

**DENVER
RESCUE
MISSION**



CASE STUDY

Denver Rescue Mission: Getting More Creative

read more at [RallyCorp.com](https://www.RallyCorp.com)

RALLYCORP

What They Do:

Create lasting change in the lives of homeless men, women, and children in Denver.

1,015,731

Meals provided

351,471

Nights of shelter

Learn more:

[DenverRescueMission.org](https://denverrescuemission.org)

Founded:

1892

480

Families housed

80

New Life program graduates

ABOUT

"We have been in the community 131 years, helping people experiencing homelessness," Gagner said.

In addition to the basics of keeping people fed, sheltered, and clothed, the Denver Rescue Mission helps with a number of services to overcome barriers to housing and employment. They offer family programs, rehab, transitional housing, community outreach, and more.

"We're just trying to get more creative with how we're putting text campaign info out there."

-Alexxa Gagner,
Senior Director of Marketing
and Communications

CHALLENGES

Staffing

“Working in a shelter with people who are going through challenging times can be difficult and so keeping frontline staff is tough,” Gagner said.

Post-pandemic:

With COVID-19 emergency declarations ending, much of the additional funding and extra protections, such as eviction moratoriums, have ended. This includes using local hotels as additional shelter space.

Immigrant crisis:

5,000 to 8,000 refugees from South America have come to Denver, adding an additional strain to local resources.

Giving:

“Overall giving is down,” Gagner said. Like some nonprofits, they saw a peak during COVID-19, but giving has dropped since then.

Meeting needs:

“The needs of the population change, they ebb and flow. We’re seeing a younger demographic due to the Fentanyl crisis,” Gagner said. “Really trying to meet the needs of the people coming to us will always remain a challenge, and to strive to do better by them, try to do what works for them, and really help them.”

“Family homelessness in Denver specifically is on the rise,” Gagner said. “Families are a big challenge because they can’t always stay together in shelters.”

FUNDRAISING TRENDS

Fewer donors giving more:

“The trend we’re seeing specific to fundraising is less active donors, but the active donors are giving at a slightly higher rate,” Gagner said. “New donors aren’t coming in as frequently as before, so overall, we have fewer donors.”

Inflation impact:

“Denver’s the second or third highest city in the country affected by inflation,” Gagner said. “So I think we’re probably seeing that both with donors and with clients, because people have great needs and then also people have to tighten their budgets.”

Solution:

“That’s where we are looking to focus on text campaigns to bring in new people,” Gagner said.



WHY RALLY?

Acquisition:

“New people, new supporters, new people who want to learn about the Mission,” Gagner said.

Turkey drive:

“We knew right away it would be a great tool for our turkey drive,” Gagner said, “Which is really the main way we have used the text campaign and the way we’ve used it the best way to get people involved.”

Easy:

“After talking with [Rally founder] James Martin and learning about the structure, it was an easy sell because it made a lot of sense,” Gagner said.

Back in 2010 the **text-to-give model** emerged that worked through mobile carriers, but now the text-to-donate model gives nonprofits more control. “At that time, there was no platform where we could log in to see the numbers or the data,” Gagner said. “What’s great about Rally is you can log in their dashboard. The visuals and charts are helpful.”

HOW ARE YOU USING RALLY?

The Denver Rescue Mission primarily uses Rally for keywords with specific fundraising campaigns:



TURKEY:

Their annual Thanksgiving turkey drive.

WARMTH:

The Spread the Warmth winter campaign where they partner with a local TV station.

HOPE:

They've used this simple keyword for radio campaigns.

"We're trying to figure out our strategy," Gagner said. "Most people use it to buy something or you get 20% off a meal. We don't really have that, so how can we get more creative with our content to really try to add value to people? Yes, stories are good, but can we give away Rockies tickets for people to sign up for our text?"

EXPERIMENT

The Denver Rescue Mission is not afraid to try things to see what works.

Social to text:

"Is it lame to put up a social media post asking people to sign up for text?"

Gagner said. "I'm older, so I was asking the younger folk about that and they said, 'Well, let's try it.'"

QR code comeback:

During the pandemic, QR codes made a comeback. But it's not necessarily an improvement and they're experimenting to see what works best. "QR kind of does the same thing as text, but they're not opting in with a QR code, they're just going to a link," Gagner said. "We want you to opt in so we can text you more versus just going to a link." Here's how to use **QR codes with Rally** and still capture that opt in.

Test with monthly donors:

"We have a good pool to test with," Gagner said. "It's a really great audience that we can test some of this content with because they're really invested already."



WHAT'S NEXT?

Denver Rescue Mission uses Salesforce as its customer relationship management tool, and they're looking to implement Rally's [Salesforce integration](#).

"We're definitely evaluating what the best way forward is, especially with the Salesforce integration," Gagner said. "We know straight to text has a higher open rate than email."

CUTTING EDGE

Gagner cited a recent Rally [webinar on artificial intelligence](#) as an example of helping nonprofits stay current.

"I do feel like Rally is really on it when it comes to technology and the next steps forward, especially with nonprofits," Gagner said. "Sometimes we can be a little behind for whatever reason, and I think it's great that Rally has said, 'We're going to help these nonprofits stay on top of it.'"

See how Rally can work for you. Go to RallyCorp.com to get started