



## **BRITISH RED CROSS ACHIEVES HIGHEST RECRUITMENT OF DIRECT DEBIT DONORS**

The British Red Cross is very likely the best known charity in the world. Wherever there is a humanitarian crisis, the famous red cross or crescent can be spotted and its volunteers helping to provide essential support such as food, clean water, shelter and medicines to the most vulnerable.

Although the charity relies on a global network of volunteers, providing vital relief also means depending on the generosity of tens of thousands of donors each year. As such the British Red Cross fundraising strategy during 2006 has focused on significantly increasing the volume of donors giving on a regular basis through Direct Debit, and it has been a great success.

Various activities throughout the year created a significant 19.6 per cent increase in the number of donors giving by Direct Debit between January and July, earning them an Achievement Award at the 2006 BACS Direct Debit Charity awards. The charity was also commended in the Innovation category.

Liz Williams, senior campaigns manager at British Red Cross, said: "We are committed to increasing the number of donations made by Direct Debit because they generate substantial funds and provide predictable monthly income for years to come".

A two pronged approach was taken by British Red Cross, with activity specifically developed to recruit both new donors and convert existing donors to using Direct Debit.

Appeals to recruit new donors included direct mail and a direct response television campaign, asking potential supporters to give £2 a month. This was supported by telemarketing, face-to-face fundraising on the street and doorstep and a continuation of the innovative online fundraising campaign, which asks supporters to give 'just one hour' of their salary each month by Direct Debit.

Existing donors were approached with direct mail and telemarketing appeals to give on a regular basis using Direct Debit. British Red Cross also included a Direct Debit option in cash appeal mailings, implemented telemarketing campaigns to lapsed cash donors and used

direct mail and telemarketing activity to ask lapsed regular givers to reactivate their Direct Debit.

British Red Cross is no stranger to success at the BACS awards. 2005 saw the charity scoop the Innovation Award. Name, job title at British Red Cross said: "It's a great achievement to be a winner for two consecutive years. Our fundraising teams work diligently to raise donations by Direct Debit, the benefits of which are enormous.

Liz Williams continued: "Regular giving is one of the best ways of achieving our goals and to provide a reliable, sustainable foundation for our life saving work. No other form of fundraising can compete and we will continue our work to encourage further donors to give regularly using Direct Debit. "

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