

THREAD  
Fundraising

# The Popcorn Principle

## Craig Linton

Fundraising  
can sometimes  
be like...





proposing on a  
first date...

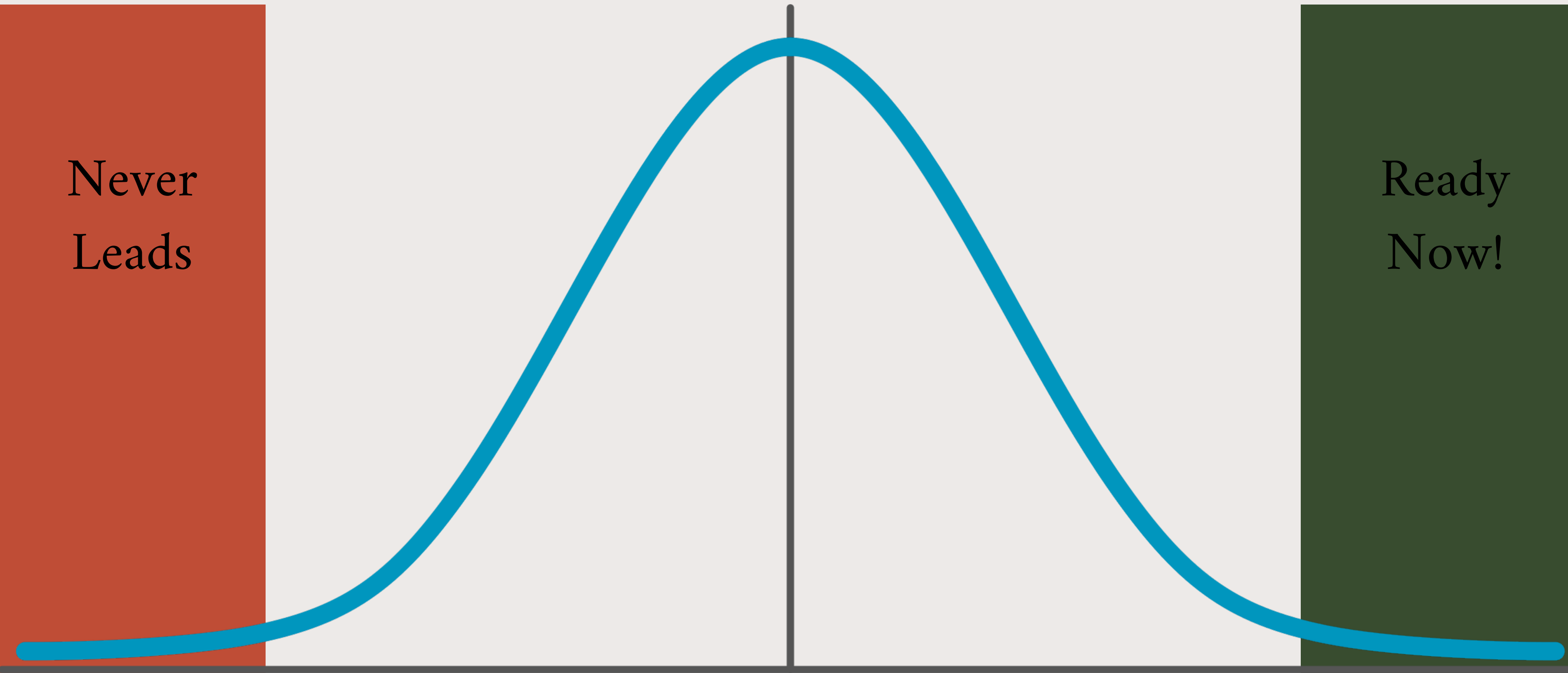




# Now / Later / Never Lead Distribution

Never  
Leads

Ready  
Now!





