How to make email your *no.1* fundraising tool

Nobody is excited about email.

~~automation · segmentation · personalisation · data hygiene~~

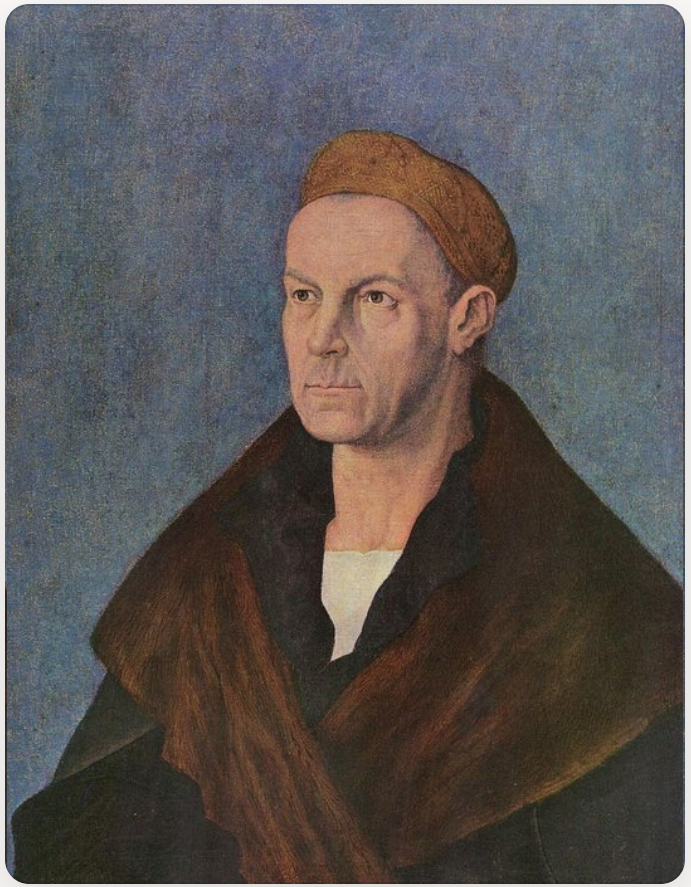
That boredom is exactly why it's the most underused asset you have.

How did Christianity spread?

Letters.

Personal, written appeals — sent again and again to a list. **Email is the closest thing to that personal conversation, at scale.**

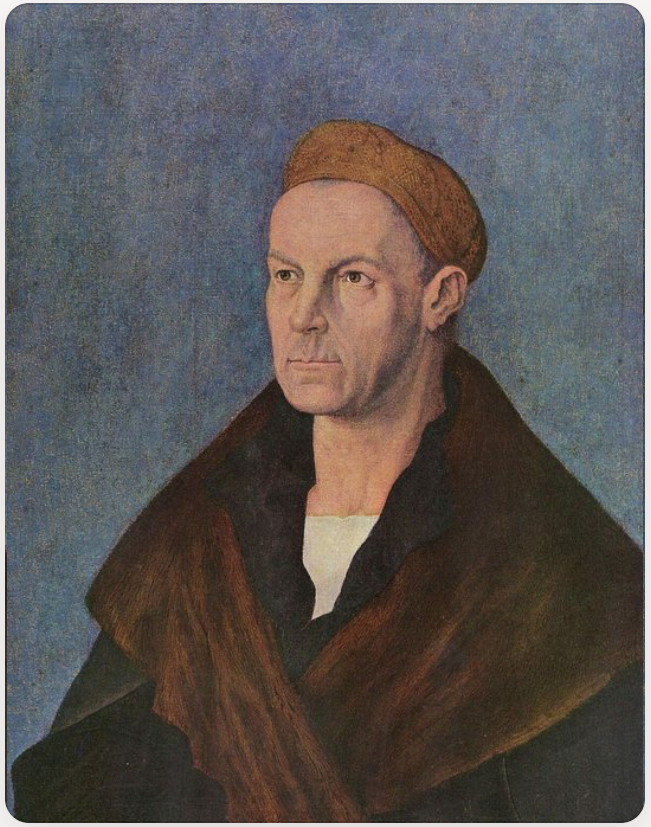
Do you know this guy?



Jakob Fugger

The richest man who ever lived.

The OG newsletter creator.



