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Peer-to-Peer Event Fundraising for Everyone

Choosing the right event for your organization

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Peer-to-peer fundraising events have become a popular way for nonprofit organizations to raise money and gain public awareness for their cause. Providing a venue for supporters to show their passion for your mission – and easily share that message with their friends and families – is an excellent way to reach new advocates, volunteers, and donors and continue to engage your current supporters. Organizations like Susan G. Komen for the Cure, the American Cancer Society, and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society have raised billions of dollars through their event fundraising programs over the years to fund their missions. However, it's not just the large, national nonprofit organizations that can benefit from event fundraising. We believe any organization can be successful with peer-to-peer event fundraising if they choose an event suitable for their organization.

In this guide, we hope to inspire you to pursue peer-to-peer fundraising events for your organization. We'll help you understand the six types of peer-to-peer fundraising events for nonprofits and provide guidance on choosing the event type(s) that best fit your organization's needs, mission, audience, and resources. For each of these event types, we'll also provide real-world advice and examples from Convio clients.

Here are the six event types we will cover and the clients we'll showcase in this guide:

EVENT TYPE	DESCRIPTION
NON-COMPETITIVE	Non-Competitive Events are typically identified as walks, fun runs, and family-friendly events geared towards promoting the organization's mission and gaining new supporters. *Client Spotlight:* Michigan Humane Society's Mega March
COMPETITIVE	Competitive Events are generally tied to a competitive athletic event or activity such as a foot race or stair climb. *Client Spotlight:* Colon Cancer Alliance's Undy 5000
ENDURANCE	Endurance Events are geared towards individuals looking for a challenge both physically and emotionally, who are willing to train and make a huge effort to participate in activities such as long distance walks or runs, cycling events, or even mountain climbing events while also making a commitment to meet minimum fundraising requirements. *Client Spotlight:* Hill Country Ride for AIDS
VIRTUAL	Virtual Events allow the participant to register and fundraise online, and participate on their own terms. Sample events are read-a-thons, wear red (or pink, or another awareness color) days, or other activities participants can perform on their own. *Client Spotlight:* Trick or Treat for UNICEF Online
YOUTH / SCHOOL	Youth/School Events are events designed for children, to educate them about causes such as diabetes, autism, or heart health. and to get them engaged in philanthropy at an early age. *Client Spotlight:* American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart
SMALL TEAM	Small Team Events like golf tournaments and bowl-a-thons are designed for small groups of people raising money around a cause. *Client Spotlight:* Project Bread Strikes Out Hunger Bowl-a-thon

NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

Non-Competitive Events make up the large majority of physical fundraising events in the nonprofit space. These events include fun runs, awareness walks, dog walks, field days, and more. Non-competitive events serve to raise money and awareness for a specific cause, while trying to be inclusive of as many supporters as possible. In an effort to appeal to as broad an audience as possible, non-competitive events generally do not require any special training or preparation and require a nominal ($10 or less, if any) registration fee to participate The activity performed at the event is generally low-impact and the event itself is usually takes only a few hours of participants' time. While participants are encouraged to fundraise, there is no minimum fundraising dollar amount required for a participant to gain entry to the event. However, non-competitive event participants tend to fundraise at a higher rate (38.52%) than participants in competitive events (19.97%). One reason is because non-competitive events attract participants with a stronger affinity for the mission of the organization rather than the activity performed at the event. Competitive event participants may not have an affinity for the organization's cause and need more education on why fundraising is an important element of the event.

The level of commitment and resources required to design and host a non-competitive event can be moderately high. Because of their inclusive nature, and goal of building awareness about the organization's mission, these events can attract hundreds or thousands of participants. Securing a location large enough to accommodate the event requires logifistical planning like securing permits, parking, police, and volunteers, not to mention the effort of marketing the event. Coordinating a non-competitive can be a full time job for for one or more of your staff. Depending on the event, especially as it grows in size, non-competitive events can require several months to a year to plan and execute successfully.

 While a lot of work goes into planning and promoting a non-competitive event, there are also many benefits to hosting this type of event. Whether due to the low registration fee, or the fact that the cause probably draws more participants than the activity, non-competitive events tend to enjoy higher fundraising activity than any other event type without a minimum. Participants seem to understand that fundraising is the main goal of the event. There are also non-monetary benefits to non-competitve events as well. Exposure to new prospects and donors and increased awareness of your mission in the community can also help your organization succeed.

Examples:

Walks, Dog Walks

Fun Runs

Field Days

Typically characterized by:

• Varying levels of investment

• Single event day

• Low/no registration fee

• Family/pet-friendly

• Fundraising encouraged

Typical event cycle:

• 6 months, but some organizations may choose year around

Considerations:

• Volunteer help is crucial

• Logistics can be complex

Client Spotlight:
Michigan Humane Society's Mega March

COMPETITIVE EVENTS

Competitive events are similar to non-competitive events in many ways, but are tied to a competitive athletic event or activity such as a 5- or 10-K foot race. These events are generally single-day affairs with an athletic event that a person or team can "win." As a result, these events can be more exclusive, and less family-friendly. In general, competitive events also require an additional level of logistical planning and incur higher costs than non-competitive events. For instance, a large scale race involves technology to time the participants, the ability to generate and distribute Race numbers/bibs, and a means to report results post-race. Courses are often "certified" in order to attract serious runners, so that their run time can be accepted as a record or to be nationally ranked. Therefore competitive events often demand a higher registration fee ($20-50) that supporters must pay in order to participate to help cover these additional costs. Whether because of the required fee, or the fact that participants may have an affinity for the sport more so than the cause, competitive event participants tend to fundraise at a lower rate than non-competitive event participants (19.97%).

For the organization, the level of effort is moderately higher than non-competitive events. In addition to everything a non-competitive event has to plan and execute, competitive events have the additional logistical tasks of fulfilling on race-related items such as race numbers, t-shirts, timing chips, course measurement and design, and trophies. Another dimension to consider is volunteer management and third-party vendors that will have to be coordinated as well. Competitive events are no small undertaking, generally taking a year or more to plan and execute.

Examples:
- Foot Races
- Snowshoeing
- Stair Climbs

Typically characterized by:
- Medium level of investment
- Single event day
- Timed participation
- Medium registration fee
- Mostly adult participants
- Fundraising encouraged
- Awards

Typical event cycle:
- 12 months

Considerations:
- Volunteer help is crucial
- Extensive & complex logistics

Despite the added work, competitive events such as Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure have proven that the competitive event model can be wildly successful. Participants tend to be more invested in actually participating on event day, which can provide an excellent public relations opportunity for your organization. Because the event attracts a more mature and active audience than non-competitive events, corporate sponsors are also more likely to be interested in sponsoring your event (especially if your participants are within their target market). Depending on your mission, competitive event can provide a great opportunity for you to attract new supporters, corporate partners, and sponsors.

Client Spotlight:
Colon Cancer Alliance's
Undy 5000

ENDURANCE EVENTS

Endurance events generally take place over multiple days, and require a high level of athletic commitment from their participants. Typical endurance event activities are long distance walks, marathons, mountain climbs, and cycle events. These events require a great deal of commitment from the participant, including a higher registration fee ($50-$500), a high-dollar fundraising minimum ($500-$12,000), and usually some form of athletic training. While these elements can limit the pool of potential participants, the increased rate of fundraising among participants (n=73%) and the higher average amount raised per participant ($1,218) offset the restricted capacity of the event.

