts will reach both primary and secondary markets.

Personal Selling will be used in order to achieve the following two communication objectives:

- Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. *This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.*
- Increase awareness of the types and quality of donations needed to support homeless families in need by 60% among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023, to reduce items wasted by 40%.

Public Relations and Publicity Objectives

Objective 1: Publicize a success story in the news about a family that Mercy House is currently helping or has helped. This story will be used to increase awareness by 30% to the local communities. This



public relations story will be released in local newspapers and radio twice for the month selected until June 2022.

- **Strategy 1:** Develop a story that can be released to local newspaper “Daily news record”
 - **Tactic 1:** Work together with the family to decide how they want their story to be told
 - **Tactic 2:** Have elements of what Mercy House does and how the stores benefit these families
 - **Tactic 3:** formulate other testimonials within the community
- **Strategy 2:** Have a radio host interview families for publicity of what Mercy House has done and what they do now to help families
 - **Tactic 1:** Create a storyline that can be easy to follow for listeners
 - **Tactic 2:** Highlight families that have been benefited directly from the donations/sales of the Mercy House stores
 - **Tactic 3:** Make time available to go onto a radio show to discuss the story further with the chosen family

Objective 2: Using public relations in order to promote events in local publications and in JMU campus publications in order to raise awareness by 25% and overall band reach by 20% by June 2022.

- **Strategy 1:** Reach out to local publications and social media platforms in order to promote Mercy House events
 - **Tactic 1:** Reach out to local businesses, restaurants and breweries to feature Mercy House and the mission on there social media platforms to promote future or current partnerships
 - **Tactic 2:** Work with Harrisonburg publications such as “Valley Weekender” “Rocktown Weekly” “Shenandoah Journal”
 - **Tactic 3:** Work with Harrisonburg publications such as “Valley Weekender” “Rocktown Weekly” “Shenandoah Journal” social media platforms
- **Strategy 2:** Reach out to JMU specific publications and social media platforms in order to promote Mercy House events
 - **Tactic 1:** Reach out to local news and magazines on campus “the breeze” “Proust”
 - **Tactic 2:** JMU social media’s and club and organization platforms
 - **Tactic 3:** “Potty Mouth” and other print media that are posted around campus

Public Relations Budget

Public relations has been allocated \$250 out of the total \$20,000 campaign budget. This represents 3.5% of total spending.

Medium	Total \$	% of Public Relations Budget	% of Total Budget
Newspaper story [21]	\$50	20%	2.5%
Radio interview	200\$	80%	1%
Total PR Cost	\$250		3.5%



Rationales

Objective 1

The publication of a success story in the news about a family that Mercy House is helping or has helped, will help individuals understand Mercy House’s mission on a more personable level. “Customer success stories can be one of the most valuable pieces of content for showcasing knowledge and thought leadership for a company and serves as effective marketing collateral for your company to promote its triumphs” [49]. Using local publications will increase community involvement and reach.

Objective 2

Using public relations as a method to bring awareness to Mercy House events will help the overall reach of Mercy House’s marketing efforts. On campus publications will be a great mode of transportation for promotional media because JMU students read these types of publications more than local town newspapers. This will also allow students to make a comparison between Mercy House and their school. The most popular newspaper on JMU’s campus is The Breeze. It is published “Thursdays with a few special editions published on Thursdays. The circulation is 5,000 with a readership of about 20,000 students, faculty and staff”. Not only will on campus publication reach the secondary market of students but will reach the primary market through faculty and staff.

Budget

Public relations has been allocated 3.5% out of the total campaign budget. The budget will be divided up into two parts: newspaper stories and radio interviews. The costs of these mediums are consistently low and do not require a large investment to gain positive results. Through promoting testimonials and stories of the impact Mercy House has made within the Harrisonburg and Rockingham County community, Mercy House will gain a more positive and well-known brand image and bring more awareness to their mission. By incorporating radio interviews into the public relations budget, Mercy House will benefit by gaining the attention and interest of their primary target market.

Deliverables

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 8/21/2023
Mike Tyson
Mercy House Inc.
(540) 432-1812
spotter@themercuryhouse.org



Mercy House and Jack Brown’s Collaborate to Overcome Harrisonburg Homelessness

Harrisonburg, Virginia: The Mercy House, Harrisonburg’s Thrift Store and Homeless Shelter, announced today will be partnering with Jack Browns. With Mercy House’s continuing efforts toward expanding awareness and loyalty from the local community, Jack Browns will be partnering with Mercy House to continue to help house and assist homeless families. Jack Browns will be contributing a percentage of sales to Mercy House as well as helping Mercy House grow brand awareness within the local community by mentioning the collaboration on their social media pages.

