

Tables Have Four Legs

*Ensuring Your Program Isn't
Dependent on One Channel*



[Link to
presentation](#)

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Your fundraising program is a table.

It's holding up Thanksgiving dinner.

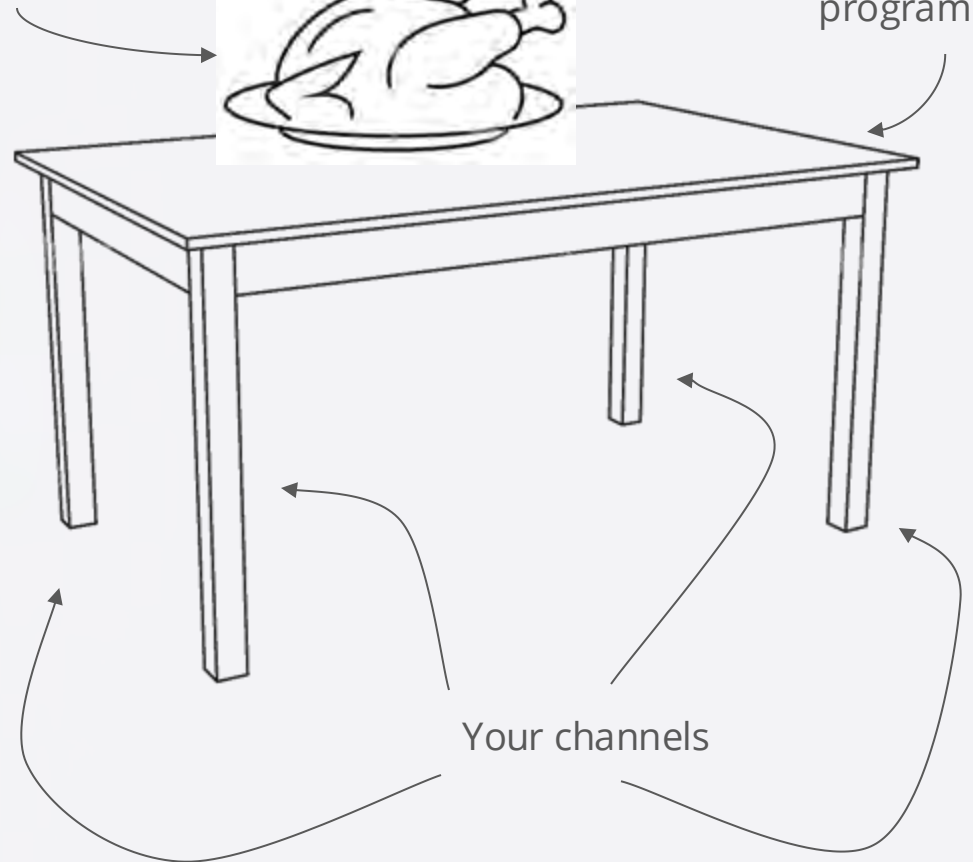
(The dinner is your organization's revenue.)

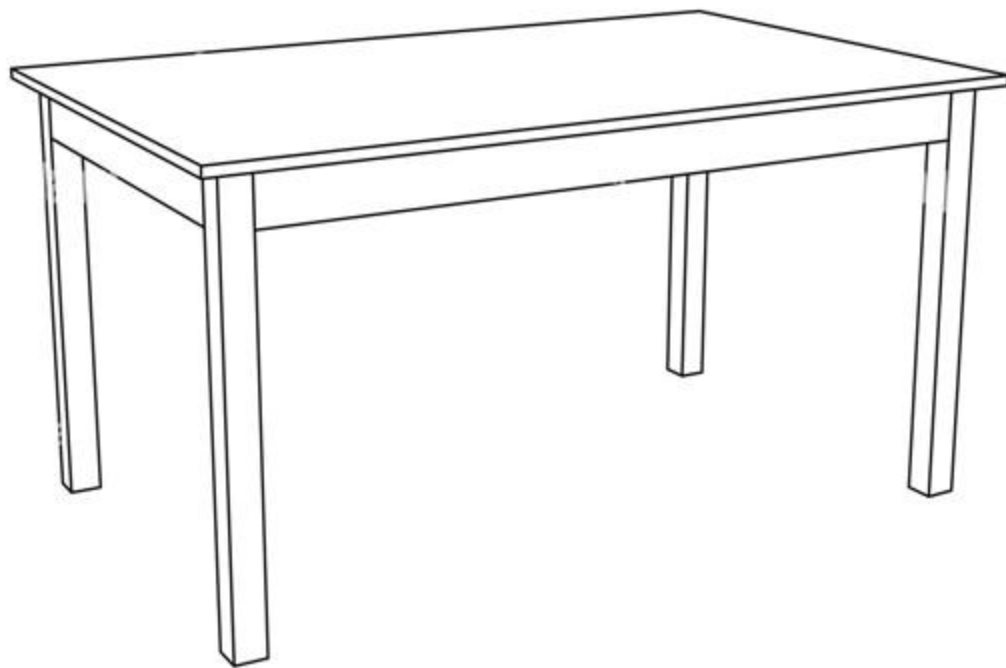
What's holding up that table?
Your channels.