Endurance events are the most logistically complicated of all the event types. Providing overnight accommodations and meals for participants in multi-day events can be challenging, not to mention the work required to acquire permits and insurance for an event that might span multiple cities or legal jurisdictions. Additionally, medical care must be on hand, rest stops must be available at periodic intervals, and volunteer road crews must be organized to keep the event on track.

The advantages to these events, however, far outweigh the complexities. Those attracted to endurance events love a challenge, and seem to eat fundraising minimums for breakfast.   Because the challenge – both athletic and fundraising - is so large and the road so long, completing an endurance event seems to produce a high not replicable in smaller scale events, The overall impact of the event on the participants may explain why endurance events enjoy a higher (online) re-participation rates than any other event type (n=33.88% compared to the overall average of 19.94%).

Examples:

Marathons

Cycle Events

Triathlons

Typically characterized by:

- High level of investment
- Multi-day event timeline
- High registration fee
- Adult participation
- Required fundraising minimum
- Athletic training required

Typical event cycle:

- 12 months

Considerations:

- Volunteer help is crucial
- Extensive event production and logistics

Client Spotlight:
Hill Country Ride
for AIDS

VIRTUAL EVENTS

The term "virtual event" can refer to a myriad of campaigns and activities. In the most general sense, a virtual event is one in which supporters can sign-up for and participate from anywhere – it does not require the participant's physical presence at an event site. Virtual events are specifically designed to allow anyone to participate from anywhere, so that they may spread the word and fundraise for a specific cause. Because of this, virtual events generally do not require a registration fee or fundraising minimum. Virtual events are also often used to provide an online element to a typically offline campaign, such as Salvation Army's Online Red Kettle campaign.

The level of effort to develop and execute a virtual event is generally low, as there are no physical logistics to coordinate or pay for. The biggest challenges around a virtual event is educating and promoting the campaign among supporters and creating a great online user experience to keep them engaged. Since it is not as tangible as a dog walk or 5k race, extra effort needs to be made to make the event easy to understand and convey to potential participants.

The biggest benefit to choosing to create a virtual event is the low overhead and the fact that anyone with access to a computer can participate. Some virtual events are simply an ongoing viral campaign throughout the year. Others are organized around a specific day, like Earth Day, World AIDS Day, or even Halloween or Valentine's Day. Because virtual events do not have a set time, registration fee, or fundraising minimum, these events are great for kids, teens, and adults of all ages, as well as people with disabilities. If your organization has a highly motivated constituent base, constituents who are geographically distributed, or a small budget or staff, this may be an event type to consider further.

Examples:

Online event tied to an actual event

Online campaign tied to a larger campaign

Typically characterized by:

• Low level of investment

• No location or day

• No registration fee

• Kids, teens and adult participation

• No fundraising minimum

Typical event cycle:

• Varies – 6 months to year-round

Considerations:

• Online experience needs to be engaging and easy

• Great for constituents who are geographically distributed

• Creating milestones or organizing around specific dates help motivate participants

Client Spotlight:
Trick-or-Treat for
UNICEF Online

YOUTH/SCHOOL EVENTS

Youth and School events are designed for children to participate in, either in conjunction with their school or another organization geared toward youth services. These events often serve as a tool to educate young people about a given cause, such as diabetes, heart health, or autism. Because of the audience, registration for youth events tends to be free, but fundraising is encouraged. About 36% of participants fundraise in youth events. While average gift is smaller for youth events than any other segment ($31.55), the relation of youth events to school-related activities often increases the reach of the organization to a very large audience.

The challenge for organizations considering this type of event are centered around working with children. There are additional risks and barriers to entry that must be considered including child protective acts, insurance, and the logistics of working with school administrators and teachers to help promote and motive participants.

The biggest advantage of youth events is that you engage and make an impression with participants at a young age. Educating children about important causes early can impact their lives in a larger way, and prevent them from making poor choices as they grow. Additional support from a school or other organization can help provide the framework and venue for the event. Parents and Teachers encourage children to participate, and are often willing to help them fundraise as a means to teach them about giving to others in need.

Examples:

School walks

Jump rope events

Basketball events

Typically characterized by:

- Low to medium level of investment
- Multi-day or month event
- No registration fee
- Youth participation
- Fundraising encouraged

Typical event cycle:

- School year

Considerations:

- Logistics can be extensive depending on scope of the event

Client Spotlight:
American Heart Association's Jump Rope For Heart and Hoops For Heart

SMALL TEAM EVENTS

Small Team events are most often defined as golf or bowling events, however this category could extend to any activity with small teams (2-10 people) and a restricted event capacity. Small team events are often secondary to other, larger fundraising events, but they can be lucrative for nonprofit fundraisers. Logistics are generally simple (renting a bowling alley or golf course), but the restricted size of the event allows the organization to require a high registration fee or fundraising minimum in order to participate. After endurance events, small team events have the second-highest rate of online fundraising across participants (48%).

With a location such as a golf course or bowling alley, and a specific event that may not appeal to a broad audience, these types of events are generally limited in how large they can grow. As a result, fundraising is lower than some of the other event types.

The impact on an organization to plan and execute this type of event is generally low. Logistics are generally taken care of by the venue and require less organizational staff time or specialized skills than other event types to plan and execute. As such these types of events can be a supplement to existing fundraising programs to increase fundraising late in the year.

Given their low risk and easy set up, this may be a good event to consider if you are just starting out, or as a secondary event to supplement your annual event calendar.

Examples:

Golf tournaments

Bowl-a-thons

Typically characterized by:

- Medium to high level of investment
- Single event day
- Required registration fee
- High-dollar fundraisers
- Fundraising minimum
- Restricted team size

Typical event cycle:

- 4-6 months

Considerations:

- Low risk and relatively easy set up
- Great supplement to existing events and fundraising programs
- Designed to focus on limited (but high value) target audience

Client Spotlight:
Project Bread Strikes Out
Hunger Bowl-a-thon

ADVICE FOR CHOOSING & GETTING STARTED WITH A PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING EVENT

When choosing an event for your organization, we suggest you consider the following key questions:

- **Audience:** Who are we trying to reach with the event?
- **Budget & Resources:** Do we have the money required to set up and manage the event? Are there special skills or resources we'll need to plan and execute the event? Do we have a reliable and dependable volunteer force we can leverage to help with the event?
- **Competition:** Are there other events like this already in our area? How many are there and when and where do they take place?
- **Desire:** Do we have staff buy-in for the event? Is this something they can get excited about and be proud to be a part of? Will our audience be excited about it?
- **Executive support**: Do we have executive support for the event? How does the event fit into our overall strategy?
- **Fit:** Does the event align with our mission? Is it a good fit with our organization's personality and culture?
- **Goal:** What are we trying to accomplish with the event? What's our end goal?

Once you choose the event type right for your organization and move forward with designing your own event, consider the common themes that we've learned from the clients featured in this guide as well as the many clients we've worked with over the years. Remarkably, despite the fact that all of these clients have vastly different events, these common themes arose. Learn from their experiences to help you get off on the best possible start.

Plan.
Create a solid plan and tackle what you know you can handle in your first year. Start with being clear about what you are trying to accomplish, who you are targeting and how your event success will be measured. Knowing the answers to these questions will then make it easier to define how you will promote your event, how you will find participants, how you will staff your event, and all of the other logistics.

Consider piloting your event first.
Conduct focused testing and interviewing. Do your homework. Solicit input from your audience. Let them inform the design of your program. Talk with other organizations to find out how they are doing things.

