



Greater Giving Fundraising Best Practices 2015

Fundraising tips, best practices, and ideas taken from fundraising leaders of schools and nonprofits, who attended a Summer Greater Giving PDX Meet-up.

How do you support your event volunteers?

- Greater Giving's Go Time has significantly helped our volunteer experience. It's easy to use and training is so simple.
- Our volunteers come back year after year to support our event; it shows they appreciate the work we are doing for the community.
- We found success in recruiting local businesses or local branches of businesses to volunteer on event night.
- Often our volunteers have a family connection to our organization.
- In order to show appreciation for our volunteers; we assign them clear tasks; train them well in advance for their roles; and after the event hold a debrief/celebration.

What has your organization done to create an outstanding donor experience?

- Registration is more of a concierge experience not just check-in.
- We work hard to ensure our donors leave at the end thinking "best event ever" not about operations on the back end or exiting the event through a long check-out.
- We have built a luxury, high end party (or at least the look and feel of one!).
- By creating a long term engagement with our donors.
- We want our donors feeling like a person and not a bid number to the organization; from the first touch to the final thank you.
- Differentiating ourselves from other auctions in town; keeping it fresh and interesting. We started creating different events to attract a different audience.
- We have found that we were able to build on our already successful event by adding an after party or pre-party with a separate ticket.

How do you collect guest feedback, and how important is it?

- There has been an increase in competition from other events which means your organization has to make changes guests want to see, which makes collecting feedback crucial.
- Collecting feedback via surveys both online and on the phone have worked well.
- Year over year feedback is also key. Donors notice changes you make at the event and appreciate seeing their feedback in action.
- You need to find out what your community wants from the event. Coming up with new and innovative ideas has been challenging.
- How late guests stay into the evening is a key indicator of success. It's a metric you can easily see on event night.

What are you doing to increase sponsorships?

- We have a corporate basket challenge. A local business donates an entire basket to the silent auction. We usually ask our sponsor's administrative assistants to get their coworkers to come up with the baskets.
- One way to get new sponsors is to start by getting volunteers from that business.
- Pay close attention to who comes back year after year. Ask those who are not sponsoring again, why.

How are you increasing donor engagement with your cause?

- We like to connect with millennials by the creation of a Young Professional group. I take a top tier sponsor and ask them to identify 2 young professionals at their business. Ask the young professionals group to manage your social media, a special event, or volunteer day. By engaging at a young age these supporters will likely become major donors in the future.
- Gen X and millennials want to be able to have all the information about their donations, so transparency on what programs donations support is important.
- We created Trust Groups that pay a yearly membership. You get to select the organization/group/project the funds support.

Has technology streamlined your events, and how?

- Efficiency has increased. No longer need paper and have more time. We can also share information easily between staff/committee/volunteers.
- With Greater Giving our process has streamlined, and our committee/volunteers aren't learning a new system every time.
- With Greater Giving and Go Time, we are able to batch email receipts on event night.

How are you integrating mobile bidding in your event?

- Bidding assistants have been key in making sure event night runs smooth.
- Greater Giving Mobile Bidding has streamlined our guests experience with our silent auction.
- We have an older crowd, so we created a test for mobile bidding and allowed users to play with it before the event. It ensured that everyone was ready to bid on event night.
- Check-out with Mobile Bidding has gotten so much simpler.
- Mobile Bidding saves our volunteers time from doing data entry on the silent auction, raffle, and wall of wine.