Nearly half of all donations are made in the last four months of the year. This time of year, also known as giving season, is the perfect time for nonprofits to engage with their donors, create unique experiences and raise funds for their cause with online campaigns such as #GivingTuesday, Year-End Appeals and holiday campaigns. They are a great way to bring communities together and motivate donors with a sense of urgency and the promise of a tangible result. When your supporters are engaged through a limited, time-bound campaign, it creates a buzz and sense of urgency that inspires more awareness and increased donations.
Almost 50% of donations are made during the last four months of the year.

30% of annual giving occurs in December.

10% of annual giving occurs on the last 3 days of the year.

Whether it is for a local “Giving Day”, a national event like #GivingTuesday, a Year-End Appeal or a giving month, this guide will help nonprofits plan successful campaigns that raise more.

Planning for Success.

There are several steps that go into planning successful Year-End Giving Campaigns. Our best advice is to start preparing, creating and promoting your online Giving Campaign as far in advance as possible using a multi-channel communication strategy and digital engagement tools. This helps generate excitement, connect with your supporters, and create a movement to raise more funds for your cause through your campaign!

Keep reading for important tips on how to make your next giving campaign your best yet.

Go Hybrid, Virtual or Both!

Offering hybrid participation and donation options are a necessity these days, and by providing an opportunity for supporters to participate and donate virtually from wherever, supporters feel comfortable. It can look like a thrilling auction that gives donors the ability to bid anytime, anywhere and via any device, including computers, phones and tablets. Easy-to-use digital fundraising platforms like Panorama™ can help nonprofits easily plan, manage, promote and securely process payments for their auctions, events and donation campaigns. When hosting a virtual or online auction, the right technology can also help nonprofits keep track of bid sheets, email and letter templates, shipping labels, auction catalogs and more while also providing a holistic view of your auction’s results through comprehensive reporting on donors, auction items and sponsors. It can also look like a hybrid peer-to-peer 5k race that offers in-person and virtual participation and donation options. Hybrid events offer revenue stability and keep nonprofits from being overly dependent on one source of funding. In addition, you can appeal to everyone’s needs and allow for flexible attendance while expanding your opportunity to raise more funds. Whether it’s an auction, a gala, or a peer-to-peer event, providing supporters with flexible participation and donation options respects their needs and lets them support your cause in-person or remotely.
Incorporate a Livestream in your Campaign.

Think about incorporating an innovative way to share your campaign along with your brand, and a way to connect with your audience—through a livestream. You can livestream a portion of your campaign, use a livestream to kick-start your campaign or share a performance to help garner additional donations while incorporating an engaging, real-time element.

As livestream happens in real-time, it’s a great way to engage your audience and encourage more donations. With chat, donation and share functionalities you can make viewers part of the action, providing a way for your supporters to give instantly, and fundraisers the ability to thank donors live and in real-time, is another way to raise more funds for your cause.

Select a Day.

Is there a specific day during the year that holds special meaning for your organization? GivingTuesday? An Anniversary? A Founder’s Day? An Awareness Month for Your Cause? A Holiday? Pick a day or even a week or a month with meaning that lets you easily build a story that mobilizes your supporters around your Giving Day or Year-End Appeal. Add videos, your organization’s mission video or a livestream, images, and text to your Campaign to engage your supporters and tell your story. Use Digital Engagement Tools to communicate to your supporters through email, social media, and website updates so they understand why they should give on this special day.

Do your research! Before you set an official date for your campaign, you should account for other events that may be happening on the same day. Avoid conflict with large events such as religious holidays, sporting events, or anything that may cause a distraction. You can easily find calendars online that include large and local community events. The National Day Calendar is a fun resource to browse for unusual days and important dates.

Set Goals.

Determine what you want to accomplish for your giving day campaign. Do you want to raise a certain amount of money for your cause? Acquire a certain number of volunteers? Increase community awareness? Keep in mind, it is okay to have more than one goal; most fundraising events do! Make sure to set realistic and measurable goals that you can report on, so you can evaluate the success of your appeal. Monitor campaign metrics throughout your campaign to assess fundraising progress, effective communications, donor conversions and engagement to make any necessary adjustments and future campaign strategies. Also, be sure to communicate your goals to your stakeholders, including your volunteers, so they know exactly what you are trying to achieve.
Connect with your Advocates.

Who are your top social supporters and influencers? Who are the people in your community who support you? The more support you have, the more awareness and funds you can raise!