Secure the appropriate resources.
Your organization's resources need to be aligned with the demands of the event. Make sure you have the skills required among your team, the staff and volunteers on board to execute the event, and the necessary budget set aside.

Secure organizational commitment.
In order to secure appropriate resources, you need the support of your executive team. To ensure successful event execution, you'll also need buy-in from your staff. It's important that your event fits into your overall mission and organizational vision. And, if your event type requires volunteers, then commitment from them is critical as well.

Start small and be patient.
In year one, be realistic about what you can do and afford. Focus first on establishing a solid foundation on which you can build year after year. Don't feel obligated to start big and make a huge splash in your first year. Start small, make mistakes, learn and improve on your ideas. Rely on your team's skills and experience -- just remember every challenge is an opportunity to learn and improve.

Harness the power of online engagement.
Use the internet to take advantage of the power of peer-to-peer influence. Design your event site to "speak to" your key audiences and provide a clear path for what you want them to do – register, start a team, send emails to their friends, make a donation, etc. Empower your participants to easily spread the word and solicit donations. Make sure your online tools are engaging and user-friendly.

Follow event fundraising best practices to drive results.
We have other research and guides on best practices for creating successful peer-to-peer fundraising events. We also have extensive experience working directly with clients to help them create and implement their events online. We can consult on ideas for distinguishing your event from all others; promoting your event; recruiting and retaining participants; increasing your fundraising; and engaging and retaining corporate sponsors.

Monitor your results and continually evolve.
Establish an evaluation process to measure your results and identify improvement opportunities. We have benchmarks for each event type based on the results of our TeamRaiser clients. Use these as a guide to understand how you are performing.
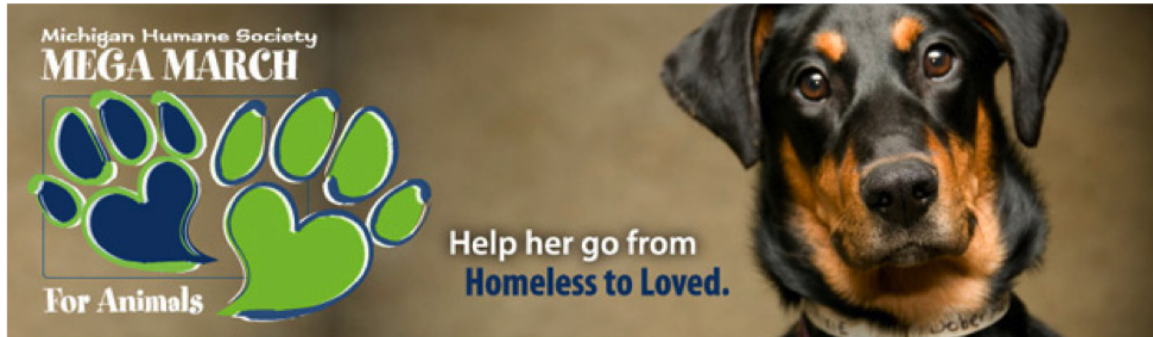
CLIENT SPOTLIGHT:

Michigan Humane Society's Mega March

www.michiganhumane.org

www.michiganhumane.org/megamarch

The Michigan Humane Society is a private, nonprofit animal welfare organization and is the largest and oldest such organization in its state, caring for more than 100,000 animals each year.

Mission:

To end companion animal homelessness, to provide the highest quality service and compassion to the animals entrusted to our care, and to be a leader in promoting humane values.

Profile:

• Rescues and cares for more than 100,000 animals each year

• Hosts one of top 5 largest dog walks in the country

• Recently named as one of the top 5 best managed nonprofits in Detroit

Michigan Humane Society's Mega March is one of the top 5 largest dog walks in the country – but they didn't start out that way. The organization made a deliberate, strategic decision to move from lots of smaller events throughout the year to three large signature events -- with their Mega March being one of them. Prior to the Mega March, the organization had several, small regional walks.

"Aligning our vision as an organization with our strategy for our events and our technology platform allowed us to move from several small, grass roots walk events to a single, large walk event and growing it to be the largest walk for animals in Michigan and one of the top 5 walks of its kind in the country."

–Michael Robbins, Vice President of Marketing & Communications, Michigan Humane Society

Their change in strategy has paid off. In each year since launching the Mega March, they've seen an increase in funds raised and a decrease in expenses. This organization is a great example of bringing together a vision, a solid strategy and the right technology in order to create fundraising events that raise awareness, engage supporters and drive significant fundraising. In fact, the Michigan Humane Society was included a recent Crain's Business Publication as one of the top 5 best-managed nonprofits in Detriot.

Event Statistics:	2006	2009
Total raised (online & offline):	$210,000	$308,388
Total raised online:	$61,292	$134,761
# of online gifts:	1,762	3,343
# of participants:	3,584	5,143
% of participants that are fundraisers:	85 -90%	85 – 90%
Started Event:	2006	
Launched on Convio TeamRaiser:	2006	
Results:	Have increase funds raised 47% in the first 4 years of the event	
Registration fee:	None	
Fundraising minimum:	None	
Staffing:	10-20 staff members with various roles that vary with the event cycle; volunteers play huge role on day of event	
Organization's investment:	Medium	

Participant engagement opportunities:

- Form a team and fundraise
- Participate and fundraise
- Participate only
- Fundraise only
- Donate

What they learned in year one:

- Confirmed their strategy of having one large walk instead of many small ones was the right approach

Supporter motivation:

- Life has been positively impacted by having a pet
- Consider pets an important part of life
- Want to make a difference

*"Equally important to the funds raised from our event are the number of people we engage. Our event is an effective way to identify people who are most open to receiving our message and engaging with us for the long-term. And we know the longer we can keep people engaged, their lifetime impact on our mission grows exponentially."*
-- Michael Robbins, Vice President of Marketing & Communications, Michigan Humane Society

Communication elements:

- Kickoff event – corporate breakfast with local media
- Television & radio (promotion and live on event day)
- Press releases
- Local ecalendars and blogs
- Social media – Facebook, Twitter, YouTube
- Website
- Peer-to-peer emails
- Outbound emails from the organization

What makes their event unique:

- It's simple – very well-run and streamlined; the event itself takes only 3 hours.
- It's scenic – located in a very pleasant setting incorporating downtown Detroit and river-front.
- It provides value – sponsors are onsite at the event providing educational information and fun giveaways.
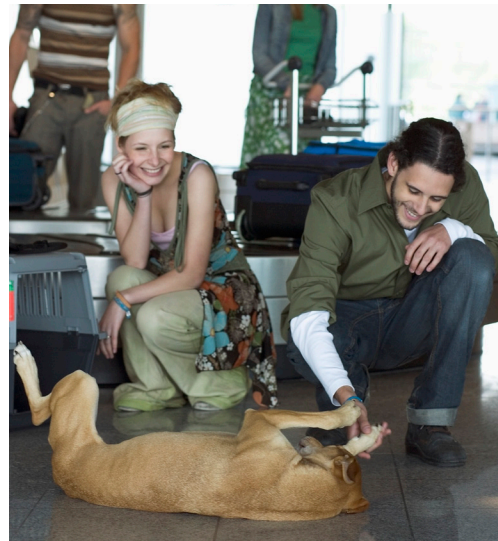
Key metrics tracked:

- Participants Registered
- Funds raised
- Expenses
- Donor engagement

Most important benefits to the organization, outside of fundraising:

- Constituent engagement – to reaffirm commitment of current supporters to the organization and to identify new people who are most open to receiving their message

Challenges faced:	Solutions:
Finding ways to continue growing the event	Retain participants by keeping the event simple and fun Reach new participants by continually improving communications and using peer to peer outreach Provide multiple ways for people to get involved
Logistics & how to make the event more efficient	Invest enough time in planning Align resources appropriately
Engaging more people online	Create a site that is engaging, fun and easy to use Promote the event site in as many ways as possible

How goals are set:
- Strategy/goal session at budget cycle in the fall, then reaffirm in spring to take into account new information or trends
- Consider previous year results, changes in the organization, and current economic environment (unemployment, local businesses)

Success formula:
Vision for the event + Passion of volunteers & staff + Staff expertise + Organizational commitment + right technology

Advice for other organizations considering this type of event:
- You need a solid plan.
- Make it part of your long-term strategy; be committed for at least the next 5-10 years.
- Your organization's resources (staff, budget, volunteers) need to be aligned with the event.
- The event should be embedded in the fabric of your core mission.
- Make participation fun and easy, providing multiple ways to get involved.

