

Covenant Ballet Case Study

Background: Covenant Ballet Theatre, a nonprofit dance company in Brooklyn, NY, lost the use of their rehearsal space when a rare hurricane destroyed the building in late 2012. Making matters worse, they didn't have enough money to afford rent on comparable-sized spaces. In desperation, they took to *Fund Anything*, a crowdfunding site, in April 2013 hoping to raise \$19,000.

Problem: Covenant Ballet's fundraising campaign was languishing. Halfway into the 12-week campaign, they had raised only a fraction of their goal (\$3K). The clock was ticking; *Fund Anything* required campaigns to reach their goals in order to collect donations.

Solution: I wrote a single email for the company. The email, while pithy, contained a big idea which connected the company to ballet's glorious history. The email was sent to the company's internal list (200-400).

Result: Covenant Ballet raised \$3.5K in the three days after the email was sent. That bump pushed the campaign to *Fund Anything's* front page, which attracted the attention of Donald Trump. Mr. Trump donated \$2.5K, which set off a new round of publicity and ensured the campaign stayed on the front page for several more days. When the campaign closed, Covenant Ballet kept all the proceeds because they had exceeded their \$19K funding goal.

Conclusion: Past donors need fresh incentives to give.

Creative

[Email sample](#)

[Wall Street Journal Article](#)