UNITUS COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION – CONTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHT

Top-Takeaways

1 Use the credit union’s physical space to promote the campaign - signs on buildings go a long way.

2 Enlist staff and advocates to spread the campaign through their individual social networks.

3 Utilize messaging recommendations in local marketing efforts.

By the time the Pacific Northwest Open Your Eyes to a Credit Union® (OYE) digital campaign got underway in January 2020, many consumers in the region already had a preview of the effort, courtesy of an ardent advocate: Unitus Community Credit Union.

Unitus is a 100,000-member credit union based in Portland, OR, serving 15 counties in Oregon and all of Washington State.

As an early contributing member of Open Your Eyes, Unitus had full access to the panoply of messaging, graphics and promotional ideas available to participating credit unions. And they had a marketing challenge on the ground at their flagship building at Unitus Plaza in downtown Portland.
The plaza is in the heart of Portland’s financial district, literally in the shadow of major banks. The city-center is a vibrant transportation hub and sees heavy commuter traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular. The credit union saw an opportunity to increase its visibility so consumers could connect to the benefits of joining a credit union. It sought to enhance consumers’ awareness of Unitus as a credit union and not just a place in downtown Portland.

Using the OYE campaign’s distinctive black and white portraits on a white background, Unitus posted signs with a variety of images and headlines along a glass wall around the headquarters perimeter, promoting the advantages of banking with a credit union. The signs, each sporting the Unitus logo, were also posted in branches throughout their service area.

Many of Unitus’ new members are referrals by member friends and family, so the organization also seeks to encourage word-of-mouth advertising by featuring the Open Your Eyes campaign on its website and on social media. Staff customized, downloaded, and posted material from Contributor HQ, the source of creative assets and materials for campaign contributors to utilize. As new material is made available by the campaign, Unitus updates its posts.

Unitus has further extended the campaign’s reach by leveraging social media posts from the campaign’s Your Money Further Facebook account. Unitus shares posts from the Your Money Further Facebook account and adds their own spin to the message in the comments section.

“It is all about engagement,” says Lori Fink, Marketing Manager for Unitus. “Sharing posts from others, such as Your Money Further, reinforces the Unitus message, giving it added credibility,” she says. “Credit union members often join in the conversation, which is valuable for Unitus,” she adds. “If our members are talking about us and talking about credit unions in general, we just love letting them do it, and we can come around and reiterate what they say.”

Credit Union Awareness has benefited all credit unions in each state where it is running. Contributing credit unions have the added advantage of gaining immediate access to campaign materials that they can use and align with their marketing goals. The marketing ideas, easy-to-use graphics that can be customized with a credit union’s brand, and market-tested messaging can be blended with a credit union’s existing marketing assets to strengthen its presence in a community.
Lori believes the Open Your Eyes campaign has had a positive effect on the credit union. So does Steven Stapp, President and Chief Executive Officer. “Unitus has experienced strong membership growth throughout the year, and we believe part of that growth is a direct result of sharing the Open Your Eyes to a Credit Union campaign’s messaging,” he says. “This initiative gives us the opportunity to advance our movement on a broad scale, better enabling us to keep money flowing into local communities, increasing social mobility for those less fortunate, and creating a better world by respecting and uplifting the individuals in our communities.”

Open Your Eyes to a Credit Union is the Credit Union Awareness brand platform and is designed to help drive consumers to credit unions.

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—Steven Stapp, President and Chief Executive Officer

Note: Access to campaign content is available to credit unions participating in Credit Union Awareness. For more information please email: awareness@cuna.coop.