"The success of the event begins with the generosity of the people of metro-Detroit and the surrounding communities. They are absolutely passionate about the well-being of our four legged companions and the work of the Michigan Humane Society. Combine that with MHS' vision for this event and the commitment, collective knowledge and compassion of our staff, overlaid with the expertise of our partners like Convio, and the direct outcome is the means to help thousands of additional animals in need!" -- Michael Robbins, Vice President of Marketing & Communications, Michigan Humane Society

[runner icon] CLIENT SPOTLIGHT:

Colon Cancer Alliance's Undy 5000

www.ccalliance.org
www.undy5000.org

The Colon Cancer Alliance (CCA) is the oldest and largest national patient advocacy organization dedicated to ending the suffering caused by colorectal cancer. In order to increase rates of screening and survivorship, the CCA provides patient support, public education, supports research and conducts advocacy work across America.

Mission:

To end the suffering and death caused by colorectal cancer by increasing screening rates and survivorship through support, education, and furthering research and advocacy efforts.

Profile:

• Oldest and largest national patient advocacy organization dedicated to colon cancer

• Provides information and services to hundreds of thousands each year

• Helpline receives an average of 700 calls monthly

The Colon Cancer Alliance is dedicated to a type of cancer that is not always comfortable for people to discuss. The organization needed a way to get people's attention in an unintimidating way and open the dialogue about colon cancer and the importance of getting screened.

The organization decided they wanted to conduct a fundraising and awareness-building event to reach and engage more people, but they needed to decide exactly what that event would be. They hired a stage-three colon cancer survivor to recommend an event concept. After researching the options, she concluded the best event would be a 5K but with a twist and a light-hearted name. And instead of the usual t-shirts, they would give away boxer shorts. The Undy 5000 was born.

CCA's CEO believed strongly that they had to take the event around the country since there were so few colon cancer events. They targeted cities where they had significant support – for example, relationships with surgeons – and in additional cities where they felt they needed to be. In each city, a volunteer

Event Statistics:	2008	2009
# of events/cities:	3	5
Total raised (online & offline):	$306,595.36	$593,898.08
Total raised online:	$134,153	$184,466.53
# of online gifts:	2007	3703
# of teams:	154	288
# of participants:	1,987	3,996
% of participants that are fundraisers:	22.5%	22.19%
Started Event:	2008	
Launched on Convio TeamRaiser:	2008	
Results:	In 3 cities in year one; will be in 14 cities in year three; achieving goal of increasing % of funds left in local communities	
Registration fee:	Ranges from $25 – $40; adult, child and family	
Fundraising minimum:	None, but uses incentives to encourage fundraising	
Staffing:	National Fundraising Director, Undy 5000 Event Director, large volunteer teams in each city, intern, office manager, staff members rotate onsite support at events, agency for communications strategy, exhibit company for assistance with logistics	
Organization's investment:	High	

committee was established to be the local face of CCA in the community and to help with logistics, marketing and securing sponsorships.

They launched the first Undy 5000 in 2008 in three cities and by 2010 will be in 14 cities. In each city where they host an event, they are able to increase each year the percentage of funds raised that stay in the local community. The Undy 5000 has helped CCA do something they could not do prior to launching this event -- they now can help people receive colon cancer screenings that otherwise could not afford it.

Participant engagement opportunities:
• Participate in Competitive Run
• Participate in Family Fun Run
• Fundraise
• Form a team and be a team captain

"At the end of the day what matters is how much money we leave in the local communities and getting more people screened for colon cancer."
-- Stacie Misheler, Event Director

What they learned in year one:

- Most participants didn't realize the organization behind the Undy 5000 was the Colon Cancer Alliance
- Focus on learning and making decisions for how to run the event.

Supporter motivation:

- Identify with the mission -- they know someone with colon cancer or who has survived colon cancer or they are a survivor themselves
- Want to participate in a competitive run (the Undy 5000 is a USTF certified 5K course)

Communication elements:

- Television PSAs
- Radio interviews with doctors
- Social media – Facebook, Twitter
- Website
- Peer-to-peer emails
- Outbound emails from the organization

"One of the challenges you can expect to encounter is participant retention. You want your top fundraisers to come back each year. You have to make them feel special and recognize their efforts. We personally reach out and thank each and every one of them so that they know how much they are appreciated and the impact they are making on their local community."
-- Stacie Misheler, Event Director

What makes their event unique:

- Provide education and opportunity for dialogue by having doctors and survivors speak and booths with resources.
- Make it a family fun day with a disc jockey and moon bounce.
- Offer a USTF-certified 5K course.

Challenges faced:	Solutions:
Raising awareness of the organization behind the event, the Colon Cancer Alliance	Did research with participants Rebranded the Undy 5000 to include "provided by the Colon Cancer Alliance" Include links in event emails to the CCA website Speakers at events mention CCA Include CCA on event materials
Participant retention	Personally reach out to thank them Try to make participants feel special by recognizing their efforts
Getting participants to register early	Focus on improving communications
Getting corporate sponsors to recommit in a tough economy	Invest time in building and maintain these important relationships; make a strong case for sponsoring

Key metrics tracked:

- Total funds raised
- % of funds provided to each local community
- Local & National sponsorships
- Registrants
- Average gift size
- Ratio of donors to participants

Most important benefits to the organization outside of fundraising:

- Raising awareness of colon cancer and the importance of screening
- Reaching new people and gaining new supporters

How goals are set:

- They set different goals for the first year they are in each city
- They use historical data to set goals each year in each city

Success formula:

Passion of their CEO + Commitment of volunteers in each city + Making the overall event experience as personal as possible

Advice for other organizations considering this type of event:

- In year one, be realistic about what you can do and afford.
- It's easier to get sponsors to recommit than find new ones, so focus on retaining your sponsors.
- Make your event unique and original. Make it stand out. Give people a reason to be a part of it.
- Focus on getting people to fundraise. An effective way to do this is to put a face on the organization by telling personal stories of those impacted.
- Talk with other organizations to find out how they are doing things.

"In your first year, be realistic about what you can do and afford. You'll spend a lot of time and energy on establishing your approach & logistics, defining guidelines, coordinating volunteers, etc. There's a pretty steep learning curve, but keep in mind even by year two – it WILL get easier."
– Andrea Clay, National Fundraising Director

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT:
Hill Country Ride for AIDS
www.hillcountryride.org

The Hill Country Ride for AIDS is an annual cycling event that rolls through beautiful central Texas. It's a Ride, not a race, and all levels are welcomed and celebrated.

