Fundraising Strategies

Super Events

Super events are a fundraising tactic where you recruit lots of event hosts to hold a small fundraising event on behalf of your charity on the same night, and all around the same theme. Super events work because they leverage your efforts… in many cases, the amount of time you would spend on supporting hosts who want to hold small ($500-$5,000 net) fundraising events may not be worth the return. However, using super events, you can support a network of hosts who are each raising money for your group, with much higher returns.

For example, you may hold a super event to launch your new fundraising campaign where 10 event hosts each hold an event and raise an average of $2,000 for your organization. If each host held a separate event scattered throughout the year, your members may spend a total of 30 hours supporting these events (3 hours spent X 10 events). With a super event, your staff may only spend 10 hours supporting the whole effort, and raise the same amount. In fact, super events normally raise more money than individual events, because of the increased buzz around the effort.

So, you might recruit 10 families (or 5 families in a smaller church) to host a party at their home, each designed to raise money for something like a new playground at church. Or you get each group in the church (choir, SS, altar guild, ushers, etc.) to run a fundraising event on the same weekend with the same theme – each of them interpreting that theme in their own way. This encourages each group to reach out to people they know who are not part of your church – since the rest of your members are busy doing their own thing elsewhere! The built-in competition spurs on the groups and adds energy to the weekend. This is also a good way for a group of congregations (e.g., in a deanery or region – or a group of smaller churches) to work together to raise funds for a diocesan program (e.g., your camp or a special project) or for an emergency (e.g, raise funds for those whose homes were destroyed in a natural disaster) or for specific work like supporting outreach ministries in your own congregations.

Multi-Level Fundraising

Set up a fundraising committee for your group, and task it with a dollar goal. If you need to raise $10,000 and recruit 5 members for the committee, each of them is responsible for raising $2,000.

Then, each of these members recruits people to raise money for your organization. Let's say one of your group members finds 3 additional people to help. With 4 people raising the $2,000 (the original member plus the 3 new recruits) each of the people in that "downline" only needs to raise $500. If each of those four members recruits an additional one person (total of eight people), each of them would then only need to raise $250. Or each member can recruit an additional four people (a total of twenty people) and each of them then raises $100. Each person makes his/her own decision about how to raise their $250 or their $100.

The goal here is to have lots of people out raising a small amount of money each, which adds up to more money, with lots less work (each member of your fundraising committee is responsible for motivating and tracking their own "downline." Two levels is good (especially in a small organization), three levels would work, but anything more than that would likely get too complicated.

Focus on Sponsors for All Regularly Scheduled Events

If your non-profit has regularly scheduled events, a great way to raise more money for your organization is to raise more money through the events you are going to have anyway. And the best way to accomplish this is to focus on bringing in sponsors and upgrading past event attendees to become sponsors. Smart non-profits raise 60-80% of their event revenue from sponsorships, and fill-in the rest with ticket sales and add-ons, like auctions and raffles. Sponsors provide more bang for your buck, and more possibilities for your limited fundraising time.

Who are good sponsors? Start with your own vendors and neighborhood businesses. Look at what other nonprofits have as sponsors. Select businesses that are aligned with your mission – or at least aren't at odds with it (e.g., a bar sponsor for a church event). Approach each business with a sponsorship agreement and ask them FAR in advance. In some cases you may need to plan a year in advance, so don't wait until the last minute to ask. Be prepared to offer something in exchange for the sponsorship. Most businesses consider a sponsorship as a marketing expense so you

need to give them an opportunity to market their goods and services (which is why you want to choose who you ask accordingly). Posting a sign, having your sports team wear T-shirts with the sponsor's logo on it, passing out a marketing brochure, letting them set up a table at your yard sale where they can talk to potential customers, etc. Whatever you can do to help them connect with new customers makes the sponsorship worthwhile.

Launch a Crowdfunding Campaign

Harness the power of sites like Indiegogo, Kickstarter, DoJiggy Pledge or Fundraise.com to run a crowdfunding campaign. Online crowdfunding campaigns are a great way to raise a quick $1,000 – $10,000 or more. Every non-profit has the power to run a successful crowdfunding campaign, and it takes less effort than you might think. If you need to raise money quickly and have a cause that is compelling, consider launching a crowdfunding campaign.

Begin by thinking about what people with no affiliation with your church would want to give money to support. Not your gas bill or salaries! But they could help you build a playground for neighborhood children – especially if you can tell a story about how it will impact an impoverished neighborhood. Or they will help you support a refugee – especially if you can tell a story that touches people's hearts. Even raising money to help you set up a homeless shelter or feed families at your soup kitchen will attract donors. The key to crowdfunding is a compelling story (real need, great response) that has a measure of urgency. For advice see: http://www.thefundraisingauthority.com/internet-fundraising/crowd-funding-your-non-profit/