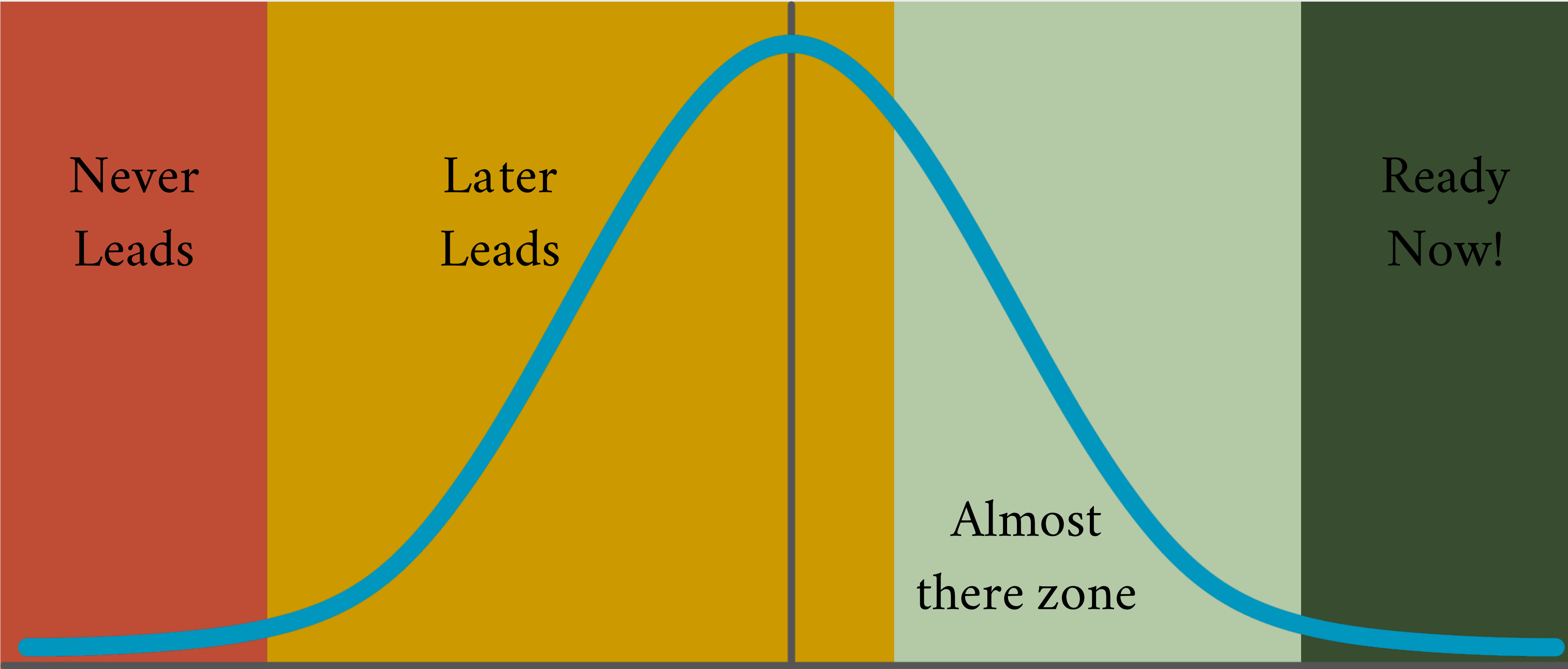
# Now / Later / Never Lead Distribution

Never  
Leads

Later  
Leads

Ready  
Now!

Almost  
there zone



# Need to ask when time is right for the supporter, but...

...the people ready to give changes every day

- Inspiration
- Saliency
- Lifestyle
- Something they've heard or seen
- Good or bad news
- An anniversary or important personal moment
- Etc, etc



If we treat everyone as 'ready now'...

...then this is where the popcorn comes in!









Some pop straight away...

Some need time to warm up...

Some never pop...

...and some might burn if you heat them  
too quickly!



Generating a consistent flow of new supporters is NOT just about converting a higher percentage of new leads, it's also about identifying the supporters who are already in your audience who want to help NOW.

# Ready now questions

Has some  
you love been  
affected by X  
cause  
recently?

Did you see  
something  
in the news  
that made  
you want to  
take action?

Have you  
donated to  
another  
charity like  
ours in the  
past?

Would you  
like to mark  
an  
anniversary  
/special  
date?

