

# How Australia's Largest Domestic Charity Grew its Digital Fundraising by 298%+



**Janine Kewming**



**Kyle Vermeulen**



- Context and Challenges
- Results
- Six Key Lessons
- Q&A



# About the Salvos

 Disaster & Emergency

 Homelessness

 Family & Domestic Violence

 Youth

 Alcohol & Other Drugs

 Poverty & Financial Hardship



2019



## 2019: Fundraising Challenges

Primary strategy for revenue was individual giving appeals – heavy reliance on DM.

Legacy brand w/ aging donor base.

Total active donors and cash gifts in decline.

Low new donor acquisition, dominated by print tactics.

## 2019: Team Challenges

Two separate regional based teams with different approaches, cultures, and Marcomms styles.

Starting transitioning to run campaigns as a single team

Nearly 40% vacancies

Organizational upheaval

## **2019: Digital Challenges**

Two separate CRMs, old tech stack.

Perception that digital was support channel only.

Very limited investment in digital and paid advertising.

Digital campaigns were carbon copy of Direct Mail.

## CHALLENGE

Delivering through change and with new staff (or no staff) in key positions caused delays, tension and stress.



## RECOMMENDATION

Project process, governance, roles & responsibilities will provide clarity.

The approach to Red Shield Appeal hadn't changed in 5 years, but the market had.



Moving with the market will safeguard future revenue.

There are many chefs in the digital kitchen.



Developing digital as a centre of excellence will boost brand and revenue.

## OUR GOAL

To grow new donor acquisition and overall fundraising revenue by connecting with potential and existing donors through digital channels.

# Melbourne passes Buenos Aires' world record for time spent in COVID-19 lockdown



# In four weeks we went from...

FROM



TO

Domestic Violence

Supporting our COVID Response

Door knock

Digital Door Knock

Ambassador influence

An army of micro-influencers

Shaking real buckets

Shaking a digital bucket

In-person events

Digital events





*Incoming Call*  
**Brendan**



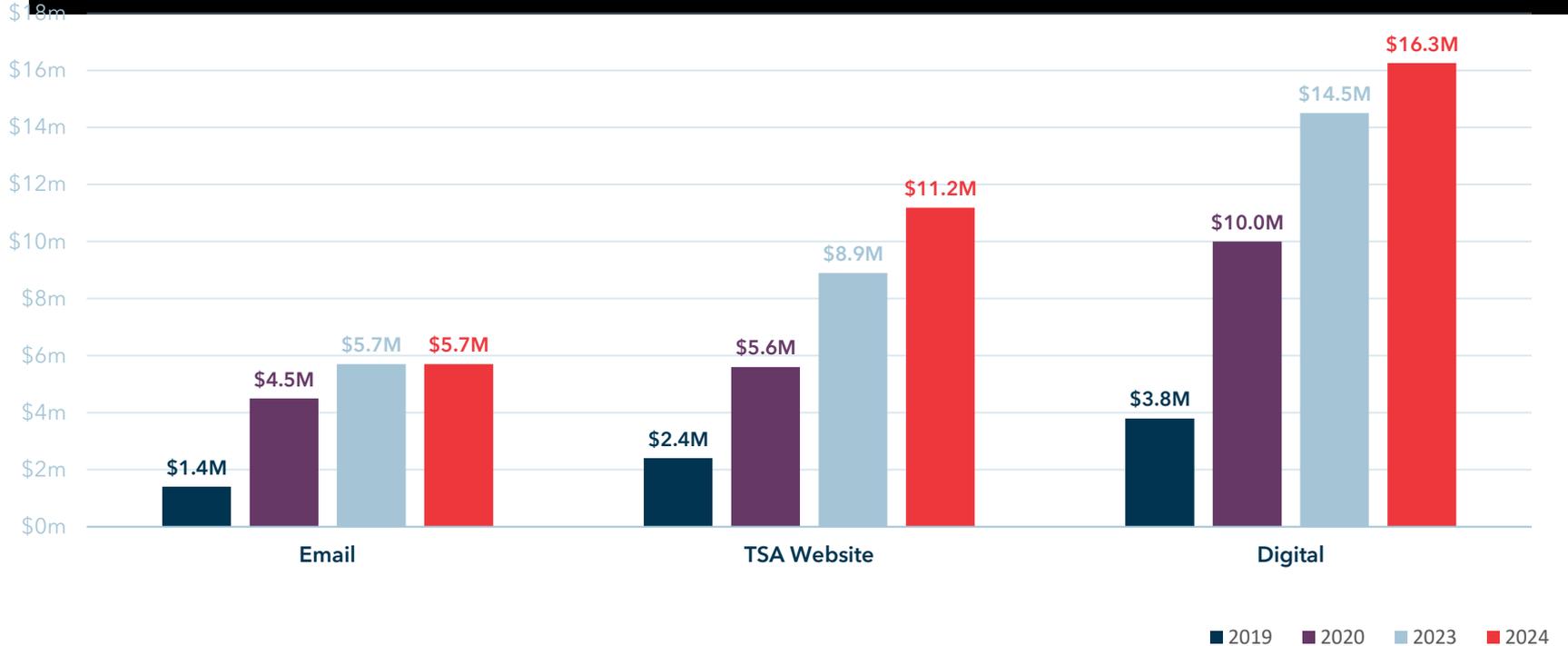
**RED  
SHIELD  
APPEAL**

**It's Red  
Shield Appeal  
Weekend.**



# And the public responded...

## RED SHIELD APPEAL REVENUE FY 2019 / 2020 / 2023 / 2024



# **How we got here:**

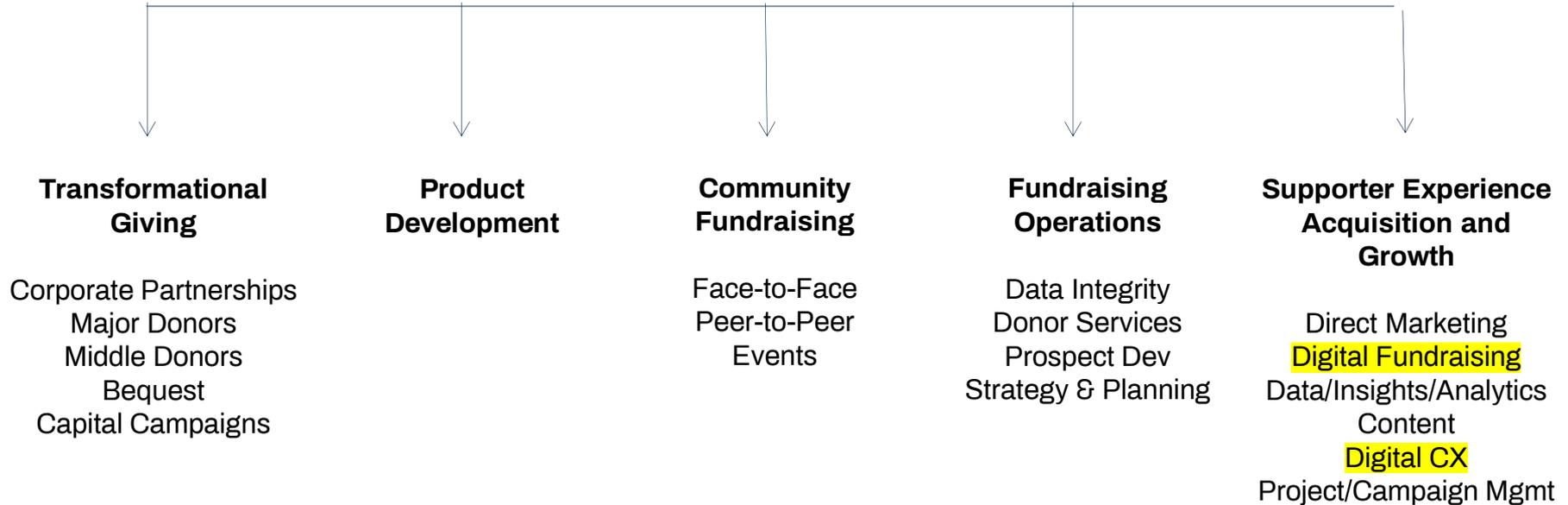
## **Six key lessons**

LESSON ONE

# Make the hard calls

- **Get the right structure, with the right leaders.**  
If your setup doesn't support your goals, fix it.
- **Set the direction, then step back.**  
Let your leaders run their show—but hold them accountable.
- **High performance starts with you.**  
If you can't make the tough calls, no one else will.

# THE SALVATION ARMY FUNDRAISING DEPARTMENT



LESSON TWO

# Find a great digital partner

Our digital agency integrity,  
is NFP-specific, and  
understands fundraising  
nuance



Best practices digital marketing  
tactics are constantly changing,  
challenging for NFPs to keep up

Six years together,  
continuity in approach,  
and able to take long  
term view

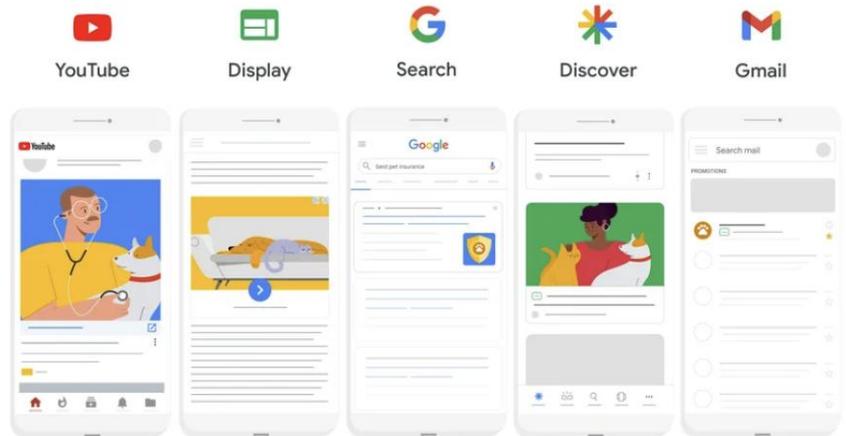
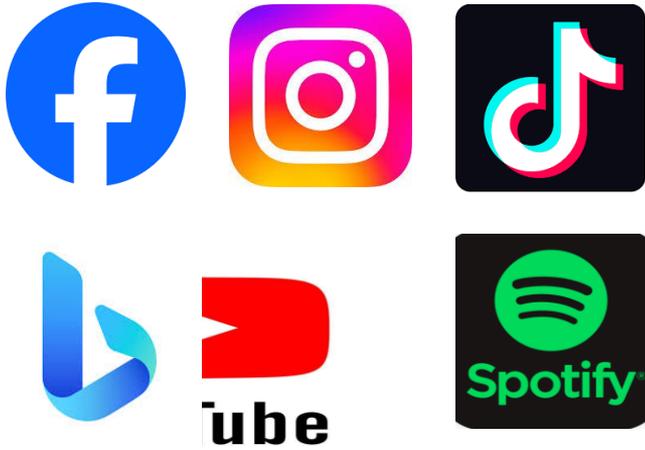
LESSON THREE

# **Digital strategy focused on acquisition**

# Digital strategy focused on acquiring high-value new donors

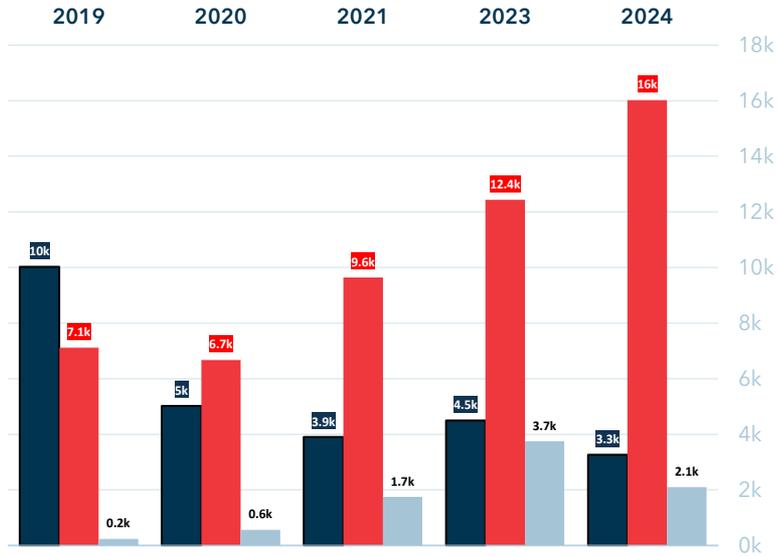


# Expanded our digital channels to meet our audience where they are

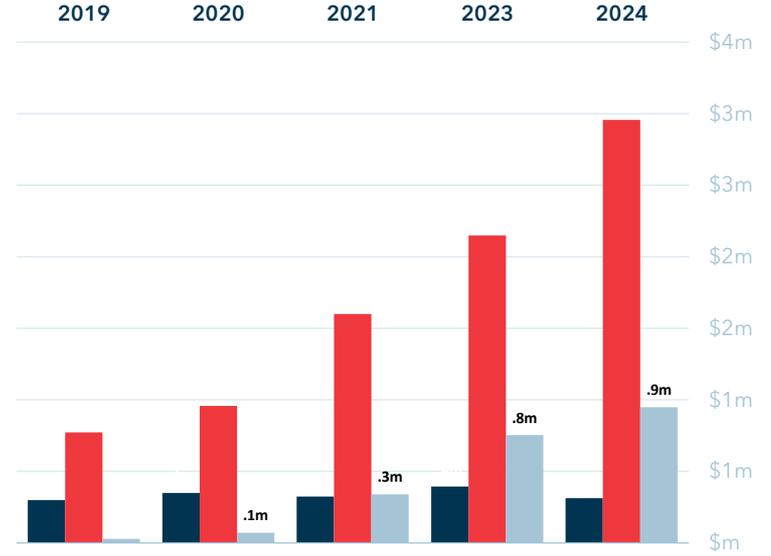


# The new donor acquisition results speak for themselves...

## NEW DONORS ACQUIRED



## DONATION VALUE (NEW DONORS)



■ Print

■ Digital

■ Other

LESSON FOUR

# **Building a suite digital fundraising products**

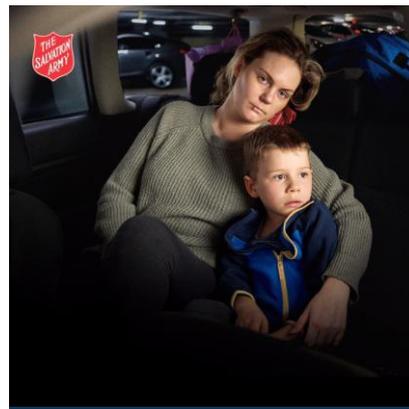
# Build a suite of fundraising products to meet different giving motivations



Appeals



Gift Catalogue



Monthly Giving



Peer-to-Peer

# 'Wishes' now plays a significant role in our product offering

Life-changing gifts for families in need.



\$35 Christmas for a mother & child \$25 Christmas hamper

Shop now



Make sure every child has a gift under the tree.



Wonderful Bundle \$195



A Meal for Someone in Need \$10



Christmas means **Wishes**



Dear ,

This year we all share one common Christmas wish ... to be together with the ones we love.

And if you're anything like me, you're probably starting to think about the perfect Christmas gifts to share with your family and friends.

Well , what's good news for you as a Salvos supporter, is your [Christmas Wishes Gift Catalogue](#) is right here!

And it's filled with perfect gifts to make Christmas Wishes come true.

There's Joy for a child with a **Christmas gift**. Hope in a **Hamper** for parents. **Christmas lunch** with a friend for someone who is alone.

And so many more, all right here online. Take a look now and find the perfect gift.

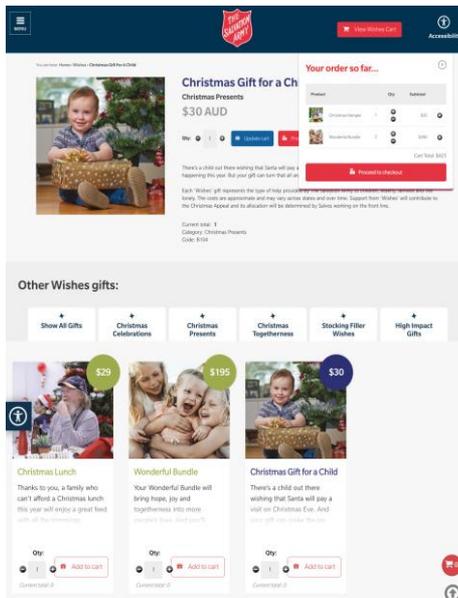
Order Now

Whatever you choose, you'll be sharing the gift of giving with your loved ones and at the same time, helping people who need you most with a Christmas Wish they're dreaming of.

# Ecommerce optimisations encouraged multiple purchases & additional donations



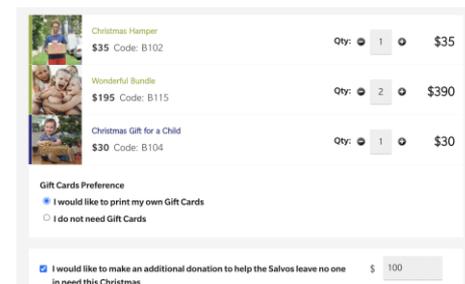
## IMPROVED ECOMMERCE EXPERIENCE



## BUILDING OUT WISHES OFFERING



## ADD DONATION AT CHECKOUT



## Mid-and-major donors

Give a  
**Wonderful**  
Bundle



**\$195**



SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU  
**High-impact gifts**  
Support families at Christmas

Shop now



**\$800**  
**CAN PROVIDE EXPERT  
FINANCIAL ADVICE**

to help a family in  
financial distress get  
back in control.

**DONATE NOW**

SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU  
**High-impact projects**  
Support families in crisis

Donate now

LESSON FIVE

# Digital Specific creative

# Cut-through digital creative, designed for different audiences

Life-changing gifts for families in need.



Christmas gift for a child \$30    Christmas hamper \$35    Christmas for a mother & child \$25

 **LEAVE NO ONE IN NEED**

Shop now



Phil tried to find a place to rent, but there wasn't anywhere available he could afford. So he slept in his ute for 168 days. Unfortunately, stories like Phil's are on the rise.

Your donation to The Salvation Army could help bring someone like Phil in from the cold.

Give a family a Christmas Hamper

\$35









# Kyle, I'd like you to be the first to see Sophie's harrowing story...



Dear ,

I want to share with you a special, extended version of our new Christmas Appeal video. [This exclusive version](#) tells the harrowing story of Sophie, who feared she would spend Christmas with her daughter living out of a car.

Everyone will see it in their screens in the coming week, but I wanted you to [watch it first](#) - and to see Sophie's story in full.

[DONATE NOW](#)

From getting ready for bed in grimy public bathrooms to struggling to find a safe place for the night, **Sophie's is a story that captures the real desperation faced by families all over Australia.** But it also shows the incredible impact your generosity can have—the chance to create new beginnings for those who need it most.



## Support families facing homelessness this Christmas

Thank you!

Your gift will help many in our community who are struggling with the challenges of homelessness, natural disaster, financial hardship or family crisis. Your support will help them find a way out of their desperate situation, to find independence, self-respect and hope.

You can call us on 13 SALVOS (13 72 58).

### 1 Donation details

Frequency\*

Once-off

Monthly

Amount\*\*

\$43

\$90

\$185

Other

43

\$43 can help provide crisis accommodation for homeless women



YouTube

00:11

**V** This Christmas, you can help families rebuild their lives....

This Christmas, your gift can bring hope and warmth to families facing...

Sponsored · Video ad upload channel f

Watch Donate now

A mobile YouTube interface showing a video player with a video thumbnail of a woman and child. Below the player are two buttons: 'Watch' and 'Donate now'.

Google

Search



This Christmas, you can transform lives. Your donation gives children and families the chance to experience a brighter...

Sponsored

The Salvation Army

Heart icon, Share icon, More options icon

A mobile Google search interface. Below the search bar is a video thumbnail showing a Salvation Army volunteer in a white uniform with a red cross on the back, smiling and talking to a woman and a young girl. The woman is holding the child. Below the thumbnail is a text block and a 'Sponsored' label with 'The Salvation Army' logo.



**THE SALVATION ARMY CHRISTMAS APPEAL**

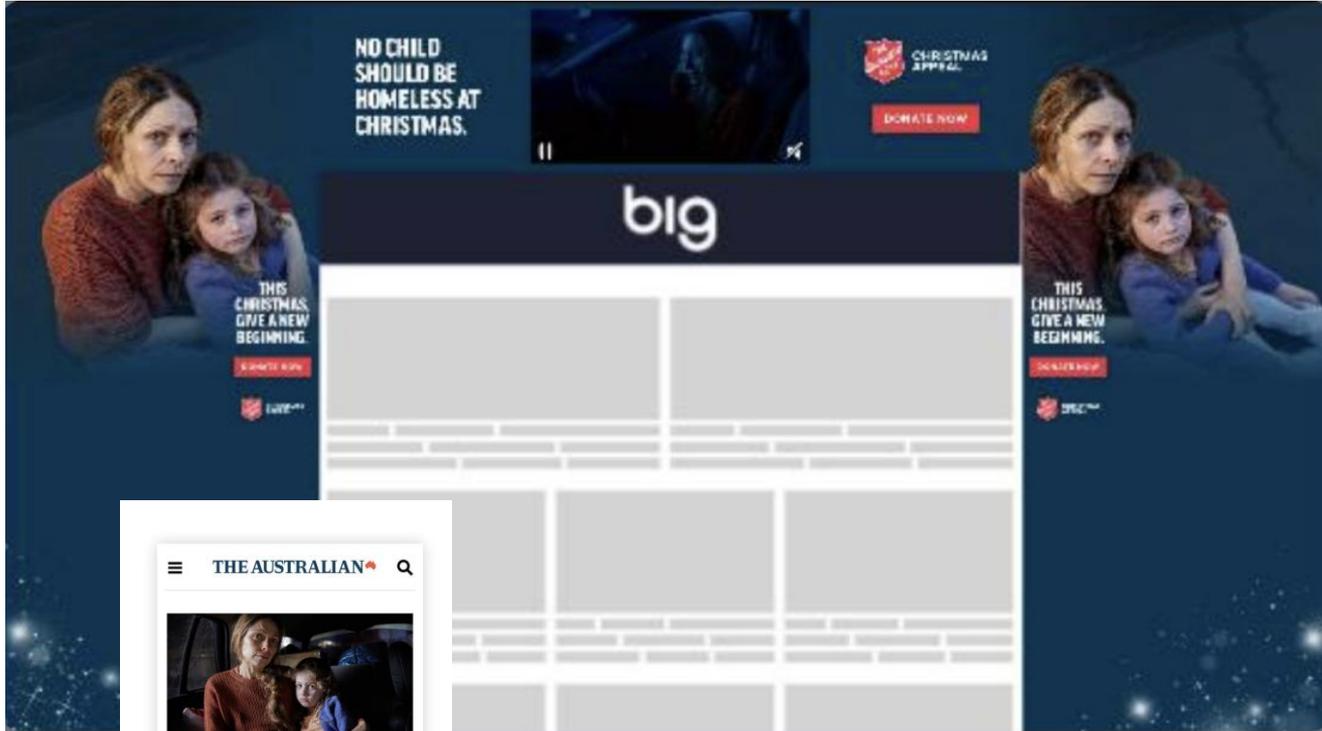
SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU

**Give a new beginning**

This Christmas help families in need

Donate now

A promotional image for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. It shows a Salvation Army volunteer in a white uniform with a red cross on the back, smiling and talking to a woman and a young girl. The woman is holding the child. The background is a brick wall. Below the image is a text block with the Salvation Army logo, the website URL, the headline 'Give a new beginning', a sub-headline 'This Christmas help families in need', and a 'Donate now' button.



THE AUSTRALIAN

**Imagine spending Christmas living out of a car...**

No Christmas tree, no family for support, and constant worry. This is the reality for too many Aussies – but you can help.



In the frames were photos of him and his wife Leonie during a backpacking trip across Europe in 1993 when they visited his hometown in northern Italy.



One picture shows Mr Klaric holding up the Leaning Tower of Pisa and the other features his wife lounging against a piece of furniture in a backyard.

The Sydney man, who told 2GB's Ben



LESSON SIX

# Test and Learn

**The Salvation Army Australia** Sponsored

Phil never imagined he'd be homeless at 71 🙄

Faced with rental prices he simply ...see more



salvationarmy.org.au  
**Help Aussies in need thi...** Donate now  
 Not affiliated with Meta

👍👎🗨️ 84 6 comments 3 shares

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment ➦ Share

**The Salvation Army Australia** Sponsored

This winter the housing crisis is now so bad that it's completely breaking people's spirits and forcing Aussies like Phil, 71, to ...see more



Help someone like Phil into a safe, affordable home.

DONATE TODAY WINTER APPEAL

salvationarmy.org.au  
**Help Aussies in need thi...** Donate now  
 Not affiliated with Meta

👍👎🗨️ 11

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment ➦ Share

**The Salvation Army Australia** Sponsored

This winter the housing crisis is now so bad that it's completely breaking people's spirits and forcing Aussies like Phil, 71, to ...see more



Help someone like Phil into a safe, affordable home.

DONATE TODAY WINTER APPEAL

salvationarmy.org.au  
**Help Aussies in need thi...** Donate now  
 Not affiliated with Meta

👍👎🗨️ 28 2 comments 1 share

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment ➦ Share

**The Salvation Army Australia** Sponsored

Winter is here and vulnerable Aussies need your support.



Help someone like Phil out of his car

DONATE TO HELP WINTER APPEAL

salvationarmy.org.au  
**Help Aussies in need thi...** Donate now  
 Not affiliated with Meta

👍👎🗨️ 58

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment ➦ Share

**The Salvation Army Australia** Sponsored

This winter the housing crisis is now so bad that it's completely breaking people's spirits and forcing Aussies like Phil, 71, to ...see more



Help someone like Phil into a safe, affordable home.

DONATE TODAY

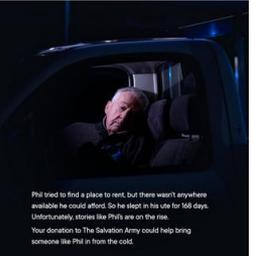
salvationarmy.org.au  
**Help Aussies in need thi...** Donate now  
 Not affiliated with Meta

👍👎🗨️ 91 4 comments 8 shares

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment ➦ Share

**The Salvation Army Australia** Sponsored

You can be there for older Aussies like Phil, struggling to survive a long cold winter without a roof over their head. Please donate today.



Phil tried to find a place to rent, but there wasn't anywhere available he could afford. So he slept in his ute for 166 days. Unfortunately, places like Phil's are not the norm. Your donation to The Salvation Army could help bring someone like Phil in from the cold.

DONATE TODAY WINTER APPEAL

salvationarmy.org.au  
**Help Aussies in need thi...** Donate now  
 Not affiliated with Meta

👍👎🗨️ 109 5 shares

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment ➦ Share

**The Salvation Army Australia** Sponsored

Phil was 71 when he lost his home and had to start living out of his ute. Sadly, he's not alone. The number of older Australians ...see more



Vulnerable Aussies are being forced to sleep in their cars.

DONATE TO HELP WINTER APPEAL

salvationarmy.org.au  
**Help Aussies in need thi...** Donate now  
 Not affiliated with Meta

👍👎🗨️ 65 11 comments 4 shares

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment ➦ Share

**The Salvation Army Australia** Sponsored

Phil was 71 when he lost his home and had to start living out of his ute. Sadly, he's not alone. The number of older Australians ...see more



Vulnerable older Aussies are being forced to sleep in their cars.

DONATE TO HELP WINTER APPEAL

salvationarmy.org.au  
**Help Aussies in need thi...** Donate now  
 Not affiliated with Meta

👍👎🗨️ 18 2 comments 1 share

👍 Like 🗨️ Comment ➦ Share

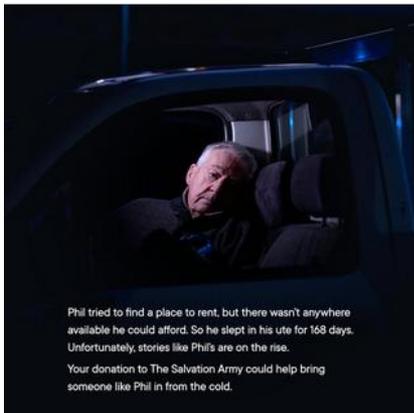


The Salvation Army  
Australia

Sponsored · 🌐



You can be there for older Aussies like Phil, struggling to survive a long cold winter without a roof over their head ❄️ Please donate today.



salvationarmy.org.au

**Help Aussies in need thi...**

**Donate now**

Not affiliated with Meta

👍 🥺 109

5 shares



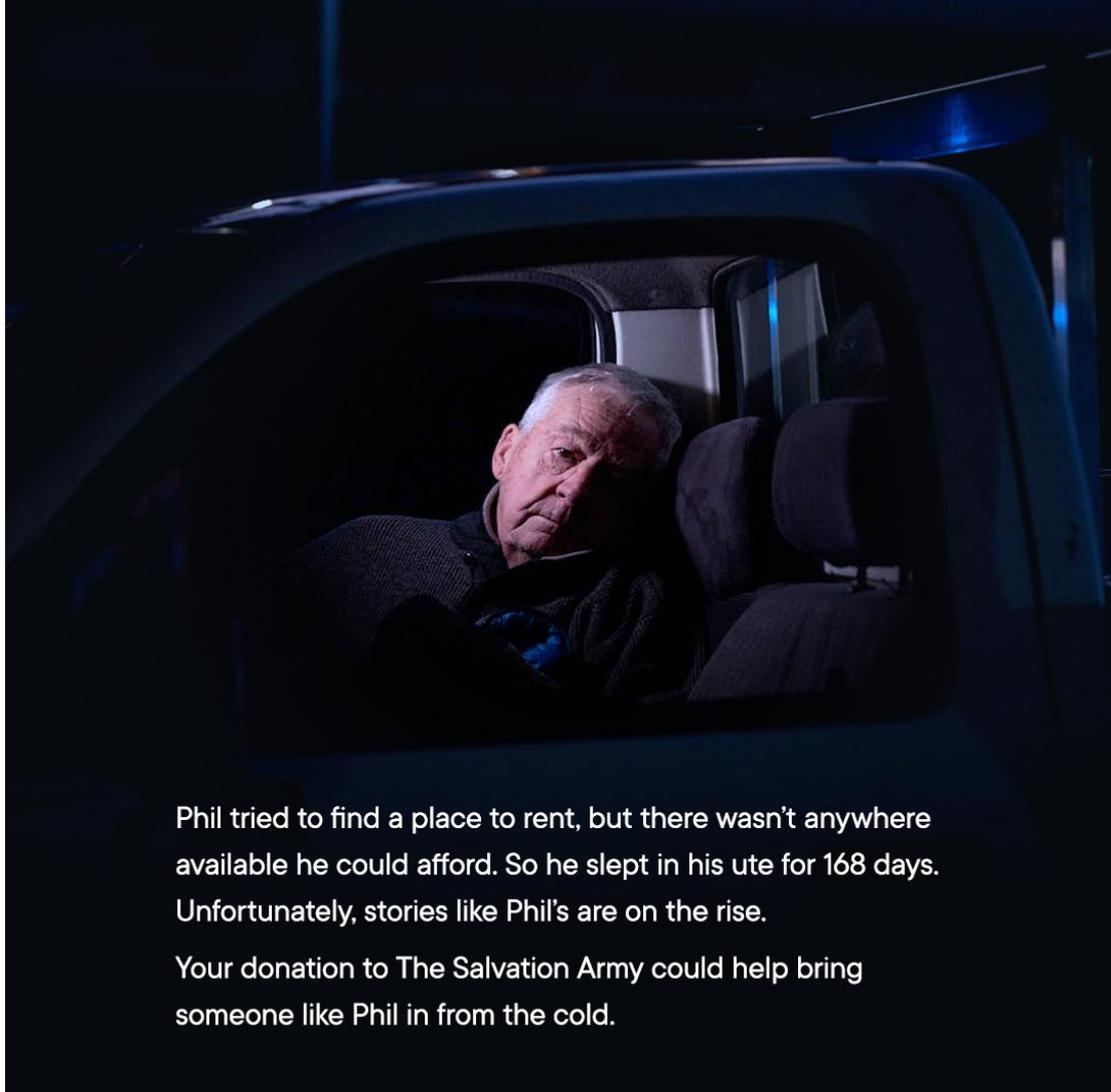
Like



Comment



Share



Phil tried to find a place to rent, but there wasn't anywhere available he could afford. So he slept in his ute for 168 days. Unfortunately, stories like Phil's are on the rise.

Your donation to The Salvation Army could help bring someone like Phil in from the cold.

# Extensive in-campaign testing

You can make **Wishes** come true this Christmas



THE SALVATION ARMY

Give a thoughtful gift that makes a difference.



THE SALVATION ARMY

Give a family a **Christmas Hamper**

**\$35**



THE SALVATION ARMY

Make sure every child has a gift under the tree.

Wonderful Bundle **\$195**



LEAVE NO ONE IN NEED

Give the gift of safety this Christmas.

Christmas for a mother & child **\$25**



LEAVE NO ONE IN NEED

Don't forget to give before **Christmas**

Shop now



THE SALVATION ARMY

Give a family a **Christmas Hamper**

**\$35**



THE SALVATION ARMY

Life-changing gifts for families in need.

Christmas gift for a child **\$30** | Christmas hamper **\$35** | Christmas for a mother & child **\$25**

LEAVE NO ONE IN NEED

Shop now

Give a **Christmas Hamper**

**\$35**



THE SALVATION ARMY

Channel your inner Santa.

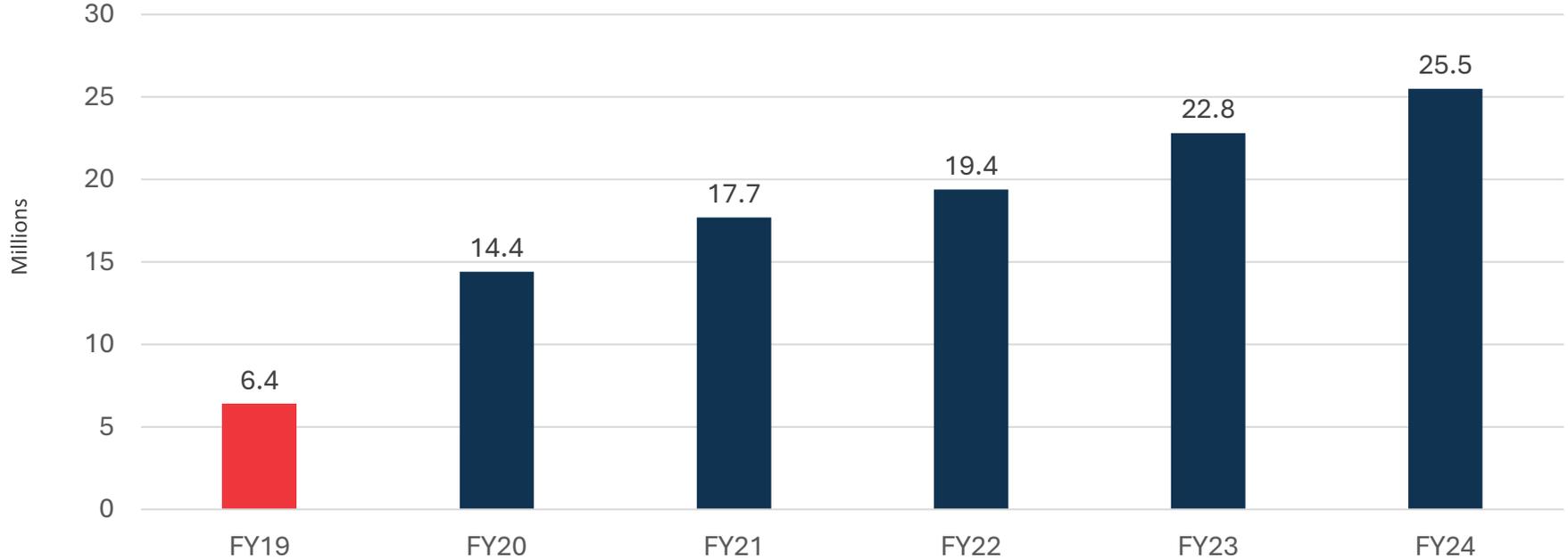
Christmas gift for a child **\$30**



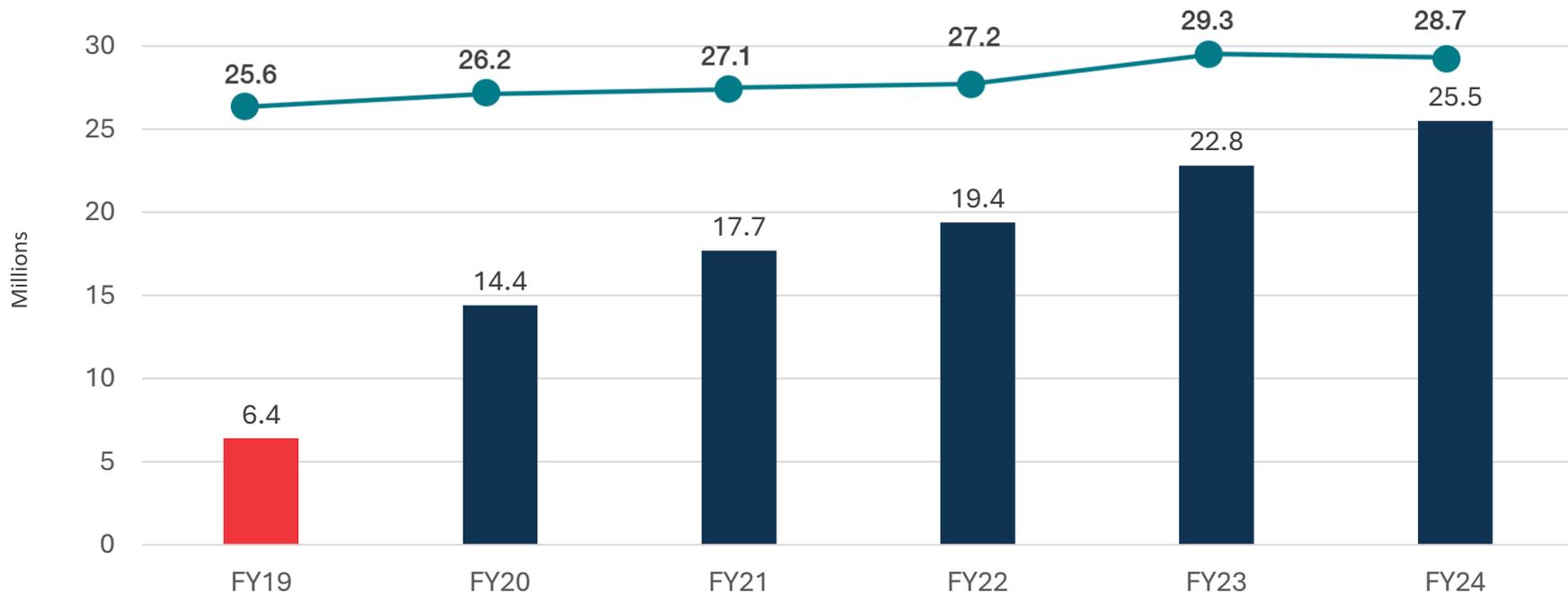
LEAVE NO ONE IN NEED

# Summary

## Digital growth year on year...

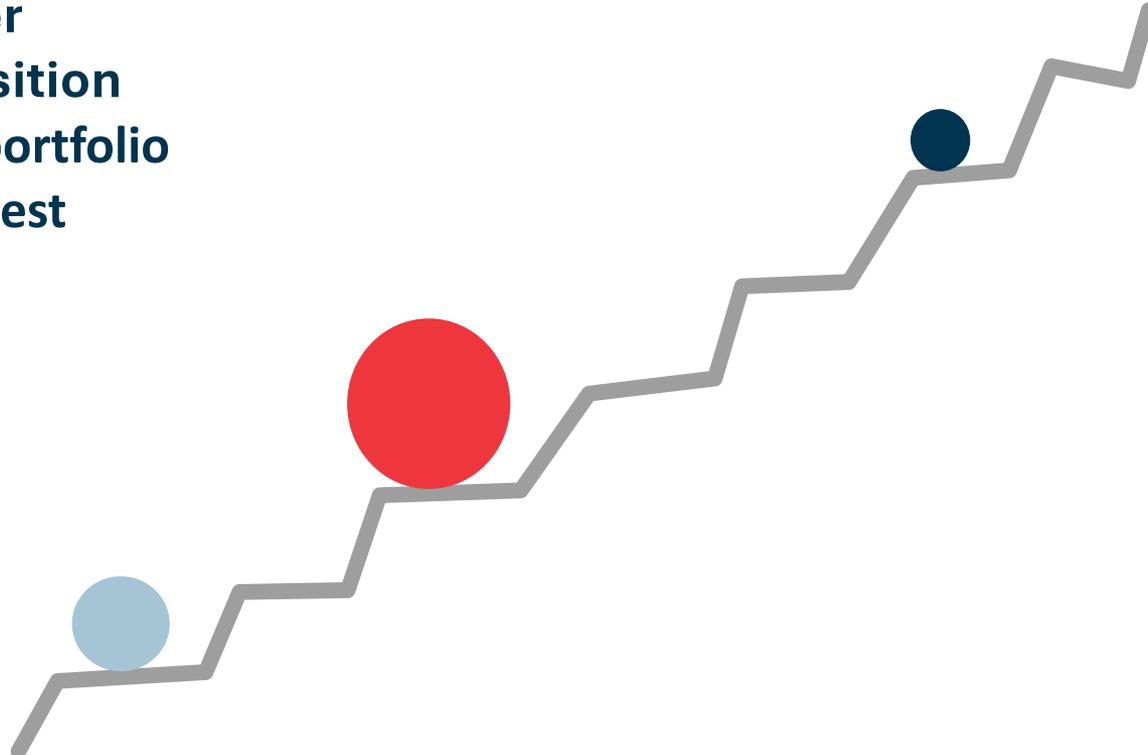


## ...without cannibalizing Direct Mail revenue



## 6 learnings from our journey

- **Make the hard calls**
- **Find a great digital partner**
- **Use digital to drive acquisition**
- **Build out a digital product portfolio**
- **Custom creative performs best**
- **Test and learn**





**Questions?**

# Thank you



**Janine Kewming, EMFIA**



National Head of Fundraising  
at The Salvation Army Australia



**Kyle Vermeulen**



Creative Director & Partner,  
ntegrity