Mission:
To raise money for life saving support for thousands of Central Texans living with HIV/AIDS

Profile:
- Raises funds for 10 leading community nonprofits that annually support thousands of Central Texans living with HIV/AIDS
- Launched Hill Country Ride for AIDS cycling event in 2000
- Attracts riders from every race, socio-economic group, fitness level, and age group

Hill Country Ride for AIDS has an interesting beginning. Prior to becoming the Executive Director for Hill Country Ride for AIDS, David Smith was the Executive Director for a nonprofit organization supporting people living with AIDS. He was approached by a company offering to produce a cycling event with his organization as the beneficiary. His organization participated but in the end, a very low percentage of the funds raised actually ended up benefitting the organization. It was disappointing to say the least, but the experienced planted the seed in his mind that perhaps an event of this type could actually work if it was executed well.

After a couple of years, David took the initiative to meet with his peers at complementary nonprofit organizations serving the AIDS community. He knew to pull off an event of this magnitude, he needed to be collaborative, and it needed to be a group effort. In 2000, David managed to pull together a total of ten organizations to launch the first Hill Country Ride for AIDS. Although they only had 79 riders that first year, they still managed to raise $90,000 which was well-worth their effort and gave them the encouragement to try the event again the following year.

In year two, they doubled the number of riders and funds raised, and each year since the ride has grown. They are now raising more money than they ever dreamed possible. And along the way, the ride became so big that Hill Country Ride for AIDS was formed, with David Smith as its Executive Director.

"None of us had ever planned a bike ride before and had no idea what we were doing. If we would have let it, fear would have gotten in our way. We didn't know what we didn't know and maybe that was a blessing because we didn't know to be afraid! What we learned was that you don't have to have every single detail figured out before you get started. You CAN just jump in and make it happen if you have really committed people."
– David Smith, Executive Director, Hill Country Ride for AIDS

Event Statistics:	2000	2009
Total raised (online & offline):	$90,000	$690,000
Total raised online:	$90,000	$690,000
# of teams:	0	73
# of participants:	79	615
% of participants that are fundraisers:	100% (required)	100% (required)
Started Event:	2000	
Launched on Convio TeamRaiser:	2004	
Results:	During the first 9 years of the event, fundraising has grown 667% and participation has grown 678%	
Registration fee:	$45 ($25 for volunteers)	
Fundraising minimum:	$500 for adults, $350 for students, $250 for children	
Staffing:	3 staff members + large crew of volunteers	
Organization's investment:	High	

Participant engagement opportunities:

- Riders signup, raise fundraising minimum and enjoy the ride.
- Riders choose to raise more than the fundraising minimum.
- Donors support riders by donating.

What they learned in year one:

- Because they want a community event, it's important to involve a wide variety of volunteers to benefit from different perspectives.
- You don't have to have every single detail figured out to get started.
- Don't let fear get in your way; looking back they are glad they didn't know enough to be afraid.

Supporter motivation:

- Support people living with AIDS
- Get fit and achieve something they didn't think they could while supporting a worthy cause
- Free training rides are offered to help riders prepare for the distance
- Participate in something fun and active
- Be part of doing something good in the community

Communication elements:

- Kickoff party
- Personal outreach to community leaders and significant fundraisers
- House parties with "kits" provided for hosts (videos, materials, speakers)
- Local television and radio
- Social media – Facebook, Twitter, blogs
- iPhone app
- Website
- Peer-to-peer emails
- Outbound emails from the organization

What makes their event unique:

- Focus on new ideas each year for adding new elements to the ride
- Pit stops along the route change each year – each with its own theme; focus is to refuel the body and spirit by cheering riders in, taking their bikes, bringing them snacks and drinks
- It's a community-created and focused event; people look forward to seeing each other each year

Key metrics tracked:

- Total funds raised
- # of participants
- Funds raised per participant

Most important benefits to the organization outside of fundraising:

- Creating a sense of community; increasing engagement of the community

How goals are set:

- Based on previous year's results and what they think riders can accomplish
- Balance driving more fundraising with not putting too much pressure on participants
- Don't want participants to fall short of goal and get discouraged

Challenges faced:	Solutions:
Getting started and producing the first cycling event	Did research with participants Rebranded the Undy 5000 to include "provided by the Colon Cancer Alliance" Include links in event emails to the CCA website Speakers at events mention CCA Include CCA on event materials
Keeping riders coming back	Commitment to keeping the event fresh and exciting each year; paying attention to details that make the riders experience memorable; creating a strong sense of community
Keeping riders motivated to fundraise each year	Being transparent with what is raised and how it's used to impact people in the community
Managing and producing a large, complex event	Good planning; continually learning and improving each year; being committed to building a large core of volunteers

Success formula:
Community influencers + Volunteers with various background and interests + Making people understand this is their ride + Building a sense of community + Adding new elements to the event each year

Advice for other organizations considering this type of event:

- Don't give up.

- Stay true to your values.

- Be open and transparent with everyone involved.

- Create a sense of community for your participants.

"We've created a community event with our ride. If just one person skips out they are missed. It's important to make people understand this is THEIR ride, that they have a stake in it and that each person's participation is appreciated and really makes a difference." – David Smith, Executive Director, Hill Country Ride for AIDS
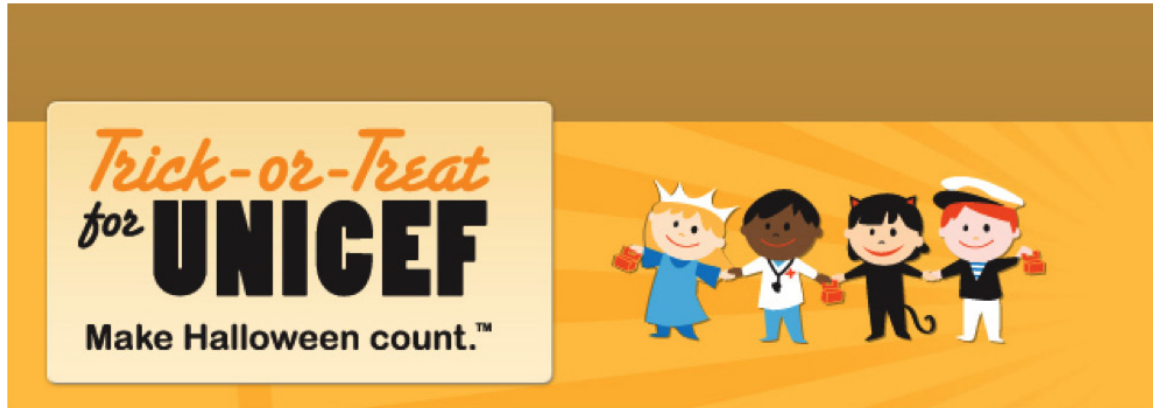
CLIENT SPOTLIGHT:

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF Online

www.trickortreatforunicef.org

www.trickortreatforunicef.org/totonline

UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund) is a global organization that saves children's lives in over 150 countries by providing health care, clean water, nutrition, education, emergency relief and more. The U.S. Fund for UNICEF supports UNICEF's work through fundraising, advocacy, and education in the United States.