Your organizational revenue

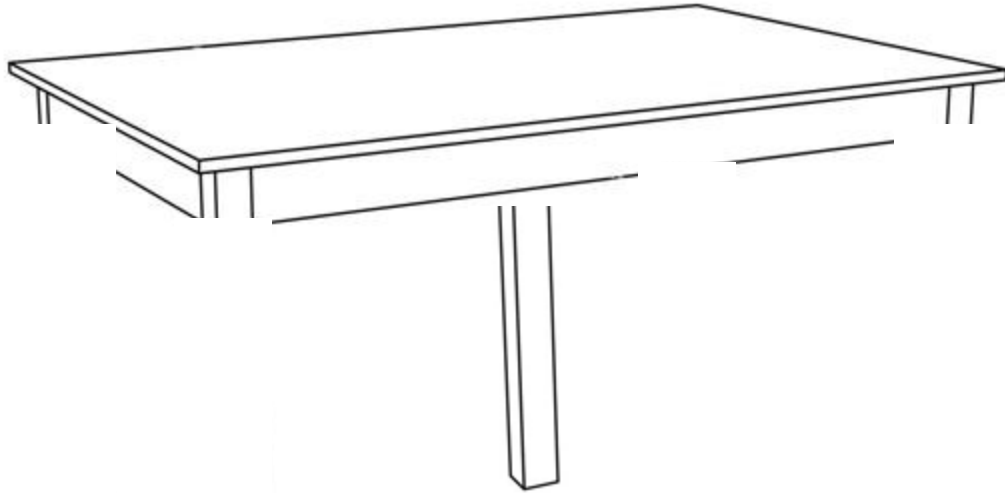


Your fundraising program





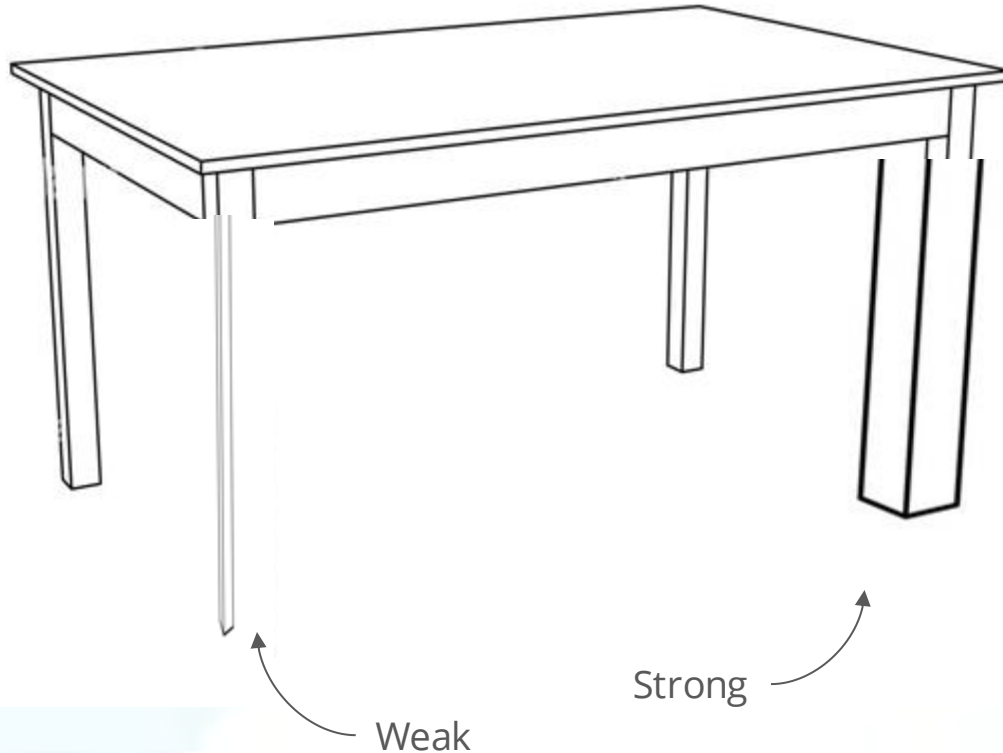
What makes a good table?