Connect with your supporter base and ask them to join, in person and online. Help spread the word and donate to your Giving Day or Year-End Campaign. To help your supporters champion your cause you should provide them with details about what you want them to do and how you want them to do it. Add a toolkit that includes your mission story, images and branding, pre-crafted email templates, suggested social media posts, a list of FAQs, and a hashtag to use leading up to and on your special day. Make sure your advocates know how important their role is in the success of your campaign. Be clear on what you expect from them and do not forget to thank them along the way for stepping up to help. Be sure to offer hybrid and virtual participation options for supporters to engage from anywhere in the world.

Reach Out to Businesses and Corporate Partners.

A fantastic way to connect with those who already know you and your cause is to contact your current partners and sponsors. These businesses have corporate responsibility initiatives and teams in place, so getting them to partner with you on a workplace giving campaign that is related to your cause should be an easy ask! With a little research, you can also find new corporations that have a similar mission or commitment that aligns well with your cause.

Select the Right Technology.

Selecting the right digital fundraising platform to run online giving programs, fundraising events and securely collect and process online donations is an important part of planning a successful campaign. You need a trusted platform that has all the tools and features to ensure you can quickly and easily plan, manage, promote, and securely process fundraising dollars.

With Panorama Campaigns, registered nonprofits of all sizes have access to integrated, online fundraising tools that support planning, managing, promoting, reporting, analytics and integrated secure payment processing for all types of fundraising events and campaigns. Customers can reduce in-person, event-related costs and increase donor engagement by supporting virtual or hybrid participation while raising more funds to help further their missions. When selecting a technology partner, you need to determine what features are most important to you and what makes the most sense for your organization.

Here are some must-have platform features to keep in mind when creating your Giving Day or Year-end Campaign.
Ability to Create Unlimited In-Person, Online and Hybrid Events, Campaigns & Fundraising Pages: Employ a combination of virtual and in-person fundraising events to enable your nonprofit to be nimble and proactive so participants can choose from flexible ways to engage and support your mission. Having the ability to host a fundraising event while allowing supporters to participate from anywhere, anytime, helps your organization raise more funds and generate more engagement from supporters while attracting new donors.

Ease of Use: Ability to easily create unlimited, branded, mobile-friendly online fundraising donation pages with an intuitive drag and drop content manager that requires no technical expertise.

Branding, Storytelling: Configuration tools to customize your campaign page to display your organization’s story and look and feel, while incorporating campaign-specific videos, images and content.

Gamified, Live Campaign Updates: Real-time countdown display ticking down to the campaign end date, thermometer displaying progress to the fundraising goal and donor listing that updates with every donation – all to inspire and motivate supporters to give to your cause.

Seamless, Interactive Donor Experience: Embedded, donation slide-out that lets your donors give without ever leaving your Campaign page while viewing the impact of their donation instantly on a real-time thermometer and donation listing.

Multi-Channel Engagement: Social sharing options and email engagement tools that make it easy to promote your Campaign with the click of a button.

Multiple Giving Options: Customized donation options, including donor covers the fee, recurring donations, company gift matching, tribute and memorial gifting allowing supporters to increase their impact and maximize their donations.

All of which helps you raise more for your mission! The great news is that FrontStream’s Panorama all-in-one digital fundraising platform has all these necessary features and tools that will make your day a success!

Promote your Campaign.

Don’t forget to engage with all your supporters including volunteers, participants, donors, sponsors and corporate partners! Give your supporters what they need to help spread the word. Make it simple by creating digital support with mission-fueled content, add a livestream to engage and excite your supporters to participate, and provide fundraising tips for your supporters to easily share online and on social media and with their network of friends and family.

Connect your Organization’s Website with your Online Giving Campaign.

Create unique web pages for your Giving Day or Year-End Appeal. This is an opportunity to focus your ask and engage your donors in a unique experience directly related to your Year-End Giving. Leverage your organization’s website and social media channels to promote your campaign, increase awareness and drive traffic to your online giving microsite. Most importantly, encourage people to get involved and build excitement on your website!
Engage Digitally.

Once you have your online Giving Campaign set up and ready to accept funds, you can get the word out through digital engagement tools. Choose a platform with integrated digital engagement tools that allow you to create segmentation lists to target email recipients based on who has donated, registered, or already received a mailing. Don’t forget to track email stats like opens, clicks, bounces, and unsubscribes to evaluate the effectiveness, donor database engagement, and success of your email campaign. Your communications should go out to your entire network — past donors, volunteers, advocates, and friends. Encourage your supporters to participate in your campaign, whether it is by making a donation or using social media to help spread the word. Provide them with all the details they need to get involved. With Panorama’s Engagement Tools, you can create, schedule and automate targeted customized messages to registrants and donors based on their individual fundraising activities in your campaign in real-time. Start building awareness and excitement for your Giving Day or year-end appeal!

