



PROGRAM ON THE ENVIRONMENT

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

THE THREE C'S OF MARKETING TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES: CONNECTION, COMMUNICATION, AND CULTURE

Session A, Breakout Room #: 18

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Underserved communities are often neglected from opportunities that could greatly benefit them due to poor marketing and outreach strategies that do not acknowledge the circumstances that these individuals are in. The purpose of this study was to understand what the best outreach practices are for reaching underserved communities so that nonprofit organizations can execute a meaningful marketing plan. To assist the Northeast Seattle Tool Library — a nonprofit sharing economy focused on increasing accessibility to tools — with this issue, I interviewed 11 nonprofits that have made the intentional effort to tailor their outreach to better reach these communities. After analyzing the answers from each of these organizations and comparing them with online literature, I found three prominent reoccurring ideas integral to appropriately reaching these diverse groups. The results indicated the importance of creating a genuine connection between nonprofits and their targeted underserved communities, which supported the other main ideas of overcoming communication barriers and utilizing culturally appropriate content. This information could inform other nonprofits so that they can utilize thoughtful marketing strategies to develop a relationship built on trust, which can encourage underserved communities to involve themselves in organizations that can assist them. Doing so helps to bridge the gap of inequality by supporting communities that might not otherwise have access to the offered resources of a nonprofit organization.