Michael DelBiondo, Mercy House’s Retail Manager, said, “The Mercy House team is extremely excited to be working with a great place like Jack Brown’s, we look forward to growing the Mercy House image to help our residents.”

Get Involved: From November 1st, 2023 to December 20th, 2022, when you write “Mercy House” on your receipt, 6% of your total will contribute to helping fund necessities for the homeless residents at Mercy House.

Aaron Ludwig, one of the Jack Brown owners, said, “We can’t wait to see how much we can help Mercy House, we’ve been looking for an opportunity to give back to our local community and we’re gonna do as much as we can to help the Mercy House residents.”

About The Mercy House: Established in 1988, The Mercy House is an organization in Harrisonburg that operates a thrift store and a homeless shelter for homeless families. The donations given to the thrift store are the primary source of funding for helping the homeless family residents.

For more information, visit www.themercuryhouse.org

About Jack Browns Beer & Burger Joint: Established in 2005, Jack Browns is a local favorite restaurant and bar in downtown Harrisonburg, VA. They have a wide, positive reputation for Harrisonburg residents and James Madison University students to go there.

For more information, visit <https://www.jackbrownsjoint.com/our-story/>

###



Media Plan: Sponsorship

Sponsorship recommendations offer Mercy House to implement a more personal, down-to-earth image due to partnering up with others who offer and maintain the same qualities and values. By coming in direct contact with the target audience of the other sponsorship members, Mercy House will have easy-access to individuals who fit desired target markets.

Mercy House will develop sponsorships with local non-profits, charities, food chains, and restaurants to partner up and be part of/create events and donation days. These events and fundraisers will be targeted toward Mercy House's primary and secondary market to acquire more awareness of Mercy House, more donations, and a higher level of interest within the community.

Sponsorship will be used to achieve the following two communication goals:

- Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.
- Increase donations to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items) by November 30th, 2023 in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.

Sponsorship Objectives

Objective 1: Create and become involved in local community events targeted towards local college students at JMU, Bridgewater College, and EMU promoting Mercy House and other local charities to generate a 30% increase in Mercy House's donations by December 31st, 2023.

- **Strategy 1:** Partner with student clubs and organizations on the local college campuses to organize on-campus events that provide Mercy House the opportunity to obtain more awareness of their mission by establishing a presence within the target audience of the student clubs and organizations.
 - **Tactic 1:** Create events sponsored by the JMU clubs Gamma Sigma Sigma and Give Volunteers ultimately offering students the opportunity to make a donation.
 - **Tactic 2:** Create events sponsored by the Bridgewater College club Habitat for Humanity.
 - **Tactic 3:** Create events sponsored by the EMU clubs Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Y-Serve.
- **Strategy 2:** Partner with local Harrisonburg and Rockingham County restaurants to create sponsored donation days where the chosen restaurants will promote the event in advance, and contribute a percentage of sales to Mercy House when a customer mentions Mercy House's name.
 - **Tactic 1:** Create a sponsored event with Harrisonburg's Bella Luna's Wood-Fired Pizza where pizza is provided for attendees and Mercy House can promote their mission and obtain more donors.
 - **Tactic 2:** Create a sponsorship with Harrisonburg's Village Juice & Kitchen where customers are provided the opportunity to make a donation to Mercy House and will receive a complimentary Mercy House sticker if they do make a contribution.
 - **Tactic 3:** Short-term partnership with Jack Browns. Jack Browns will contribute 6% of proceeds, when a customer writes "Mercy House" on their receipt.

Objective 2: Become part of sponsored events targeted towards local Harrisonburg and Rockingham County families promoting Mercy House's mission in order to generate a 30% increase in Mercy House's donations by December 31st, 2023.



- **Strategy 1:** Become involved in event sponsorships with local nonprofits in Harrisonburg to establish a stronger presence in the community as well as bring more awareness to Mercy House’s missions and ways community members can make a difference.
 - **Tactic 1:** Develop a sponsored event with the local Harrisonburg Brent Berry Food Drive to establish a stronger presence and positive image within the target audience members who will be involved with the food drive
 - **Tactic 2:** Create a sponsored event with the United Way of Harrisonburg & Rockingham County organization
 - **Tactic 3:** Partner with The Community Foundation Harrisonburg-Rockingham to create a sponsored event that leads to increased donations to Mercy House.

Sponsorship Budget

The sponsorship section of the campaign will be allocated \$2,000 of the total \$20,000 campaign budget. This represents 10% of total spending.