So why do we still write newsletters like this — *500 years later?*

~~many topics~~

~~sent occasionally~~

~~heavily designed~~

~~a gentle ask at the end~~

~~nice to read~~

~~pleasant to make~~

THE BIG IDEA

📸 PHOTOGRAPH THIS

Forget the word ~~"newsletter."~~ This is *REP* — Radical Email Practice.

STANDARD PRACTICE	RADICAL EMAIL PRACTICE
Mainly newsletters →	Mainly fundraising emails
Once a month	Once a week
Occasional fundraising email	Occasional newsletter
Many topics per email	One topic per email
A soft ask at the end	The ask is the email

At ACN: *~80* fundraising emails a year — and *6×* the revenue.

1 story · 1 need · 1 ask.

Radical isn't reckless — it's just serious about the one thing email is uniquely good at: asking, personally, often.

Why once a week isn't too much

~0.5%

of your audience gives on any given day — and only about **~5%** will even *consider* it. Everyone else is the wrong moment.

`Frequency isn't nagging. It's memory.`

THE BIG IDEA

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What to expect when you go radical

↑ immediate results — the people who already love you give first

↘ then diminishing % (10–15% → 2.5–3.6% — normal; the list is bigger)

↑ more unsubscribes (they weren't going to give)

↑ more complaints (a handful — watch the scale)

↓ lower open rates (expected when you send more)

↑↑↑ far more money raised — the only line that counts

All of it is normal. All of it is **fine.**

The three moves

1 **Enough of the right people** to email

2 **Emails that actually convert**

3 **First gift → repeat giving** — where the money really is

Four engines to bring people in

1 **Lead magnet**

a mini-course, quiz, video, prayer, VIP access — worth an email address

2 **Petition**

a public "yes" to your cause

3 **Offline events**

free tickets still need an email; on the day — paper & pen

4 **Direct conversion**

gift first, email acquired as a benefactor — more so in the onion's outer layers

The Sleeping Salesman Strategy

Let people subscribe on their own, in the places you already own — free, in minutes:

- email signature
- social bio
- 1 IG story / month
- website footer
- sign-up page
- contact page

→ it sells even while you sleep.

📸 PHOTOGRAPH THIS

People give because of who *they* are — not who you are.

Donor = hero. You = guide.

Philanthropic psychology is a real field — to go deep, look up **Jen Shang.** Here's the compressed version:

Make the donor feel three things

Autonomy

"This is my free choice — no one's twisting my arm."

Competence

"I can actually make a difference."

Connection

"I'm part of something bigger than me."

→ the good feeling comes *before* the ask, not only after.

📸 PHOTOGRAPH THIS

The anatomy of a fundraising email

Need → Solution → Urgency

1. Hook
2. The case: problem / need / **story**
3. The solution: **YOU**
4. The ask: a specific amount
5. Urgency (a real reason now)
6. Thank + praise
7. Thank + praise *(again)*
8. Button / PS: repeat the ask

short sentences · plain words · eyes in photos · **the truth**

EXERCISE · ~8 MIN

The YOU test

Open your last donor email. Count **WE** vs **YOU** — most of us are drowning in "we."

"Thank you for your *gift*"	→	**"Thank you for your kindness"**
"*We* build a stronger society"	→	**"You make it possible"**
"What *we* achieved last year"	→	**"What YOU achieved last year"**

The zone of unrepeatable enthusiasm

The first "yes" is peak excitement — go silent and it cools.

The opposite of love isn't hate — it's *indifference.*

→ the goal of the 1st gift is the 2nd.

The donors who actually fund you

Not monthly recurring. Not big majors — but repeat, non-recurring givers: **1–3 gifts a year, most years.**

the messy middle

biggest · most valuable · most overlooked.

Make it easy to keep giving

Speak to **3 segments** — Leads · One-time · Recurring. ~90% of the content is the same; the lift is **20–400%.**

Sell an *identity*, not a transaction: "I'm a person who helps."

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What to remember

1 **Switch to REP** — fewer newsletters, more real asks, weekly

2 **"Decline" is the model working** — watch the money, not the opens

3 **Donor = hero;** you're the guide

4 **Your core = the messy middle** — keep it warm



Questions?

One move this Monday: **a single-topic appeal · the YOU test · one sign-up spot.**

Want to work together? Slots open **2027+** — grab me after, or email **dominik@dominikharman.sk**