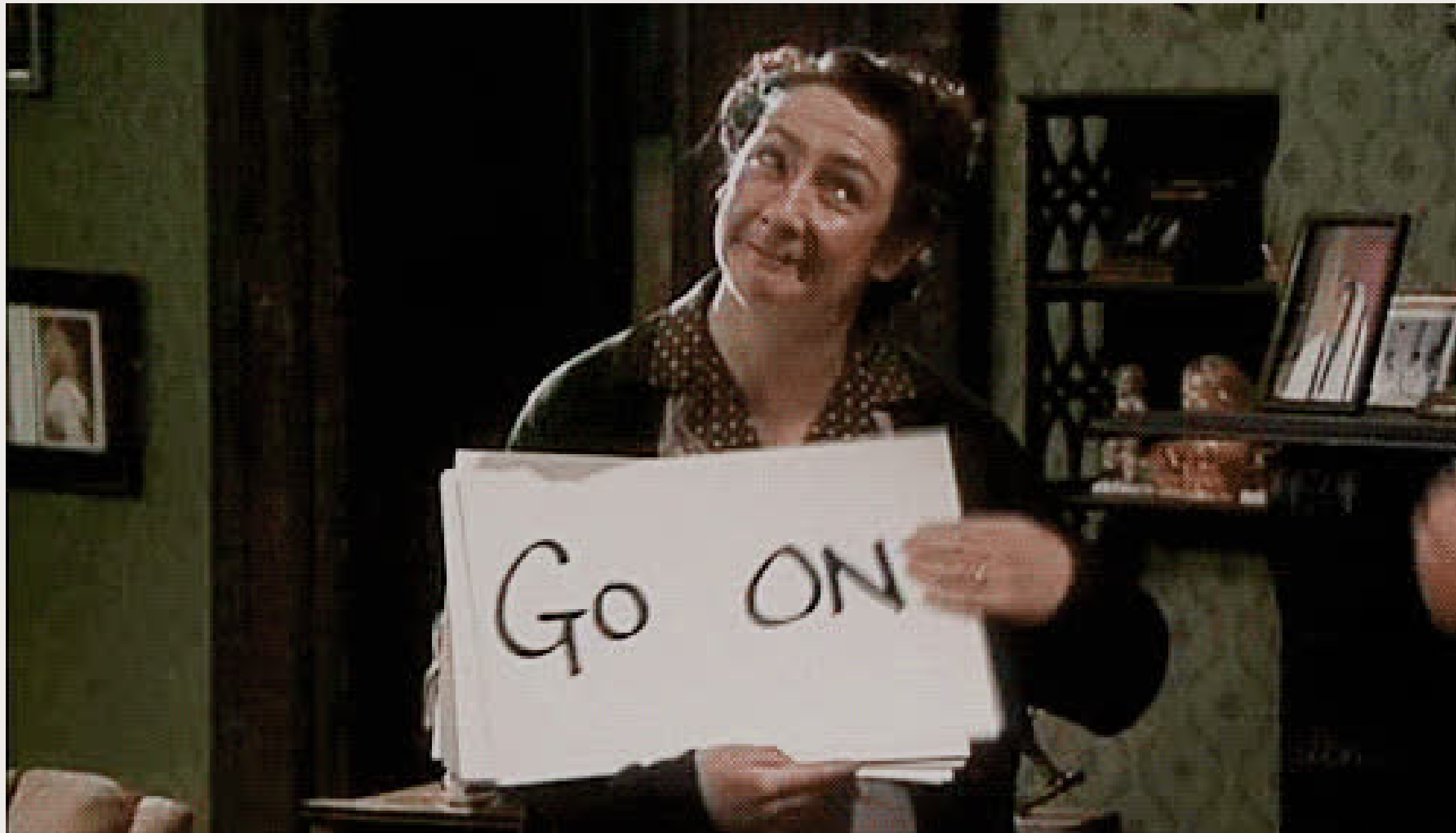
Would you  
like to  
make a  
difference  
in under a  
minute?

Want to see  
your  
impact  
instantly?

Can we  
text you  
updates as  
things  
happen?



# Applying the right amount of heat...



The Mrs Doyle error: You will, you will, you will.....

