

Arco + Associates Case Study: SSM Health Foundation – St. Louis

The Challenge: SSM Health Foundation – St. Louis is a local nonprofit dedicated to fundraising to support the needs of SSM Health hospitals, caregivers, and their patients in the St. Louis, St. Charles, and Metro-East region. With a limited staff overseeing the marketing communications initiatives for several campaigns to support the funding for six different hospitals throughout the city, the Foundation found themselves in need of a creative partner. With multiple fundraising priorities for the year and prospective donor audiences that varied from SSM Health employees to individual donors to corporate sponsors, SSM Health Foundation – St. Louis recognized their growing need for streamlined communications and a comprehensive strategy. In addition, the Foundation found themselves unexpectedly faced with another pivotal challenge in early 2020 that demanded swift and strategic messaging: the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Solution: SSM Health Foundation – St. Louis sought an agency that could act as an extension of their internal marketing team. After several agencies submitted proposals, Arco + Associates was chosen because of our partnership-minded approach and history of strategic competence, nimble execution, and client results. In our deep-dive meeting to gain a 360-degree understanding of the Foundation's goals, priorities, and challenges, we determined that SSM Health Foundation – St. Louis was in need of a strategy that would streamline all of their varying messaging and fundraising needs into a single, comprehensive plan. In addition, we were called upon to help SSM Health Foundation – St. Louis respond swiftly to the COVID-19 crisis by developing a comprehensive communications and marketing plan for their SSM Health Urgent Response Fund—a fund designed to support the emerging needs of frontline caregivers and patients during crisis times.

The Results: In just 8 weeks, Arco + Associates created and began executing on a comprehensive 12-month marketing strategy that encompassed all 2020 priority fundraising initiatives and defined targeted messaging for employee, individual, and corporate donor audiences. At the same time, we immediately began executing on communications to address the COVID-19 pandemic and increase fundraising to support frontline health care workers and patients in St. Louis. In this time, we produced:



- Messaging for a concentrated COVID-19 Urgent Response Fund campaign which raised half a million dollars
- Two funding case statements
- A 12-month integrated communications plan with a month-by-month breakdown of deliverables
- A template and strategic plan for ongoing e-newsletters to further engage donors and nurture both internal and external relationships
- A print advertising plan
- A public relations strategy resulting in 10 media hits
- A social media profile audit and optimization, complete with an ongoing social strategy and training for SSM Health Foundation – St. Louis's internal marketing team