Mission:

To do whatever it takes to achieve zero preventable child deaths by giving children the essentials for a safe and healthy childhood

Profile:

- UNICEF has saved more children's lives than any other humanitarian organization in the world.
- UNICEF works at the family, community, regional and country level—with direct access to policy makers and local organizations—to create lasting positive change in areas as far-ranging as maternal and child health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, water and sanitation, education and child protection.
- UNICEF negotiates ceasefire "days of tranquility" in conflict areas in order to immunize children

Trick-or- Treat for UNICEF started as a grassroots effort in Philadelphia in 1950 and has grown from children going door-to-door on Halloween with orange boxes to collect change to a national multi-channel awareness and fundraising campaign.

"Our event has been a natural progression from a door-to-door cam-paign to an online peer- to-peer campaign. We're allowing people to do what they were already doing -- but now do it online."
-- Vijita Kumar, Interactive Marketing Coordinator

The U.S Fund for UNICEF wanted to extend the reach of the campaign and increase opportunities for involvement by allowing people to do what they were already doing but do it online. They also valued the power of peer-to-peer marketing and wanted a way to harness it. The world was changing, and they knew they needed to find ways to incorporate an online peer-to-peer component into this campaign, especially since the campaign targets the youth market. Trick- or- Treat for UNICEF Online, a virtual event, complemented the overall Trick -or –Treat for UNICEF campaign and provided a relevant peer-to-peer fundraising participation option.

Trick- or -Treat for UNICEF Online is open for registration and donations year-round, but the bulk of participation, fundraising and communications is focused on October and Halloween with the most activity between September and November. Because the virtual event occurs every year, it's important

''We're going to celebrate the 60th anniversary of our campaign this year. Adding a virtual participation component to a campaign that has been around for 60 years was critical in keeping it relevant, vibrant and engaging.''
– Alisa Aydin, Managing Director of Direct and Interactive Marketing

Event Statistics:	2000	2010
Total raised (online & offline):	$41,326	$110,575.37
Total raised online:	$36,120.68	$107,247.81
# of online gifts:	1209	1315
# of teams:	432	454
# of participants:	1668	3197
% of participants that are fundraisers:	100% (required)	100% (required)
Started Event:	2004	
Launched on Convio TeamRaiser:	2008	
Results:	Adding a virtual peer-to-peer participant driven element to their long-standing Trick- or- Treat for UNICEF campaign has expanded awareness and reach; Online peer-to-peer fundraising has increased nearly 200% in the last year	
Registration fee:	None	
Fundraising minimum:	None	
Staffing:	Part of portfolio managed by one full-time staff person. Bulk of staff hours work is done from August until December ; This campaign also piggy backs on outreach work done by the – Marketing, PR and Customer Service teams on the overall campaign	
Organization's investment:	Low	

to keep the campaign fresh and interesting to encourage participants to continue to engage and fundraise year after year. The U.S Fund for UNICEF makes sure the campaign evolves by adding new elements. For example, one year they had a challenge from a corporate partner. Another year they had a celebrity youth ambassador create a celebrity page and offer a challenge. They've also redesigned the online user experience to make the site more fun and engaging and easier to use. Every year there's a new twist and something interesting and unique about the overall Trick-or -Treat campaign.

Participant engagement opportunities:

- Using online tools to spread the word about UNICEF and raise funds

What they learned in year one:

- Making the online experience easy, intuitive and engaging is imperative

Supporter motivation:

- Parents and teachers use the event to teach young children about philanthropy.
- Children in Middle and High School and College students participate by raising money as a service-learning opportunity.

Communication elements:

- Event leverages the communications built into the overall Trick- or -Treat for UNICEF campaign
- Promotion by local volunteers in schools and communities
- Social media – Facebook and Twitter
- Website and Blog
- Peer-to-peer emails
- Outbound emails from the organization

What makes their event unique:

- Each year they add new elements to keep it interesting – same is true for the overall campaign.
- Each year they assess and refresh the Trick-or -Treat for UNICEF Online components and tools with the aim of making them even more engaging.

Key metrics tracked:

- Funds raised online and offline
- # of participants
- Type of participants

"To encourage people to participate year after year, we keep our event and overall campaign fresh and interesting by changing it up with new partner initiatives, new celebrities, new digital assets, new educational materials, and new volunteer opportunities, such as Halloween parties."
-- Alisa Aydin, Managing Director of Direct and Interactive Marketing

Most important benefits to the organization outside of fundraising:

- Making people comfortable with engaging and giving online
- Providing another participation option to make it easy for people to get involved beyond making a donation online – reaching out to others, spreading the word, getting others involved

How goals are set:

- Overall goal for the Trick –or- Treat for UNICEF campaign is set based on previous year results and Trick -or –Treat for UNICEF Online serves an another channel for meeting the overall goal.

Challenges faced:	Solutions:
Making participants comfortable using the online site and tools	A focus on the user experience of the site to make it easy and intuitive to use, welcoming and accessible
Raising awareness and increasing online engagement and retention of participants	Commitment to keeping the event fresh and exciting each year; paying attention to details that make the riders experience memorable; creating a strong sense of community
Increasing fundraising from participants	Proactive coaching to participants to assist their fundraising efforts; offering support and guidance

Success formula:
Keeping the campaign relevant + Understanding how supporters want to engage and providing it to them + Making online interaction fun and easy

Advice for other organizations considering this type of event:

- Have a plan. Before you build anything, understand who you are targeting, how you will maintain it, who will staff it, and how you will handle incoming questions.
- Be patient. Start a solid foundation and build on that year after year.
- Integrate your online event into your offline messaging, and mention your event in everything you can.
- Seed your event with existing supporters.

"A key area we focus on is the online experience of our participants. Because we have a virtual event, it's critical that we make our participants comfortable using our online tools and remove any obstacles for them to engage with us online. We made it a priority to redesign our site to make it even more intuitive and fun."
-- Vijita Kumar, Interactive Marketing Coordinator

⊕ CLIENT SPOTLIGHT:

American Heart Association's Jump Rope For Heart and Hoops For Heart

www.heart.org
www.heart.org/jump
www.heart.org/hoops

The American Heart Association is a national voluntary health agency focused on providing credible heart disease and stroke information for effective prevention and treatment. The association's impact goal is, by 2020, to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent while reducing deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent.

Mission:

To build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke

Profile:

• Founded in 1924 by six cardiologists to improve public and medical awareness about heart disease

• Jump Rope For Heart and Hoops For Heart reach ~15 million students in ~40,000 schools

• Collaborating on the first nationwide certification program to evaluate stroke care provided by hospitals

Jump Rope For Heart and Hoops For Heart are national education and fund-raising events sponsored by the American Heart Association and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD). These events engage elementary and middle school students with jumping rope or playing basketball while empowering them to improve their own health and help other kids with heart-health issues.

Jump Rope For Heart is American Heart Association's longest-running fundraiser. The Jump Rope For Heart started in the 1970s as a "rope-a-thon" organized by a PE teacher in Milwaukee and the local American Heart Association chapter. By 1978, Jump Rope For Heart was launched as a national fundraising and awareness event targeting elementary schools across the country. AHA's companion youth program, Hoops For Heart, originated at the Albuquerque Academy in New Mexico, where the basketball event was first piloted in 1992–93. In 1994, Hoops For Heart was launched nationally targeting middle schools.

Today, Jump Rope For Heart and Hoops For Heart have raised over $800million to help fund research, education and advocacy efforts leading to many lifesaving breakthroughs and important heart milestones. In addition, millions of students have learned about our nation's No. 1 and No. 3 killers – heart disease and stroke.