Mistake 1: too much, too soon

# Applying the right amount of heat...

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14
Ask	Ask	Ask	Content	Ask	Ask	Ask	Ask	Content	Ask	Ask	Ask	Content	Ask

Turn up heat too quickly and for too long and you'll “burn out” your best leads



# Applying the right amount of heat...



The tumble weed approach.....

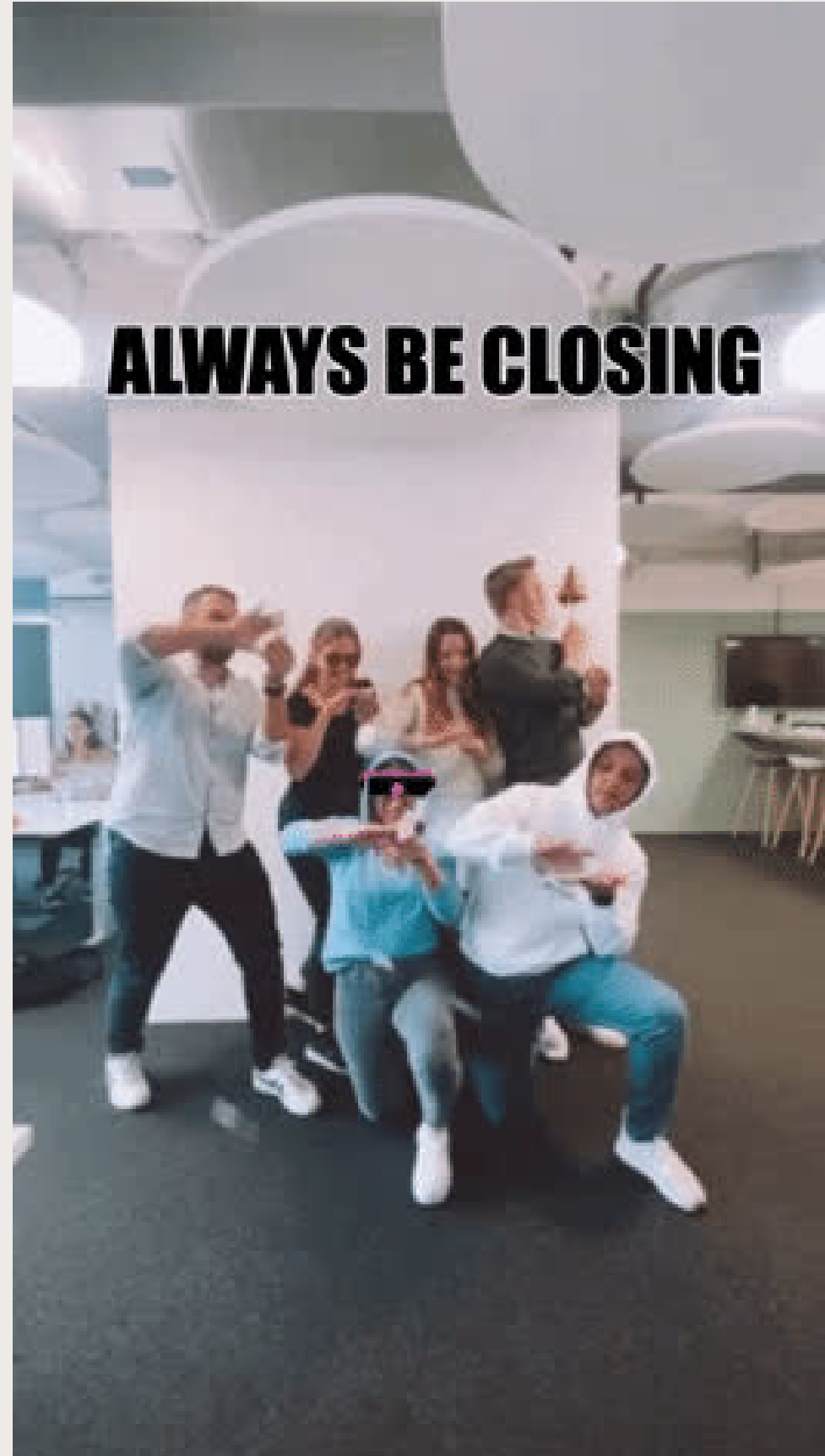
Mistake 2: turn down the “heat” and your best leads never pop.

