

Successful Online Fundraising Tips

This is a collection of tips from experts in fundraising. See the end of the document for source articles if you wish to read further.

1. Plan and Use a Coordinated Campaign

- Use a combination of the media available: school or program website, social media, and email
- Keep campaign easy to spot and difficult to miss in all media formats
 - Ultimate goal is to get the message out and provide a call to action
- Give the campaign a name and always use it in communications for a consistent message
- Put program's name and logo (if you have one) on your fundraiser page, regardless of platform
 - This branding makes the fundraiser look more legitimate than a generic page
 - Studies have found it can boost donations

2. Establish a Sense of Urgency

For project-based needs, one-time events, or cyclical needs:

- Keep your campaign timeline short
- Encourage donors to participate now, rather than later when they risk forgetting

For long-term maintenance fundraising:

- Keep the content fresh and active so viewers know it's still in use
- Emphasize that the sooner you have donations, the better it is for the school or program

3. Use a Concise Call to Action That Includes Impact

- Start all communications or web pages with this for those who focus on the bottom line
- Cuts through donor apathy
- Provide the simplest cause and effect example of donor impact
 - Eg: every \$5 puts a book on our shelf
- Include further details and information for those who want it
- While sob stories **can** work, you're much better off if your message includes hope

4. Develop Clear and Realistic Goals

- This is critical for project-based needs, one-time events, and cyclical needs
- Most platforms can show a progress bar of where your funding is, and where you need it to be
- Clear goals help funders see that you have a plan, which can reassure reluctant donors
- Realistic goals inspire more donor responses

5. Make It Easy and Safe to Donate

- If it's too difficult, time consuming, or confusing, you will lose potential donors
- Include buttons or links in e-mails and on your website to take viewers to the donation page
- Include dollar amount presets for ease, but also allow people to enter their own
- Always test your donation page setup to make sure it works properly
 - It needs to work equally well on laptop, tablet, and phone
- Ensure fundraising pages are secure; the URL should start with https://

6. Tell Your Story Visually

- Visual storytelling allows you to focus on one narrative
- The right visuals, can tell the story much more concisely than words
- Use photos and videos
 - Include people, especially your project's primary beneficiaries
 - Avoid stock photography
 - These should support the message and be consistent across media channels

7. Engage Your Supporters

This isn't something that applies to all fundraisers, so think about how it can work for yours.

- Give your supporters a voice
 - A space to share comments
 - Photo or video reactions to the fundraiser or organization
- Include a share button, making it easy for them to share the campaign with their networks
- Can boost energy and enthusiasm

8. Provide Transparency

- Share or show how funding will be used
- Include wish lists to make goals and objectives clear
- Share research or data supporting the plan or program
- Provide an implementation plan

9. Interact with Supporters

- Acknowledge every gift, thank every donor
- Follow up with all supporters to celebrate and share success after the campaign is over
- Report on the impact of the implementation or project
- In any follow-up communication, include information on how donors can be involved

Sources

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