It is also important to follow up with additional email communications leading up to your event to ensure everyone remembers your campaign is happening soon!

Connect in Multiple Ways.

All supporters want to feel important and valued. A great way to recognize your most loyal supporters who have already donated, participated, or even volunteered with your organization is to find a time and various ways to connect with them. After scheduling your emails and social media posts, it is also a good idea to schedule a time for a group of your fundraising advocates or volunteers to make calls to donors leading up to your campaign and on the day itself. Ask them for their support, help to spread the word, and ask for a donation on your Giving Day or for your Year-End Appeal.

Be Social.

Schedule posts and encourage your supporters to join the conversation. Create a unique hashtag to use across all your platforms leading up to, on, and after your campaign. Make sure your ambassadors, volunteers, and supporters know the hashtag, so they can use it across their networks. With Panorama Campaigns, sharing your fundraising appeal is easy with one-click social share tools and buttons!

Create your own hashtag! Choose one that is meaningful to your organization and your mission.

Create a Media Kit.

Reporters are always looking for a good story, especially when a good cause is involved. Create an online media kit with information about your organization, statistics, photos, promotional materials, and links to your website and social pages, and then send it to various local and regional press outlets. Write and distribute a press release about your campaign. Find reporters, bloggers and industry experts on social media and ask them to help support your cause! Check out Help A Reporter Out and sign up to the mailing list for free to see what reporters are looking for.
Day of Giving or Year-End Appeal.

Day-of activities are just as important, if not more important, than activities leading up to your big day. You must be active and present for your entire Giving Day. This goes for hybrid or virtual events as well — even if it’s entirely online, you should be available and monitoring the entirety of your event. To add more excitement, consider adding a livestream to kickstart your campaign, or to help wrap up your campaign. Use a countdown timer which is the perfect way of adding visual movement to your campaign and create a sense of urgency. FrontStream’s eGuide 6 Easy Steps to Fuel Donations with Data and Technology reports how some organizations say countdown timers increase revenue by 400%! Don’t keep all of your activities between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. – it’s important to reach out beyond the typical workday. Research cites that donors on smartphones and tablets tend to visit charity websites during the evenings and weekends. Make sure your campaign supports mobile responsive pages, so your donors can engage anywhere and anytime! Don’t miss getting the attention of your mobile audience!

Provide Online, Live Gamified Updates.

In addition to scheduled social posts, you’ll want to consider incorporating automated live updates on your Giving Page to engage and inspire your donors. Inspire and motivate supporters to give to your cause with a progress bar with real-time funds collected to the goal. Fundraising thermometers motivate supporters to reach goals and increase overall giving by 35% on average over sites that don’t use one. This helps your fundraisers see how much money was raised and how far they have to go! Provide a seamless, interactive, donation experience by enabling donors to give without ever leaving your campaign home page and view the impact of their donation instantly with a real-time thermometer and donor listing.

Update your Supporters Throughout the Day.

Post and share your event success on social media with updates throughout the day to keep everyone up to date on dollars raised and the day’s activities. Make sure your fundraising advocates are encouraging engagement and donations along with you!

Hold Fundraising Challenges.

Think of creative ways to have contests or challenges during your Giving Day or Year-End Appeal to get people excited and involved. Offer fundraising incentives for those who are fundraising on your behalf. For example, fundraisers who reach $1,000, will receive a $25 gift card.
Post Campaign Celebration.

Take a look at the goals you set and plan how you’ll communicate your success to your supporters. Just like your campaign promotion leading up to the event, create a multi-channel communication plan post-campaign to connect digitally to all those who supported your campaign. In addition to personalized thank you emails, consider updating your campaign page with a commencement video, photos of the beneficiaries of your cause or a thank you message from your executive director. Visual content is also a fun opportunity to showcase how your donors have made an impact and helped propel your mission forward.

Social Media Thank You Messages.

Thank your donors with heartfelt messages and include how they helped your cause! Share the impact the day had on your organization by using photos, infographics, and statistics. Make your supporters feel extra special!

Continue to Encourage Donations on your Nonprofit Website.

Don’t forget about your supporters who were unable to participate in your campaign. Panorama’s all-in-one digital fundraising platform allows you to create beautifully branded donation pages you can add to your organizational website to encourage others to give to your cause all year long. Share the link to your donation page on all of your social accounts or through email using Panorama’s all-in-one digital fundraising platform including robust engagement tools and channels.

Panorama by FrontStream Your All-in-One Digital Fundraising Platform

Schedule a Consultation

Learn more at www.frontstream.com