# Applying the right amount of heat...

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14
Content	Content		Ask	Content			Content					Content	

Turn up heat too slowly and your leads will forget about you.

# Want donations every day / week / month?





# Use segmentation and re-optimization

[illegible]

# Adding some flavour to your popcorn...





Passive  
segmentation  
and asking



# The perfect PS



A pre-written P.S. that subtly lays out in detail other ways supporters can take the next step to engage or give when they are ready to ‘pop’



# The perfect PS

The Guardian use this to brilliant effect- consume content then get asked to support their work.

11:26

43

Article count on

***Congratulations on being one of our top readers globally - you've read **1495 articles** in the last year***

## **Now is not the time to look away**

It's the Guardian's job to keep a close focus on events in the Middle East for our global audience.

With reporters sharing live updates around the clock, including from inside Gaza, we're well-placed to provide comprehensive, fact-checked reporting to show the world what is happening in the region. But we can't do it without your support.

We rely on the generosity of our readers, whose support helps to keep our correspondents on the ground and our reporting free from commercial or political influence.

We appreciate that not everyone can afford to pay for news, but if you can, can we count on your support? Here are three good reasons to make the choice to fund us today:

- 1.** Our quality, investigative journalism is a scrutinising force.
- 2.** We are independent and have no billionaire owner dictating what we do - your money directly powers our reporting.
- 3.** It doesn't cost much, and takes less time than it took to read this message.

**Choosing to back us on a monthly basis makes the most impact, meaning we can continue to cover the story from every angle: the conflict, the plight of those affected and what it all**

# The perfect PS

## Under pressure, undeterred

The urgent threats facing the free press today would have been unimaginable for most of the Guardian's 204-year history. With big tech, billionaires, and authoritarians seizing more control of the world's news and information, our independent journalism needs your support. **We value whatever you can spare, but a monthly subscription makes the most impact, enabling greater investment in our most crucial, fearless journalism. Thank you.**

☐ Support £4/monthly

Recommended

☒ **Support £12/monthly**

- ✓ Unlimited access to the Guardian app
- ✓ Far fewer asks for support
- ✓ Ad-free reading
- ✓ Exclusive newsletter for supporters
- ✓ Unlimited access to the Feast app

☐ Support with another amount

Continue →

# The perfect PS

P.S. Last spring, the bluebells were breathtaking. Next spring, they could be gone. Here's how you can help stop that.

Spread the word: Print our poster and share the forest's story in your window.

Speak up: Send a short note to your MP asking them to protect what's left.

Keep it growing: Become a monthly Friend of the Trust and give the forest a future, not a deadline.



# Re-registration Campaigns

**Delivers tasty content flavoured to the interest of certain supporters.**

Ask your leads and supporters to temporarily opt-in to additional content and deep dives. Move from one flavour to multi-flavour and only serve to those who are interested.

# Re-reg content ideas

Inside stories  
or behind the  
scenes with  
front-line  
colleagues

Webinar and  
additional  
content on a  
specific area  
of your  
work

Additional  
stories and  
content

Deep dive  
into your  
impact and  
the difference  
the supporter  
makes

Breaking  
news alerts  
via SMS or  
WhatsApp

Gratitude  
series - feel  
good  
stories of  
impact

E-course  
on an  
aspect of  
your work

# Putting it all together





# Migrant Help - lead gen

**What kind  
of Local  
Welcomer  
are you?**

Solidarity Starter? Advocate?  
Community Ally? Hope Sharer?



**Take our  
1-minute quiz**

**Discover your  
refugee-welcoming  
style... and what  
you bring to your  
community in London.**



# Migrant Help - lead gen

## Take Our Quiz and Discover Your Welcoming Style

❤️ "I'm ready to welcome a neighbour."

✅ What kind of Local Welcomer are you?

Take our 1-minute quiz to find out.

You'll see your results and badge at the end — plus hear inspiring stories from people near you.

This free quiz is brought to you by Migrant Help — we support refugees and people seeking safety in the Scotland.

When it comes to welcoming refugees, what matters most to you? \*

- ☐ 🛠️ Offering practical, hands-on help
- ☐ 🤝 Making people feel safe and supported
- ☒ ⚖️ Standing up for fairness and dignity
- ☐ 🧑🏫 Helping children feel safe and welcome
- ☐ 🤗 I just care, I want to do something

What role do you usually take in your community? \*

- ☐ 👂 I'm a listener and quiet supporter
- ☐ 🗨️ I organise and bring people together
- ☐ 🧱 I prefer to help behind the scenes
- ☒ 💬 I speak out and share what matters online
- ☐ 🌱 I haven't done much, yet, but I want to start

← PREV

NEXT →



# Migrant Help - lead gen



**Craig, You're a Nurturer From Scotland.**

You are the kind of person who leads with care, making children and families feel safe and supported.

Want to help welcome people in your community and make a donation?

Yes

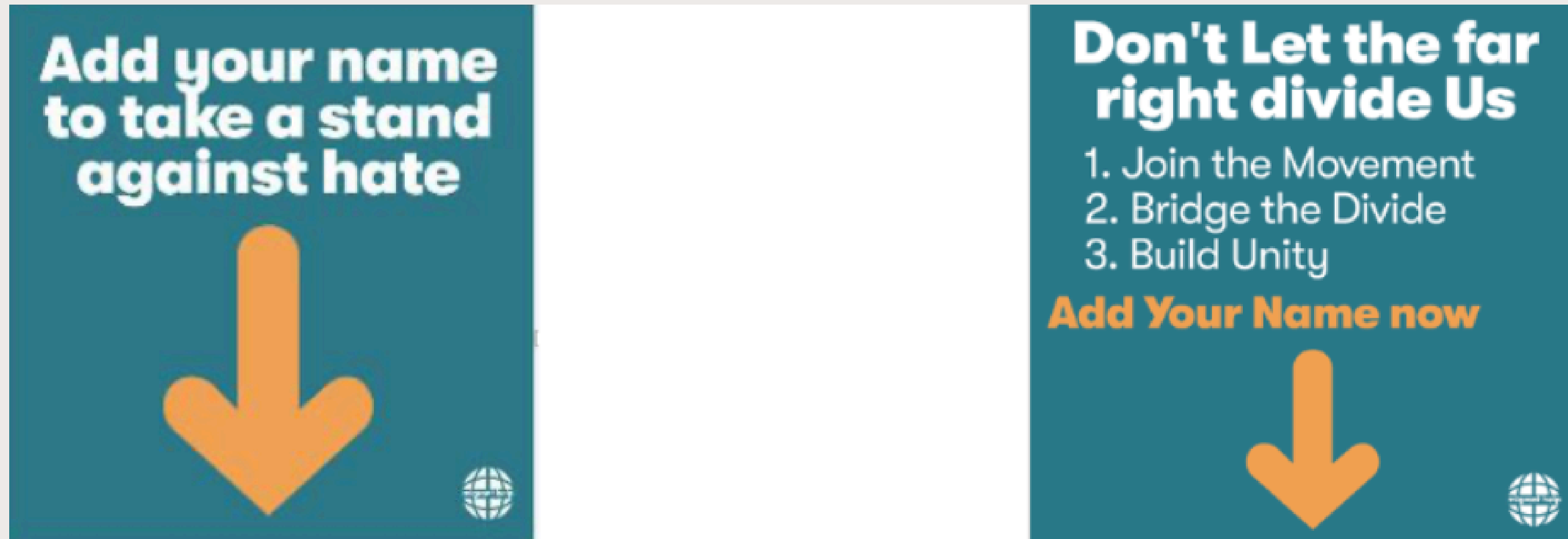
No



Everyone gets emails tailored to their quiz answers.



# Migrant Help - lead gen



# Migrant Help - lead gen

## Yes, I'll add my voice and welcome refugees in my community



Refugees are being targeted with lies and fear. But caring and compassionate people like you are pushing back with welcome.

Last year, over 5,000 people signed up to our anti-racism guide.

Why not join them and add your name. Together we can show what solidarity looks like.

Our free guide is full of tools to counter misinformation, challenge prejudice, and stand up for what you believe in. Thanks for signing up.

9829

Help us get to 10000

### Add your name to stand with refugees.

First Name \*

First Name is required

Email \*

Email is required

I'd like to be emailed stories of hope and other info from Migrant Help on how my support makes a difference. \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Are you sure? If you click 'Yes', we can update you on the impact and how you can help us.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Yes, I'll add my name

# Migrant Help - lead gen

**Thanks, Craig! You'll get your Welcome Guide soon.**

Would you consider a small monthly gift?

Yes

No

**You just took a stand. Now meet Layla.**

Layla fled war with her two children. She thought they'd be safe in the UK. Instead, they were placed in a hotel where far-right protestors gathered outside — shouting abuse and throwing stones. Her children are now too scared to leave the room.

"We escaped violence, only to find it again," she said.

Your voice helps push back against this hate.

**Now, will you take the next step?**

Your donation could provide warm clothes, toys, and trauma support for children like Layla's.

**Chip in £5 to help families like Layla's feel safe again**



# Migrant Help - ready now and re-reg



Dear Craig, a loud minority is spreading hate. But across the UK, people like you are showing what we really stand for — unity, compassion, and welcome.

Most of us want to live in peace and support one another, no matter our background.

Your voice proves that hate won't define our communities.

Will you send a message of solidarity to refugees — to let them know they're not alone?

[SEND YOUR MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY](#)

Thank you for being part of this movement. Together, we're stronger.

Best wishes

**Arjun**

My name is Patience, and I've called Glasgow, Scotland, home since July 2022. It's here — amidst challenges and change — that I'm building a new sense of belonging.

On my first day at a health centre in Glasgow, I was scared, unwell, and had almost lost all hope. I wore a pink scarf that day, and a nurse noticed it immediately.

"I love the paisley print on your scarf," she said. "Did you know this will be your new home now?"

That moment felt like a small sign from the universe — a feather on my shoulder. Maybe, just maybe, I could be safe here.

Migrant Help supported me with shelter, food, clothes, and, most importantly, care. They gave me access to counselling and a safe place to heal.

Later, they encouraged me to join their Lived Experience Advisory Panel — a group of people like me using our stories to shape better services.

Since then, I've co-created a podcast for New Scots, run workshops, and begun a degree in community development at the University of Glasgow.

Migrant Help made me feel like I matter.

[Yes, share more stories of hope](#)

Thank you for standing with people like me,

# Migrant Help - perfect PS

*P.S. Whenever you're ready, here are three ways you can learn more and get involved in helping to promote community harmony and support refugees and people seeking asylum.*

- 1. We work with refugees every day. People who have faced unimaginable hardship — and are now rebuilding with courage. Would you like to hear more stories of hope? Click [here](#) and we'll send you an extra selection of curated stories.*
- 2. Our resource library is a curated list of [interesting articles, links and inspiring stories](#) of how people and communities are rallying round to welcome and support migrants.*
- 3. Step up and join hundreds of others who show solidarity by [making a regular gift to Migrant Help](#). Every donation helps us provide services, support and safety to people facing the toughest of circumstances. Sign up [here](#) and join the movement.*

# Re-reg content

Refugee  
film watch  
along

Deep dive  
into  
trafficking

Anti-  
racism e-  
guide

Meet the  
team -  
Q&A  
webinar

Additional  
stories on  
topics

Personalised  
comms  
based on  
survey/quiz



# Results

Leads from  
39p to  
£1.01

74% email  
optin

0.8% initial  
donation

24% asking  
for  
additional  
stories

Conversion  
rate in first  
6 weeks of  
1.8%-4.1%

Cost per  
new donor  
<£30!

# Want to apply the popcorn principle in your fundraising?

Check out our work:

**[threadfundraising.com](https://threadfundraising.com)**

Get in touch if you have follow-up questions or would like to explore working together:

**[hello@threadfundraising.com](mailto:hello@threadfundraising.com)**

**Special offer to try our Thread Supporter Journey, Lead Gen and Experience Platform in the delegate pack.**

**THREAD**  
Fundraising

# What do we do?

THREAD  
Consultancy

THREAD  
Insight

THREAD  
Digital

THREAD  
Experience

THREAD  
Learning

+ Custom  
solutions