The schools choose the day of their actual event, which can be anytime during the year school year. AHA works with the Event Coordinator, often the PE teacher, to set goals, organize and promote the event, and increase participation and fundraising. AHA conducts consistent communications to the Event Coordinators and to the students to encourage them along and provides them with a full suite of educational materials that can be used year-round – including posters and lesson plans.

Although these events have a long history of success, AHA still faces challenges and each year identifies opportunities to improve. A key current challenge is that AHA would like to broaden the scope of who at the schools get involved. They want to increase involvement of principals and teachers and the overall community to make this a community event, not just something that happens in the gym. They also know that the online component of this program is critical, given they want to engage youth.

Event Statistics:	2008-2009 school year	2009-2010 school year
Total raised (online & offline):	$71M	$64M
Total raised online:	$5.7M	$7.7M
# of online gifts:	~160,500	270,600
# of participants:	NA	147,400
# of students that fundraised online:	51,500	74,400
% of participants that are fundraisers:	NA	50%
Started Event:	1970s (Jump)/1990s (Hoops)	
Launched on Convio TeamRaiser:	2009	
Results:	Have raised more than $800 million in the past 31 years to help fund research, education and advocacy efforts leading to many lifesaving breakthroughs and important health milestones	
Registration fee:	None	
Fundraising minimum:	None	
Staffing:	~250 national, regional and local staff	
Organization's investment:	High (event supports over 40,000 elementary/ middle schools)	

While these events experienced an increase in online revenue, the overall campaign experienced a decrease as a result of the decline in offline revenue. Offline donations – kids collecting checks and cash – comprised ~88% of the total campaign. The downturn in economy was identified as the main variable that contributed to people giving less this year in terms of offline donations. This trend was seen across similar revenue streams in the organization. A small segment of returning schools that achieved a higher threshold of students raising money online (versus prior year) compared to other returning schools, experienced a slight increase in new event dollars.

Participant engagement opportunities:

- Students can register to participate on their school team
- Students can fundraise
- Event Coordinators (teachers) manage the school teams, track progress and send messages to students
- Parents of the students can stay informed of what their kids were doing

What they learned in year one:

- Jump roping and shooting baskets really resonate with kids!

Supporter motivation:

- Students join together in helping other kids with special hearts.
- Students help their school earn gift certificates for free P.E. equipment.
- Students and donors want to help someone in their family who has been or is currently affected by heart disease or is at risk for heart disease.
- Students and donors just want to help make a difference.

Communication elements:

- School visits by AHA directors
- Event Coordinator (usually P.E. teacher)
- Classroom lesson plans
- Website
- Peer-to-peer emails
- Outbound emails from the organization

"By redesigning and relaunching our Youth Market Program sites, Convio translated the vision into a reality. In our first year with Convio, we've seen huge improvements. We had an increase of over 40% in the number of students who fundraised online compared to last year, 50% of our registered students are fundraising online, and our online fundraising is more than 30% ahead of where we were last year at this time. We know we have a bright future with Convio."
-- Deepa Karani, Youth Market Consultant, National Center, American Heart Association

What makes their event unique:

- Educational materials provided through many ways – posters in the school, lessons plans in the classroom, engaging website.
- Participating students receive event packets.
- Students can help their school earn gift certificates for free P.E. equipment.

Key metrics tracked:

- School recruitment and the list of schools hosting events
- Student participation
- % of students fundraising

Most important benefits to the organization outside of fundraising:

- Students learn how to develop heart-healthy habits while being physically active.
- Participants learn physical skills they can use for the rest of their lives.
- Kids learn the value of community service and become empowered to contribute to their community's welfare.

How goals are set:

- Start with national goal; then each market director (each with ~150 schools) set goals; then they work with their schools to set goals

Challenges faced:	Solutions:
Finding ways to continually grow an event that's been around more than 30 years	Worked with Convio to create better online tools and communications Consultants focused on generating creative, new ideas
Increasing online engagement and the % of students involved in fundraising	Created online tools that are more engaging, age-appropriate and user-friendly Redesigned the site to "speak to" their key audiences and provide clear, intuitive navigation
Need to be able to scale the event to support over 40,000 schools	Implemented the Convio platform Continually assess and improve processes for how the event is managed
Distinguishing their event from all of the other fundraising activities in schools	Make the event site and peer-to-peer tools engaging

Success formula:

- Organizational commitment – to provide resources and dedicated staffing
- Staffing structure – national, regional and local roles; feet on the street visiting schools
- Schools – to partner with them to make the events happen
- A powerful mission – resonates more than ever given current health of Americans

Advice for other organizations considering this type of event:

- Ask yourself these key questions:
    - What are you trying to accomplish?
    - What impact or difference are you trying to make with the youth?
    - How can your event be measured and monitored?
- Pilot your event first. Conduct focused testing and interviewing. Do the homework.
- Solicit input from your youth audience. Let them inform the design of your program.
- Don't feel obligated to start big. Start small, make mistakes, learn and improve on your ideas.
- Establish an evaluation process to measure results and identify improvement opportunities.

"Partnering with 40,000 schools and 15 million students is an exciting challenge, and the Convio team extends themselves to help us every time we need it. They bring laser focus to what will make a difference in our program and they often paint a larger vision than we have for ourselves, pushing us to accomplish more than we ever could on our own." -- Deepa Karani, Youth Market Consultant, National Center, American Heart Association

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT:

Project Bread Strikes Out Hunger Bowl-a-thon

www.projectbread.org
www.projectbread.org/bowl

Project Bread is Massachusetts's leading anti-hunger organization.

Mission:

To alleviate, prevent, and ultimately end hunger in Massachusetts

Profile:

- Has oldest continual pledge walk in the country

- Funds over 400 food pantries, soup kitchens, and food banks in Massachusetts

- Runs the only statewide hunger hotline, answering 37,000 calls per year

Project Bread has relied heavily on their annual Walk for Hunger for the past 42 years as a primary source of fundraising. However, due to the tough economy, their organization took a hit like many other organizations have over the past two years. They had record demands on their services, yet they lost a significant amount of state funding and as a result had to layoff 20% of their staff. The Development team pulled together to generate new ideas to make up the budget gap.

The Walk for Hunger had always engaged lots of children and mothers, so they wanted to find a way to reach 20 and 30-somethings and their disposable income. Since this demographic likes to go out and socialize, they decided on a bowl-a-thon on a night of the week that likely nothing else would be going on – a Monday night. One of their development team members had worked at a bowling alley that had hosted charity events, so they had some good insights into what to expect. Although creating a large walk event and a bowl-a-thon are very different events, some of the key skills of the development team – logistics and event planning -- transferred nicely.

They didn't want to select just any bowling alley and found one in a great location (across from Fenway Park) that was considered a cool place to hang out because it's a high-end bowling alley crossed with a cocktail club. The event was successful in that they almost reached their fundraising goal but perhaps

more importantly they reached new people in the community, added three new teams for their Walk for Hunger, engaged teams from local companies, and boosted the morale of the development team. The development team really enjoyed creating and producing the event and found a great deal of fulfillment by doing something to make a difference for the organization during a challenging time.

For next year's event, Project Bread anticipates seeing much more corporate involvement. They expect more corporate teams to participate in the bowl-a-thon, and they have already received requests from companies wanting Project Bread to organize a bowl-a-thon just for their employees.