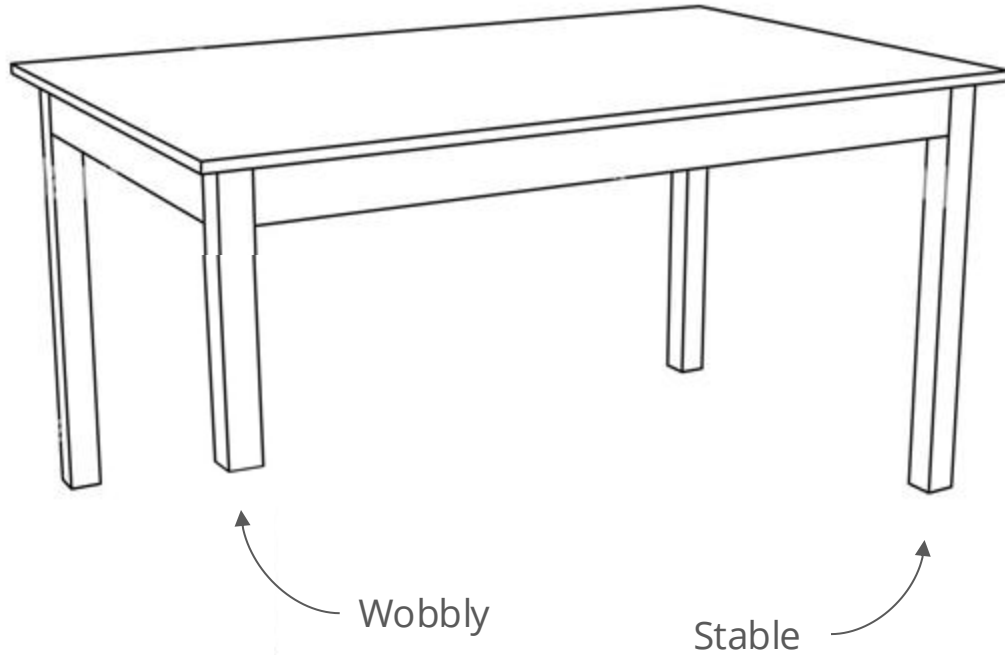
Tables need many legs.

- **No legs?**
Not even really a table.
- **One or two?**
Incredibly risky unless *perfectly* balanced.
- **Three?**
Possible, but you can't use the whole table.
- **Four?**
Boring, predictable.
- **More?**
Maybe! How much support do you need?

Tables need strong legs.



- **Strong**
Produces a *lot* of:
 - Revenue
 - Recurring gifts
 - New donors
 - Leads
- **Weak**
Produces.
But only a little.



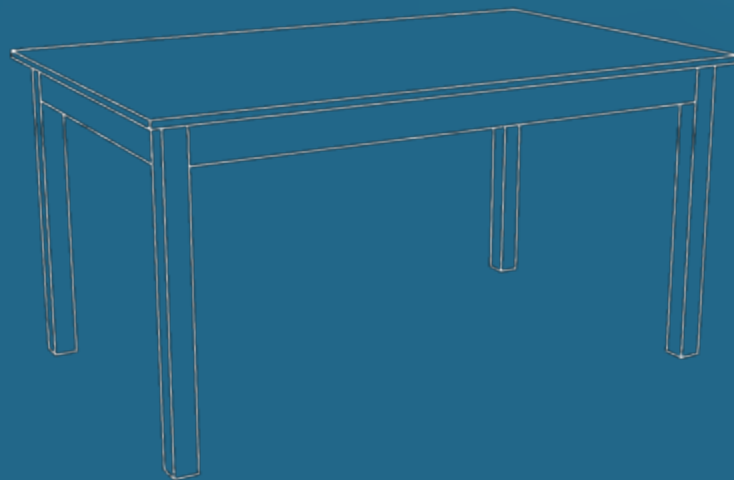
Tables need stable legs.