Medium	Media Vehicle	Total \$	% of Sponsorship Budget	% of Total Budget
Events:	Bella Luna Venue	\$400	20%	2%
	Food & Drinks	\$800	40%	4%
	Digital Ads	\$300	15%	1.5%
	Entertainment	\$150	7.5%	0.75%
	Print Ads	\$300	15%	1.5%
Sponsorship Giveaway	Mercy House stickers	\$50	2.5%	0.25%
Total Sponsorship		\$2,000	100%	10%

Rationales

Objective 1

By developing partnerships, sponsorships, and stronger relationships with local community non-profits, charities, and college clubs and organizations, Mercy House will succeed in obtaining a greater reach of the secondary target market of local college students as there will be direct interaction and promotion to the individuals who possess the characteristics of the target market. According to a survey conducted about fundraising methods used by young people in the U.S., it indicated that 31% of the respondents used sponsorships as an effective way to reach a younger demographic [70].

Objective 2

Establishing sponsored events with already well-established nonprofits and charities in the Harrisonburg community will aid Mercy House in achieving their goal of increasing their brand awareness by 40%, quality of donations by 40%, and overall sales by 25%. Mercy House will be able to establish a stronger

presence of their brand and mission within the target market of families in the Harrisonburg and Rockingham County area through sponsorships; the sponsorships will help the target audience view Mercy House as an established, trustworthy non-profit in Harrisonburg that makes a positive impact in the community as well as a place for individual to make a micro-level difference, too.

Budget

The sponsorship recommendations have been allocated a total of \$2,000 out of the \$20,000 available for campaign spending in efforts to achieve an increase in Mercy House's brand awareness, quality of donations, and overall sales. By allocating funds to event sponsorships, Mercy House will be provided with the resources needed to create and co-host a community fundraising/awareness event that will directly gain the attention and interest of the primary and secondary target markets.

Deliverables





Media Flowchart

2023	January				February				March				April				May				June				July				August				September				October				November				December				
	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	
Traditional Marketing																																																	
Radio																																																	
Print Advertisements																																																	
Magazine																																																	
Newspaper																																																	
Digital Marketing																																																	
Website Advertising																																																	
Google Ad Campaign																																																	
Mail Campaign																																																	
Social Media Marketing																																																	
Facebook Ads																																																	
Facebook Posts																																																	
Instagram Ads																																																	
Instagram Posts																																																	
Support Media																																																	
Transit Media																																																	
Out-of-House Media																																																	
Banner/Poster Ads																																																	
T-shirts/Stickers/Pens																																																	
Direct Marketing																																																	
Postcards																																																	
Letters																																																	
Digital Newsletter																																																	
Automated Texts/Phone																																																	
Sales Promotion																																																	
Mercy House IPA																																																	
Sweepstakes																																																	
Giveaways																																																	
Personal Selling																																																	
Cold-call marketing																																																	
Partnerships																																																	
Public Relations																																																	
Newspaper Story																																																	
Interviews																																																	
Awareness Events																																																	
Sponsorship																																																	
Sponsored Events																																																	
Sponsored Fundraising																																																	



Budget Breakdown and Summary

Category	Medium	Media Vehicle	Cost	% of Total Budget
Traditional Advertising			\$1,800	9%
	Radio			
		WSVA News/Talk	\$350	1.50%
		WKCY	\$300	1.75%
		Rewind 105.1	\$300	1.50%
	Print Ads			
		Posters	\$100	0.50%
		Brochures	\$150	0.75%
		Business Cards	\$50	0.25%
		Daily News Record	\$250	1.25%
		Downtown Magazine	\$300	1.50%
Digital Marketing			\$4,750	23.75%
	Google Ads			
		Search Ads	\$1,775	8.90%
		Display Ads	\$1,775	8.90%
	Email Campaign			
		MailChimp	\$1,200	6.00%
Social Media Marketing			\$4,750	23.75%
	Facebook			
		Advertisements	\$1,350	6.75%
		Event Promotion	\$2,000	10.00%
	Instagram			
		Advertisements	\$1,400	7.00%
Support Media			\$1,500	7.50%
	Out of Home Ads			
		HDPT	\$300	1.50%
		Bridgeforth Stadium	\$560	2.80%
	In House Ads			
		Posters	\$90	0.45%
	Branded Product			
		Stickers, Pens, T-shirts	\$550	2.75%
Direct Marketing			\$1,500	7.50%
	Direct Mail			
		Mercy House Postcards	\$1,275	6.75%
	Email			
		Mercy House Email	\$200	1.00%
	Phone			
		Texts	\$25	0.01%
Sales Promotion			\$500	2.50%
	Brewery Partnership			
		Craft Beer	\$180	0.90%
	Loyalty			
		Punch card, T-shirt, Sweatshirt	\$270	1.35%
		Stickers	\$50	0.25%
Personal Selling			\$900	4.50%
	Text/Call			
			\$400	2%
	Community Outreach			
			\$400	2%
	Sales Training			
			\$100	0.50%
PR and Publicity			\$1,30	6.50%
	Newspaper Story			
			\$50	2.50%
	Radio Interview			
			\$200	1%
Sponsorship			\$2,000	10%
	Events			
		Bella Luna Venue	\$400	2%
		Food & Drinks	\$800	4%
		Digital Ads	\$300	1.50%
		Entertainment	\$150	0.75%
		Print Ads	\$300	1.50%
	Sponsorship Giveaway			
		Mercy House stickers	\$50	0.25%
Measurement and Evaluation			\$1,000	5%
Total Budget			\$20,000	100%