Event Statistics:	2009
Total raised (online & offline):	$14,401.00
Total raised online:	$10,404.34
# of online gifts:	322
# of teams:	16
# of participants:	108
% of participants that are fundraisers:	82%
Started Event:	2009
Launched on Convio TeamRaiser:	2009
Results:	$14,000; raised awareness with younger demographic; added 3 new teams to the Walk for Hunger
Registration fee:	$15
Fundraising minimum:	$500 per bowling lane/team
Staffing:	4 staff members contributed – 1 for event logistics, 1 for the website, 2 for organizing and promoting the event; on event day all 10 staff members pitched in
Organization's investment:	Low

Participant engagement opportunities:

- Organize a team

- Participate on a team and fundraise

- Donate to a team

What they learned in year one:

- Ideas for improving event logistics

- Opportunity to involve more companies -- some companies participated in the event as their fall event for their staff

- Opportunity for company events -- one company requested that Project Bread organize a bowl-a-thon just for them

Supporter motivation:

- Participate in a fun event for an important cause

Communication elements:

- Social media – Facebook, Twitter, YouTube
- Reached out to local bowling & sports teams on Facebook
- Reached out directly to corporate sponsors
- Website
- Peer-to-peer emails
- Outbound emails from the organization

What makes their event unique:

- Host the event at a fun, hip bowling alley in a great location
- Offer fun prizes – for most strikes, most gutter balls, best team average, best fundraising team

Key metrics tracked:

- Funds raised
- # of participants
- # of teams

Most important benefits to the organization outside of fundraising:

- Increased morale of the development team – this was an event they created rather than inherited; it helped them to think they did something to help the organization fill the budget gap
- Gained three new walk teams for their Walk for Hunger
- Opportunity to raise awareness and reach new supporters – a running slide show appeared above the lanes all night as a way to educate participants about the mission

How goals are set:

- This being the first year – the team just aimed for $15,000 – an amount they could feel good about contributing to the organization's budget gap.

Challenges faced:	Solutions:
Doing everything for the first time	Rely on the team's skills and experience; just remember every challenge is an opportunity to learn and improve
Recruiting participants	Created online tools that are more engaging, age-appropriate and user-friendly Used social media since target demographic is 20 and 30-somethings Reached out to corporate sponsors directly

Success formula:

Development staff skills + passion to help the organization + event concept and location

Advice for other organizations considering this type of event:

• Look at the skill of your team and available resources to select an appropriate event.

• Secure buy-in and commitment from your team.

• Just jump in and go for it.

"Event fundraising is typically very resource intensive, but if you do a good job in year one, you're well on your way. The first year you are doing everything for the first time and learning what works and what doesn't. The second year you should start realizing the payoff. Then by year three you've really mastered the details and execution, and all you have to do is focus on increasing your revenue."

-- Margaret Sloat, Project Bread

Comparison Chart for Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Event Types

Based on our experience working with clients to succeed with peer-to-peer fundraising events of all types as well as our interviews with the clients featured in this guide, we profiled each event type based on typical attributes. Use this chart to help you assess the event type that's right for you.

EVENT TYPES	NON-COMPETITIVE	COMPETITIVE	ENDURANCE	VIRTUAL (Take the Challenge)	YOUTH/SCHOOL	SMALL TEAM
Example Activity Types	Walks, Dog Walks, Fun Runs, Field Days	Foot Races, Snowshoeing, Stair Climbs	Marathons, Cycle Events, Triathlons	Various – can be stand-alone campaign or tied to existing events or campaigns	School Walks, Jump Rope events, Basketball event or other contests & challenges	Golf Tournaments, Bowl-a-Thons
Participant Profile	Everyone – all ages	Everyone – but usually adults	Everyone – but usually adults	Everyone – all ages	Children	Everyone – can be all ages
Participant Physical Commitment Level	Low	Med	High	NA	Low - Med	Low
Registration Fee	None - $	$$	$$$	None	None	$ - $$
Fundraising Minimum	None	None	Yes	None	None	Yes
Team Participation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes – with restricted team sizes
Event Length	Single-day	Single-day	Multi-day	Ongoing – but can organize around specific milestones or dates	Multi-day or month	Single-day
Event Cycle	6 months	12 months	12 months	6 months – year-round	School year	4-6 months
Difficulty to Execute	Moderate - High	High - Very High	Very High	Low	Moderate- High	Low
Need for Volunteer Assistance	Crucial	Crucial	Crucial	Not necessary	Medium	None - Low
Overall Investment Level	Medium	Medium - High	High	Low	Medium - High	Low - Medium
Example	Michigan Humane Society's Mega March	Colon Cancer Alliance's Undy 5000	Hill Country Ride for AIDS	Trick or Treat for UNIFEC Online	American Heart Association's Jump Rope For Heart and Hoops For Heart	Project Bread Strikes Out Hunger Bowl-a-thon

CONCLUSION

Peer-to-peer fundraising events offer a significant opportunity to any nonprofit to not only raise more money but reach new supporters and enhance relationships with current supporters.

We believe any organization can realize long-term success by choosing the right event type and following steps to establish a solid foundation to build upon year after year.   Whether you choose to start small with a small team or virtual event, or jump in with a competitive or endurance event, be sure you understand what will work best for your organization and your constituent-base. In the end, no two fundraising events are created equal -- choose the event that expresses your mission, empowers your participants, and meets the needs of your organization.

LEARN MORE/HELPFUL RESOURCES

Convio TeamRaiserTM Event Fundraising – Learn more about our TeamRaiser product, other event research and case studies: http://www.convio.com/teamraiser -- or link to new landing page or Peer-to-Peer Event FR page…

Additional Resources:

- See how we've helped other clients: www.convio.com/portfolio
- Find best practices, white papers, tip sheets & more: www.convio.com/resources
- Assess your results: www.convio.com/benchmark (need to add TR benchmarks paper to this main landing page) – add thumbnail of benchmark study and event benchmark study?

Convio Research

- The Next Generation of American Giving | http://convio.com/nextgeneration
- The Convio Online Nonprofit Benchmark Study | http://www.convio.com/benchmark
- The Wired Wealthy: Using the Internet to Connect with Your Middle and Major Donors | http://convio.com/wiredwealthy

Convio Best Practice Guides

- Using the Internet to Raise Funds and Build Donor Relationships | http://www.convio.com/fundraising
- Nonprofit Website Fundamentals | http://www.convio.com/websiteguide
- Basics of Email Marketing for Nonprofits | http://www.convio.com/emailguide
- Toolbox for the Modern Nonprofit: Donor Management Made Easy | http://convio.com/donormgmtguide
- Going Social: Tapping into Social Media for Nonprofit Success | http://www.coonvio.com/socialmedia
- Holiday Giving Guide | http://www.convio.com/endofyeargiving

More Convio Resources

- On-Demand Webinars | http://www.convio.com/webinars
- Quick Tour Videos | http://www.convio.com/quicktour
- Sign-up for our Newsletter Convio Connection, a free bimonthly newsletter for nonprofits on how to attract constituents, drive action, and build loyalty through online relationship management. | http://www.convio.com/newsletter

Contact us:
info@convio.com | 1-888-528-9501 ext. 1

ABOUT CONVIO

Convio is the leading provider of on-demand constituent relationship management software and services that give nonprofit organizations a better way to inspire and mobilize people to support their organization. Convio Online Marketing, the company's online marketing suite, offers integrated software for fundraising, advocacy, events, email marketing, and web content management, and its Common Ground™ CRM system helps organizations effectively track and manage all interactions with supporters. All Convio products are delivered through the Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model and are backed by a portfolio of best-in-class consulting and support services and applications focused on the unique needs of the nonprofit organizations. For more information, please visit www.convio.com