- **Stable**
Reliably produces:
 - Revenue
 - Recurring gifts
 - Leads
 - Awareness
- **Wobbly**
Produces.
But not predictably.



Tables sometimes need shims.

- **Shims are small**, and aren't much use on their own.
- **They are used to help stabilize**, fill in little tiny gaps.
- **They can be incredibly important** to the table.



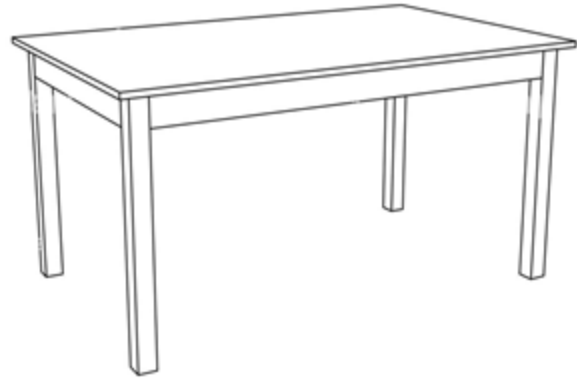
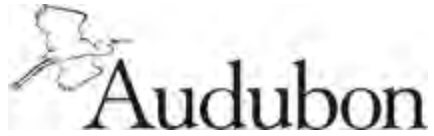
What does your table look like?

How many legs does it have?

How strong is each one?

How stable is each one?

Any shims? (Wait, is it *only* shims?!)

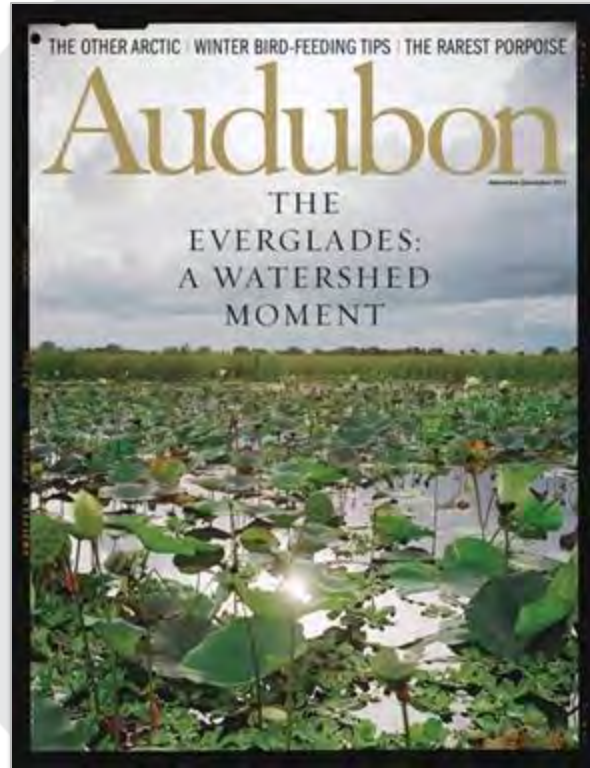


A tale of two tables.

National Audubon Society

- Mail program hits plateau
- Digital late to the game
- Big push to recurring
- Investment and experimentation
- Ongoing evolution





Mail program hits plateau

- In 2015, direct mail had been the strong, stable, but largely *only* leg of Audubon's table
- Decreasing response, rising costs, aging donor base led to worries about the future

The table had one strong leg, but it was becoming unstable and wobbly.



Digital late to the game

- 2016, investment in strengthening email, making it consistent
- 2017, search added as weak stable leg
- 2018, social, weak and unstable

The table has one strong leg, one stable one, and two weaker ones.



Today is Giving Tuesday.
Birds count on you to help.

DONORS NEEDED: 211 TO REACH: \$100,000

For the sake of birds everywhere, will you rise to the challenge this Giving Tuesday?

{{(if:FirstName)}}Dear {{(if:FirstName)}},

{{(else)}}{{(end)}}Giving Tuesday has always been a time for coming together. It's a reminder that our combined generosity has the power to change the world for the better. That's as true as ever...and yet this year is different, because the challenges and opportunities ahead are greater than ever before.

