

GRAY ATLANTA CASE STUDY:

Serving the Community: Gray Atlanta and The Atlanta Community Food Bank Pivot to Help the Area

THE PROBLEM:

The Atlanta Community Food Bank works to end hunger with the food, people, and big ideas needed to ensure that community members have the nourishment they need to lead healthy and productive lives. Unfortunately, far too many people experience hunger every day, including children, seniors, and working families. The food bank aims to help solve that problem and increase health and nutrition across the North Georgia and Atlanta metro area.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Atlanta Community Food Bank has seen a 30%-40% increase in the need for food assistance. They also used this time period to launch their "Text for Help" SMS platform and several other initiatives designed to help hungry Georgians in need. As a result, the food bank had one primary goal: making the public aware of the help they are able to provide. Through more than 700 nonprofit partners, the Atlanta Community Food Bank typically helps more than 755,000 people get healthy food each year. The goal of the food bank is to ensure that all the hungry people across metro Atlanta and North Georgia will have access to nutritious meals when they need them.

Not only did the need increase during the pandemic, reaching those people who needed meals became both increasingly important and more difficult since not everyone was in a position to get information about the resources available to them. On realizing the challenge they faced, the food bank quickly turned to Gray Atlanta to devise a plan of action. "Any time we have money to spend on ads, we want to spend it with Gray Atlanta," says Heather Moon, Public Relations Coordinator of The Atlanta Community Food Bank. "They always do a great job taking our budget and making it work."



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THE PROCESS:

In market TV ads were the primary means used to help advertise services for those in need. The sales team built a schedule consisting of 35-40 fifteen and thirty second commercials that ran for 3 weeks. Gray Atlanta was given complete freedom to book a schedule that was built for reach and frequency, expanding the number of people that the commercials had the potential to reach.

Throughout the month of May, the Gray Atlanta sales team also ran a **3 Degree Weather Guarantee** in conjunction with the spot schedule, with the Atlanta Community Food Bank as the charity of the month. This provided the food bank with a \$1000 donation.

The food bank had to put its schedule and plan together and act quickly in order to maximize its efforts and ability to reach the people who needed it most in the midst of an unanticipated crisis. "We were going to wait until September to launch [our latest campaign], but when COVID hit, we had to pivot. We saw a 40% increase in the need for food assistance in the area. So we wanted to step up and get this out to the community," Heather admitted.

The Gray Atlanta team was there to help. The team was able to take existing creative for the September plan, adapt it, and use new concepts and material to help spread the word about everything the Atlanta Community Food Bank could offer to hungry Atlanta citizens. The goal was to spread the word fast, preventing North Georgia citizens from suffering when there was aid available that they could access quickly. The advertising process used by the Gray Atlanta team helped get the job done.



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THE RESULTS:

As of June 2, 2020, the Atlanta Community Food Bank has had 6,940 users sign up for the “Text for Help” SMS system, which was featured in their ads that aired on CBS46. The food bank also saw a huge increase in website traffic during the time those ads ran, which meant that a wide number of people were able to access that information and act on it. Word quickly spread throughout the Atlanta and North Georgia area.

To the food bank team, this was more than just a successful advertising campaign. It means hungry people who were able to get the food they needed to continue to live productive lives even in the midst of a crisis situation. Not only that, but increased knowledge about the food bank also helped alleviate some worry for Atlanta and North Georgia citizens in the midst of the crisis.

“We just love working with Gray Atlanta and always see success when we advertise with them. We’re always really happy,” Heather says. The latest campaign is just one of the many successes the food bank has experienced while working with Gray Atlanta. With the help of Gray Atlanta’s marketing expertise, the Atlanta Community Food Bank will continue to grow its influence and expand its impact on the community it serves.



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