Budget Summary

Throughout this marketing campaign there will be multiple strategies implemented in order to raise awareness of the Mercy House's mission and overall donation quality. With a budget of \$20,000 for the entire campaign, Empact will be allocating funds to each segment of the marketing plan. Each section will describe in detail the choice of the medium and media channel in comparison to the amount allocated. The segments for fund allocation include traditional, digital, and social media advertising as well as direct marketing, support media, sales promotion, personal selling, PR, and sponsorship budgets.

Both digital advertising and social media advertising take up the largest portion of the overall budget. Digital advertising will allocate the budget to enhance Mercy House's platform through website amendments and advertisements. Search and display google advertisements will be used to target customers within the geographical area. These advertisements take up 17.8% of the total budget. The rest of the digital advertising will go to mail campaigns. Social Media advertising will utilize Facebook and Instagram as the mediums for promotional advertisements. These efforts will utilize 23.75% of the total budget.

The sponsorship budget will take up 10% of the total campaign budget. Most of the funds will be used for social events in which to engage customers and bring awareness to the community about Mercy House. Mercy House will be provided with the resources needed to create and co-host a community fundraising/awareness event that will directly gain the attention and interest of the primary and secondary target markets

Direct media and support media both take up \$1,500 to create which is both 7.5% of the total budget. Direct media costs will primarily be expensed through direct mail efforts. These postcards are to be sent to potential donors once every month that convey Mercy House's mission and provide a way for the receiver to learn more and/or respond. This will cost \$1275 of the digital media budget which is 6.4% of the total campaign budget. Support media will primarily be expensed to "out of home" advertising with \$300 and \$560 going towards bus advertising and bridge forth stadium advertising respectively.

Personal selling offers a \$900 expense to cover the costs of community outreach efforts, cell/text outreach, and sales training. Traditional advertising will use \$1,000 of funds that are allocated between radio, print, and television advertising.

Sales promotion and public relations utilize the smallest amount of funds. spending will be focused mainly on a brewery partnership to create a craft beer. This partnership will be highly cost-effective costing only \$180. Printing of punch cards will cost \$17 from VistaPrint and the cost of shirts and prizes will be \$50. Spending on sales promotion is small because many of the activities will support the objectives at no cost.



Measurement and Evaluation

Evaluation of Marketing Goals

This campaign's marketing goal is to increase donations to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items), in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023. To measure the success of this campaign in accomplishing this goal, measurement of donation and sales needs to be taken. In order to measure the relative increase, a baseline was established based on data from 2022 which was 15,000 items donated. Mercy House may also analyze donation events (when someone comes in to donate) by comparing past data to data collected in 2023. Mercy House will need to provide data on sales from Mercy House thrift stores from 2022 in order to compare with 2023. Mercy House should continue to track this data throughout 2023 and monitor success throughout the year.

Evaluation of Communication Objectives

To accomplish the campaign's marketing goal, communication objectives were established which align with each step of the consumer journey. Each objective has unique challenges and will be measured in different ways, as described below.

Increase awareness of Mercy House and Mercy House's mission, which is to house homeless families with dependent children, by 40% (an increase of 13,603 people) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023. This will require creating 25,192 impressions on people in the target audience.

This objective is accomplished through advertising recommendations. For the major ads, pretesting will be done to measure effectiveness. Pretesting will vary by media, but all will be tested to measure the effectiveness in communicating Mercy House's mission.

Ads that are run in support of this objective will be measured by total impressions. The method of measurement will vary by media. Engagement with these ads will also be measured, and the measurement technique will vary by media. Engagement can be measured by visits to a custom landing page for the ads. By taking into account total impressions and engagement, an estimated figure of awareness can be generated. This estimate can be modeled off of pretesting data and industry data.

Using this estimate of awareness, evaluation of success will be based on reaching the stated number of people, by the goal date.

Several media plan recommendations are in support of this communication objective and their measurement and evaluation are individually explained in the following section.

Increase awareness of the types and quality of donations needed to support homeless families in need by 60% among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by October 15th, 2023, to reduce items wasted by 40%.

This objective is accomplished through advertising recommendations. For the major ads, pretesting will be done to measure effectiveness. Pretesting will vary by media, but all will be tested to measure the effectiveness in communicating Mercy House's needs for donation quality.

Ads that are run in support of this objective will be measured by total impressions. The method of measurement will vary by media. Engagement with these ads will also be measured, and will vary by media. Engagement can be measured by visits to a custom landing page for the ads. By taking into account total impressions and engagement, an estimated figure of awareness can be generated. This



can be modeled off of pretesting data and industry data.

Using this estimate of awareness, evaluation of success will be based on reaching the stated number of people, by the goal date.

In addition to the measurement and evaluation of awareness, Mercy House should track the quality of donations they receive and evaluate success based on seeing an increase in donation quality by this metric. Alternatively, if this introduces too much overhead, this can be measured by how much has to be thrown away by Mercy House (as a percentage, not quantity).

Additionally, measurement of total number and percentage of donated items that have to be thrown out should be a factor considered. Waste should be reduced by 40% as a proportion of total items donated.

Several media plan recommendations are in support of this communication objective and their measurement and evaluation are individually explained in the following section.

Increase interest in donating to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 7,210) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 1st, 2023, measured by click-through rates and response rates.

To measure the movement of a consumer from awareness to interest, visits to the campaign's landing page will be used along with ad click-through rates and response rates on direct marketing. When a user visits the campaign landing page, they are signaling an interest in what they saw or heard in an ad or other promotional media. Measuring response on direct marketing and digital advertising clicks are indicators of interest that will be used in evaluation. In order to avoid double-counting someone as interested, only these discrete measures will be used in evaluating success. For evaluating individual efforts, more metrics can be used to measure their success.

Success will be determined through compiling this data and based on reaching the stated number of people by November 1st, 2023.

Increase the desire in donating to the Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 4,254) among the target audience in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County by November 23rd, 2023, measured by engagement on social media and looking at signs of brand equity.

Signals of desire will be measured through social media and by the success of direct interactions with consumers. Measurement of the number of people visiting Mercy House pages on social media and engaging with Mercy House on social media (sharing, liking, commenting) will be used to measure desire. Additionally, responses to direct interactions with consumers including the text and phone campaign and direct marketing campaigns (email, mail) will be measured. Number of interactions/responses and the overall contents of responses will be measured in order to evaluate the desire generated.

Evaluation of success based on these factors will be determined by compiling this data into an estimate of individuals who have a desire to donate, and whether that number reaches the goal by August 1st, 2023.

Increase donations to Mercy House by 40% (an increase of 1,319 people donating and 6,000 items) by November 30th, 2023 in order to increase sales by 25% by December 31st, 2023.

Measurement of this communication objective will be based on Mercy House's 2022 sales and donation records and the measurement of sales and donations throughout 2023. Evaluation of success will be



measured based on the relative increases in both metrics.

In order to determine if an increase in donations and sales is due to the campaign or due to other factors, Mercy House will need a method of attribution. Attribution for increases in donation can be estimated by asking people how they heard of the Mercy House when they donate. Recording this data can help to attribute increases in donation to the campaign or to other factors. Attribution of sales increases could be measured in the same way. In addition, donated items could potentially be tracked in the inventory management system to track an item donated as a result of the campaign, through to sale and then attribute that sale to the campaign.

Evaluation of Media Plan Recommendations:

Traditional Advertising

To evaluate the traditional advertising suggestions, A/B testing will be utilized. This will be useful with the radio ads, direct mail, newspaper and magazine ads, and more. This testing allows us to determine which version of an advertisement has the most positive reaction with consumers. From there, there will be an analysis of which version of the advertisements have the highest conversion rates and which efforts result in more traffic in the Mercy House thrift store.

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing objectives will be measured through site traffic metrics. The objective is to increase website interaction in order to reach more potential customers. Then, evaluation will take place to observe the effectiveness of the website. This will be completed through monitoring site traffic, conversion and click rates, and what ads are driving customers to the website.

Social Media Marketing

The social media recommendations for Mercy House will be measured and evaluated through analytical data provided from social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram that provide all necessary engagement factors concerning a given post, advertisement, event, and overall brand page. The data that is provided from Facebook and Instagram displays the reach, frequency, engagement rate, and much more that will aid in the successful measurement of the social media recommendations for Mercy House.

Support Media

Support media advertisements will be measured by analyzing conversion rates. This will allow us to look at the percentage of people interacting with the Google Search Ads so that effectiveness can be determined. These rates will also help us understand how many site visitors are further engaged with the content and express interest in the Mercy House thrift store and/or vision.

Direct Marketing

To measure the effectiveness of the direct marketing recommendations for Mercy House, a CRM system such as Hubspot will be used. Through the CRM software system, Mercy House will be provided engagement analytics such as number of clicks or opens as well as an integrated experience in terms of the ability to segment the newsletter, text, or email recipients by different demographics, characteristics, traits, and more.

Sales Promotion



Sales promotion objectives will be measured and evaluated through the event attendees and coupon redemptions related to the event. The sales promotions include limited time events where consumers are encouraged to both donate and purchase from the Mercy House thrift store. By measuring the event attendees, a count of how many people were exposed to the thrift store and responded to the promotion of the events. By measuring the coupon redemptions, the number of donations can be determined.

Personal Selling

Personal selling suggestions will be measured by sales data following the events. The personal selling suggestions include various time sensitive occurrences where donations are encouraged. By measuring the sales data after these events, analysis can be done to determine whether or not consumers were persuaded to interact with Mercy House more.

Public Relations & Publicity

Public relations and publicity will be used to promote events and to share stories from inside the Mercy House's mission.

To measure the success of event promotion, the events will have optional surveys asking how attendees heard of the event, this will provide attribution data to determine how effective the PR was. In addition, the news articles will be measured by their reach online and on social media to see if the story was well received.

To measure the success of public relations activities sharing stories from inside Mercy House the measurements will be based on engagement as a result of the activities and the reach garnered by the media outlet running the story.

Sponsorship

Mercy House's sponsorships with local charities, nonprofits, restaurants, and student clubs/organizations will be measured by engagement and reach. Counting the number of individuals who directly interact with sponsored events or fundraisers will be used to measure the reach of these activities. In addition, sponsored events where a special code is used, the use of that code will be tracked to attribute success to the sponsored event. Evaluation of individual sponsorship activities will be based on these measures.



Conclusion

This Integrated Marketing Campaign Plan has been assembled by Empact Agency to successfully aid Mercy House in executing their communication goals of increasing awareness in their mission and the types of quality donations needed, as well as an increase in the interest to donate, the desire to donate, and an overall increase in donations. Through evaluating Mercy House, what their organization stands for, and the factors that may lead to or have an impact on their current issues, Empact Agency identified solutions for Mercy House to implement which will contribute to their overall prosperity. Through extensive industry and market research, Empact Agency identified the primary and secondary target markets that will be focused on throughout the entirety of the plan constructed for Mercy House. After obtaining an in-depth understanding of the markets, specific objectives, strategies, and tactics have been created for Mercy House to implement through different marketing and advertising channels. These will lead to the success of Mercy House achieving their goals to generate awareness and donations.

The primary resources that will be focused on to reach the primary and secondary target audience of Mercy House are digital and social media advertising. The primary market of families in the Harrisonburg and Rockingham County area will gain a stronger sense of awareness of Mercy House and their mission, their local impact on the community, and ways they can contribute to making a difference, specifically by making donations. The secondary target market of college students within the Harrisonburg and Rockingham County area will become more aware of Mercy House within the community as well as ways students can assist in making a positive impact through donations, volunteering, and aiding in generating more awareness. Through digital marketing, these objectives will be achieved through creating a better Mercy House website experience, implementing Google Search Ads, and mail campaigns. Through social media marketing, Mercy House will gain the awareness, interest, and donations desired from their target markets by maintaining a strong brand presence on social media platforms, creating an interactive experience for followers and/or viewers, creating an atmosphere where the audience can get a more personable understanding of what goes on at Mercy House and the micro-level difference they make, and consistently promoting events, fundraising, and ways to donate. Various forms of print media, newsletters, mail, in-house and out-of-house advertisements will be utilized to contribute to the increase of awareness and donations for Mercy House. Through establishing a stronger presence and personal relationship with the Harrisonburg and Rockingham County community, Mercy House will achieve their communication objectives and goals in a successful manner.

Proceeding December 31st, 2023 when the proposed integrated marketing campaign plan ends, Empact Agency advocates for Mercy House to continue their efforts in implementing the media plans used throughout the year. As Mercy House continues to gain a better understanding of their target markets, how to reach them, and how to generate donations, the specific objectives, strategies, and tactics for each media plan may be altered to benefit Mercy House in the ways deemed necessary. Through regularly assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed plan and making the necessary changes, Mercy House will prosper in their efforts to increase overall awareness, interest, and donations to Mercy House.





Appendix

Traditional Advertising

MERCY HOUSE

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...Love your neighbor as yourself."
~ Matthew 22:37, 39



© 2014 Mercy House
1005 S HIGH STREET
HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA 22803
Open M-F 9am-5:30pm & Saturday 9am-5pm
Make a difference in our community, today.

YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU...

There are over 125 homeless in Harrisonburg, 22% are children

Help the cause by donating lightly used clothing, furniture, books, appliances to Mercy House. All proceeds go to Mercy House's efforts to fight homelessness and poverty.

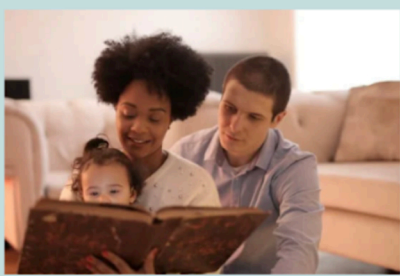


MERCY HOUSE
est. 1988

FOR MORE INFO, PLEASE VISIT WWW.MERCYHOUSE.COM

Make a Difference.