Birds need your support, which is why this year we're asking you to dig deep and commit to their protection. [Start a monthly gift this Giving Tuesday and double the funds you raise, and visit out three months, gift by automatically recurring.](#)

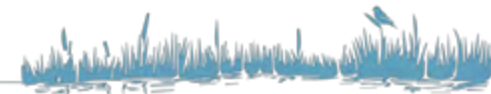
For four years, the administration has been relentless in attacking the rules and policies that keep birds safe and their habitats unspoiled. They've gone after 125 key conservation measures in all, weakening and undermining our hard-won environmental protections.

And over time, Audubon has been there to fight back. Right now, we're

Big push to recurring

- 2018, eliminated internal obstacles holding back monthly recurring recruitment
- Heavy testing and experimentation on other channels building recurring as a channel

The table has three strong, stable legs, and smaller unstable ones.

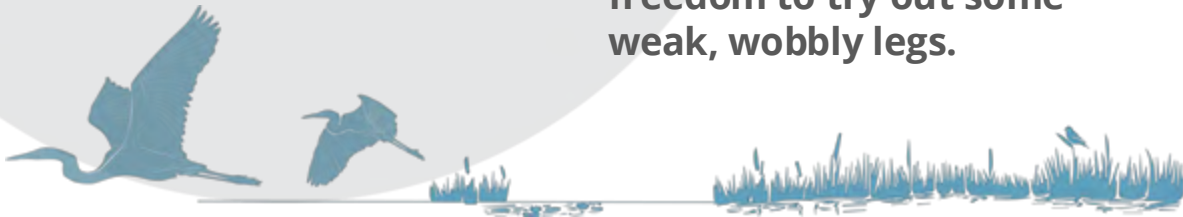




Investment and experimentation

- 2020, building off a solid, stable base, moves made to use success to build further
- Experiments in telemarketing, face-to-face, display, connected TV, SMS

The strong legs of the table mitigate risk and allow freedom to try out some weak, wobbly legs.



KEEP THEM SAFE
Donate Now

Midnight deadline: Make 2X the impact for the birds you love

Protect the birds you love
Donate Now

With your support, we've made the best path forward to help more birds survive in the winter. Through science, advocacy and hands-on conservation action, we're helping the birds survive in the winter. Together, we can protect vulnerable birds and ensure these and other migratory species continue to thrive across the globe.

100% of your donation goes to...
100% of your donation goes to...
100% of your donation goes to...

Defend Birds Year After Year
Donate Now

Donate now

Paid for by NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.
The avian decline of North American bird populations is a conservation crisis. We have to...

PROTECTION FOR BIRDS, A GIFT FOR YOU

There's no gift more precious than Audubon Magazine. It's the only magazine in your field. When you subscribe, you're not only helping our work on the frontlines of bird conservation, but you're also receiving a gift that's as valuable as any. Call 800-222-3333 to subscribe today.

in the world of this advertisement, you'll see birds of North America. Audubon Magazine is a gift that's as valuable as any. Call 800-222-3333 to subscribe today.

You Count | x2
Your donation matched dollar for dollar until December 31!

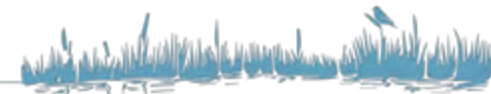
Remember — you count, too. Every member matters in Audubon's urgent work to protect birds and their habitats. And when you renew by December 31, your donation counts x2!

Double your impact — renew today!

Ongoing evolution

- 2024, mail program completely re-made
- Recurring drives almost half of revenue
- Email and search now focus on donor journey, not revenue
- Social and ads redirected toward top-of-funnel

Many more than four legs support the growing revenue goals, all serving unique, ever-changing purposes.



Wildlife Conservation Society

- Ground-up rebuild
- Ticking clock, global pandemic
- Rapid testing for fourth leg
- Shifting ads landscape
- Push to invest in new channels



Ground-up rebuild

- 2019, after internal changes, low-dollar program was left in limbo
- No investment in acquisition or leads left web and email diminished
- A solid monthly recurring file began to diminish without recruitment

The table had three stable legs (web, email, recurring), none of them strong.



WE STAND FOR WILDLIFE

We're on the ground in China

Dear Porter,

URGENT
The illegal trade of wildlife species is causing the disease that is spreading across the globe.

