Kiwanis Fundraising Guide

A handy collection of products, services and tips to help your club succeed

PULL OUT AND SAVE THIS GUIDE FOR YEAR-ROUND FUNDRAISING IDEAS
Tending the money tree

You’ve discovered a need in your community—your local town or your world community. Students need scholarships. A returning soldier’s home needs renovation to accommodate her wheelchair. An inner-city youth will stay home while friends go to camp. Tetanus threatens the lives of mothers and babies.

Whatever and wherever the need, funds likely are needed to solve the problem. Here are some tips to maximize your club’s fundraising efforts. —Eileen Dennie

**SETTING GOALS:**

**Begin with the end in mind.** What’s involved in meeting the need? Knowing the end product can guide goal setting, budgeting and even deciding what type of fundraiser your club chooses.

**Figure it out.** How much money will it take to meet this need? Get quotes and pricing so you’ll know how much money your fundraiser needs to bring in.

**Subtract overhead.** Unless you can manage to get all needed supplies, prizes and promotional materials donated, you’ll need to factor expenses into the equation. Be realistic about what your club can absorb and what should come directly off the profits.

**Prioritize.** Decide what part of the plan will be implemented at each level of giving. That way, a small victory is still a victory. For instance: Level A = make the playground accessible for all children; Level B = add swings and landscaping; Level C = install climbing equipment.

**Consider your options.** What will you do if your fundraising exceeds your expectations? That’s a good problem to have! Maybe create multiple scholarships or pay for annual maintenance at the playground—something related to the original need.
HOW DO WE GET PEOPLE TO DONATE?
With so many good causes, how do people decide where to make a donation? People may throw pennies in a passing basket without much thought, but if you really want them to dig deeper into their pockets, they need to feel a personal connection with your cause.

CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE:
Educate all around. Research and write a synopsis of your cause. Know what you are trying to accomplish so Kiwanis members can intelligently relay the basic information.

Be specific. Tell potential supporters exactly how someone will benefit from their donations. Use statistics and facts from your research.

Make it real. If appropriate, ask the individuals in need to tell their story. