

# Wordsprint

demographic targeting

*The best way to build a donor database is personal contact: the conversations, the events, the friendships, the relationships that lead prospective donors to a better understanding of your organization's goals and needs. But to supplement this process, donors can also be acquired through careful demographic targeting, utilizing the scatter-graph approach. Here's how it works:*

## #1 Identify Current Donors

If you've got a reliable database with donor history, start there. But also interview your staff, perhaps past and current directors and board members, to help assemble a list of supporters and prospects. Include past donors as well as present, going back perhaps 5 years. The list you assemble does not have to be exhaustive, but it does need to be representative.

## #2 Apply Demographic Profile

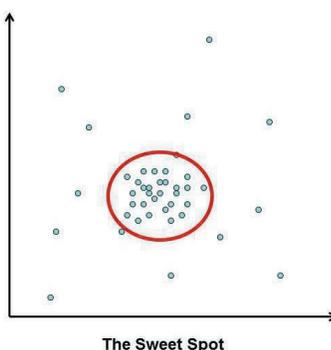
Now "score" these current donors in terms of geography, age, gender, household income, education level, whatever other demographic criteria you deem significant. This requires the insights of the best brains in your organization; it's not just a statistical analysis, it's also an intuitive understanding of who your best donors really are.

## #3 Draw the Scatter-Graph

A two-dimensional graph can't capture such a multitude of criteria, but it's still a useful model to gain an understanding of your donors. It will probably look something like this:

### Criteria:

- Geography
- Age
- Gender
- Education level
- Household income
- Home market value
- Interest in charity
- Political persuasion
- Buying patterns



Ignore the outliers and otherwise statistically unusual supporters; focus instead on the "sweet spot" – and articulate the demographic criteria represented by this group. You want to acquire more names that match this group.

## #4 Understand the Compilation Process

There are dozens of reliable "compilers" out there: companies who do nothing but gather, massage, and resell lists. Some of their data is "hard", such as age, home market value, length in residence, age and value of vehicle, etc. – because these come from public information sources like real estate transactions and DMV records). Other data is "soft" – it is modeled from sources like magazine subscriptions, club memberships, and product warranty cards. (Yes, unless an organization specifically states that they do not resell your name and data, they probably do!) Compilers gather all this data, and run it through very sophisticated computer algorithms, to build amazingly accurate demographic profiles.

## #5 Buy the Names

You can do this yourself, from compilers such as [usadata.com](http://usadata.com), [infousa.com](http://infousa.com), etc. Or you can have us purchase the list, since Wordsprint is a licensed dealer for several wholesale compilers who specialize in highly vetted and up-to-date data.

## #6 De-dupe vs Your Own List

If you did a good job of demographic targeting (steps 1-3 above), you'll have a lot of duplicates – because you'll be purchasing names that match the criteria of your best current donors.

## #7 Execute the Acquisition Mailing

Sometimes it's best to mail to prospects like this in a separate rhythm from your other appeals; sometimes it's best to integrate the two. Wordsprint can help you figure this out, and of course assist with all phases of the appeal itself. See *Appeal Mailing Services* in the Free Downloads section of our website.