Donate to Help Local Families



MERCY HOUSE
www.themercyhouse.org

MERCY HOUSE
est. 1988

Digital Marketing



Mercy House Email Letter

Hello Neighbor!

Spring cleaning season is among us! We are kindly seeking out donations of any type to be brought into Mercy House. We are looking for gently used items that are not limited to furniture, clothing, books, homeware, and home appliances.

Here at Mercy House, all proceeds go to help fight financial distress and homelessness in the Harrisonburg community. Mercy House continues to serve families with dependent children and maintains a focus on building and strengthening family unity. You can help these families buy simply by donating items that are no longer useful to you.

Please visit our website for more information about the Mercy House mission. Please [Click here](#) to visit our site! You can also visit our social media accounts to stay updated about the Mercy House community.

Best regards,
Teddy Yuhui
 Teddy Yuhui
 Mercy House Representative

Good Donations

- Used, lightly worn furniture
- Minimal stain and rips, lightly worn clothing
- Clean lightly used appliances

Poor Donations

- Large rips and tears in furniture
- Dirty and rusty Appliances
- Ripped, torn or heavily stained clothing


 Follow Us!
 540-432-1812
 sporter@themercyhouse.org



MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER



WWW.THEMERCYHOUSE.ORG



Mercy House

Make a Difference, Today.

Visit us at www.TheMercyHouse.org



Social Media

Support the Mercy House Homeless Shelter

Donate Proceeds fund our fight against poverty and homelessness

Clothing, Books, Toys, Household Goods, Furniture, & Vehicles
Please, Only in Resale Conditions

1005 N High St. Harrisonburg, VA



Help us make a difference

Donate

Help us combat homelessness and poverty



THEMERCYHOUSE.ORG



YOUR KINDNESS CAN GO A LONG WAY.



CLEAN YOUR CLOSET!

Donate your old clothes to Mercy House this spring

LEARN MORE AT WWW.THEMERCYHOUSE.ORG



Support Media

Interior Bus Ads



DONATE TODAY!

We are looking for quality donations from YOU

- Gently used couches with minimal tears/rips
- Lightly worn tables no large damage
- Lightly worn desks
- Gently used chairs



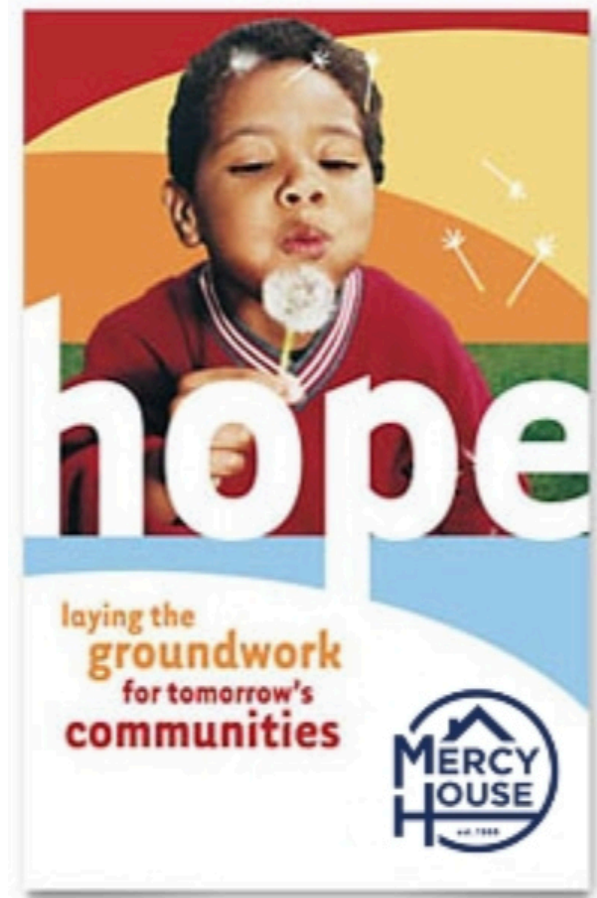
Direct Marketing



Hey John Doe! Summer is right around the corner, The Mercy House is looking for some warm weather donations!

Give back to your local community. We look forward to seeing you soon!

For more information on The Mercy House and donation standards, see www.themercyhouse.org



Sales Promotion



A promotional graphic with a yellow background. At the top is the 'MERCY HOUSE' logo with 'est. 1988' below it. The text 'BOGO WEEK' is prominently displayed in large, bold, blue letters. Below this, it says 'BRING ONE, GET ONE' and 'Donate one item, get one item for free!'. A circular inset image shows the interior of a clothing store with racks of clothes. There are decorative white dots in the top-left and bottom-right corners.