DONATE

WE STAND FOR WILDLIFE

The zoo is closed. But you can still show up!

Dear Porter,

The world rallies to stop the spread of COVID-19, the Wildlife Conservation Society has temporarily closed the Bronx Zoo, Central Park Zoo, Prospect Park Zoo, Queens Zoo, and NY Aquarium.

This is an unprecedented time for us all with the closure of non-essential businesses. We are committed to protecting the health of our community, yet it poses a major challenge for us: our zoos and aquarium are closed, but the animals are still here, and for the duration of this crisis they will require the same high-quality care we always provide them.

Breaking
With the zoo closed due to COVID-19, we need your help to close the funding gap.

DONATE

That's why we're relying on you today for your support, please help provide care for the animals you love by making an additional one-time donation today.

Your monthly contributions as Wildlife Protector help support our programs every day of the year. But now, while our caring and committed staff are still working to ensure our animals' well-being, **your support is needed more than ever.**

Though we're all working hard to adapt and cope to this fast-changing situation, the threats to wildlife and wild places around the world haven't gone away. It's important that we carry on protecting them. And the animals at our parks inspire people to help, and remind them that caring for nature matters now as much as ever.

Please make your additional one-time gift today to help support the reopening of our parks - because when this crisis has passed, we can't wait to welcome you back to the zoo.

Thank you for your caring support.

Jim Braheary
Director of the Bronx Zoo
Executive Vice President of WCS Zoos & Aquarium.

DONATE NOW

Ticking clock, global pandemic

- February 2020, the program launched... and then COVID
- Big digital investment needed to prove out quickly
- COVID campaigns led to growth, but unstable growth

The table has three strong legs, only one stable, and one weaker ones.





Rapid testing for fourth leg

- 2020, continued rapid testing to find sustainable growth
- No time for long-term ROI, could only follow what worked immediately
- Search grows \$400k

The table has *four* strong legs, three seem legitimately stable!



DMFA 2023 Best Overall Campaign
 "WCS Don't Let Them Fade Away"
 Animated CTAs



DON'T LET THEM
FADE AWAY.

Email



Animated GIF



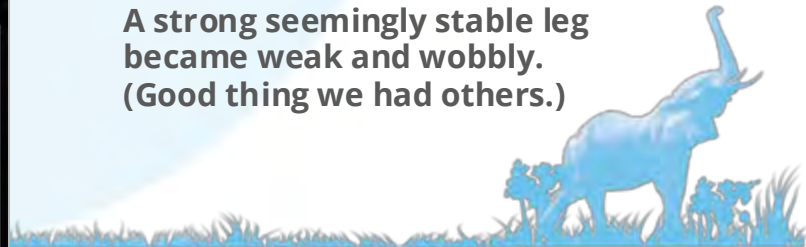
Form (Desktop)



Shifting landscape puts email in charge

- 2021, after political ad requirements and iOS App Tracking Transparency, Meta ads drop in ROI
- 2022, search drops in ROI with rising inflation, and competitive environment (spend moved from social)
- Search had been biggest source of new donors, dropped 54% in fiscal '23
- Email now required to handle lot of revenue load

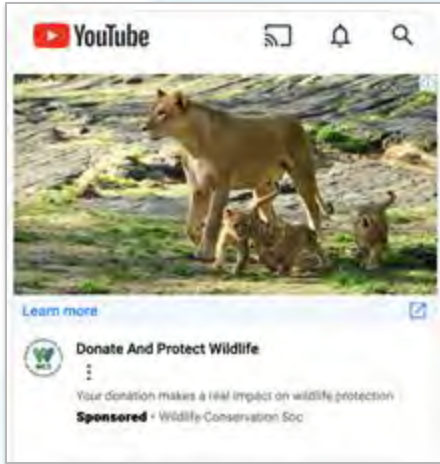
A strong seemingly stable leg became weak and wobbly.
 (Good thing we had others.)



Push to invest in new channels

- Push toward recurring grows its size and stability
- 2023, reinvest in social as ROI improves
- 2024, pivot in search to find better ROI
- Future: use stability to pilot new legs – mail, SMS, face-to-face, display

Recurring and email solidly strong and stable. Social becomes a shim to prop up recurring.



Thank you!



DO MORE GOOD