Personal Selling

Mercy House Donation Pick-Up

Moving out?
Too much stuff?

When?
5/15/22

Clothing
No rips
No major stains

Appliances
Working
and clean

Furniture
light wear and tear

Why Donate?

- ✓ Help a family in need
- ✓ Give to your local community
- ✓ Donate over throwing away
- ✓ You can make a difference

Where is Pick-Up?

Look for a Mercy House donation box in you Apartment Club House

Mercy House Store
1005 S High Street
Harrisonburg VA
22801

Learn more about us
Mercyhouse.com

**DONATION
DROP OFF**

Please make sure that all donations are at
resellable quality



Public Relations and Publicity

MERCY HOUSE SUCCESS STORY - NEWS ARTICLE

Want to Learn More?

Provide Mercy House socials, website, etc.

Mercy House's Testimony

Display info about testimonial

Give individuals helped by MH the opportunity to write a story based off of our questions

The Breeze

JMU'S AWARD-WINNING NEWSPAPER SINCE 1922
APRIL 7, 2022 VOL. 100 NO. 25 BREEZE@JMU.ORG

Why you should Donate to Mercy House

When first walking into Tropicita Taco Bar, guests are greeted by a wall painting of Mission pastor Fray Ruffalo behind the bar stand. The left side of the restaurant is a dining area, and the walls are covered in colorful drawings of children with handwritten names, creating a typical *de los* atmosphere.

The bar, which offers specialty drinks like margaritas, is on the right side of the restaurant. The ceiling has blue and white flowers hanging from it while guests sit at these tables. The mouth-watering smell of Mission food wafts through the air before the food is even brought out. The sounds of various pop artists, such as Pitbull, can be heard, giving the restaurant an atmosphere of a hangout spot.

"Pretty much what it is, it is Mission street food that you will find in the streets of Mexico, and I just brought it under one roof," manager Tony Ryan says.

Ryan is the manager and owner of the Tropicita. Four days before the start of the 2020 semester, Ryan took the place of Harrisonburg's popular pizza shop, *Brooklyn's*, when it shut down during the pandemic. Instead of being a Mission restaurant that only focuses on meals, Ryan said he wants Tropicita Taco Bar to be a place for people to hang out with friends while enjoying a drink and a meal.

What's inside

Tropicita has opened its doors this past Valentine's Day, but the long process of taking over the building and creating a new hangout spot for both JMU students and local residents didn't start in January 2020. Ryan said that while developing the concept of the restaurant, he was looking for college towns and asked an Harrisonburg area one of his family members owned Mexican restaurant in the area such as El Charro and Los Gallos Patisserie. Ryan said he moved from Springfield, Tennessee, in January 2020 to start the business in Harrisonburg, and his family moved the following May.

Fighting homelessness in Harrisonburg

By ABILYN CAMPBELL
The Breeze

Sitting in the auditorium of Wilson Hall, a voice can be heard as the JMU community said in an October interview with The Breeze that the money will help JMU collect an annual address visit return to the JMU community. "It's very intentional about that," Adams said. "It's not just something that's going to be another annual session April 15. The fall report and PowerPoint for the study will be released after the last presentation."

A school's climate is defined by Rankin & Associates Consultant as the attitudes and

breezejmu · Follow

breezejmu
Join Mercy House at Bella Luna to talk about how your donations make a difference. Learn more about Mercy Houses' mission and how to donate.

When: May 3rd, 2022
Where: Bella Luna

Tw

👍👍👍 Liked by he.e.ba and 126 others

APRIL 9

😊 Add a comment... [Post](#)

Harrisonburg News

Monday, 21/03/2022

Mercy House Miracles: How this thrift store is changing the lives of local families

[Read More](#) www.reallygreatsite.com

Sponsorships

*Bella Luna's Wood-Fired
Pizza*

A PIZZA PARTY FOR A CAUSE

A Fundraising Effort for
Mercy House

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2023
6PM-8PM | BELLA LUNA
HARRISONBURG, VA**

Join us for an evening of delicious pizza, fellowship, and the opportunity to learn more about Mercy House and make an impact. Buy your tickets now at www.theMercyHouse.org

EAT FOR CHANGE

Make dinner a selfless act by joining us for a fundraiser to support The Mercy House. Come in to the Chipotle at 1615 Reservoir Street, Harrisonburg, VA on **Friday, April 8th** between **5:00pm and 9:00pm**. Bring in this flyer, show it on your smartphone or tell the cashier you're supporting the cause to make sure that 50% of the proceeds will be donated to Firefighter Burn Institute.

Support the Mercy House at Village Kitchen & Juice!

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE





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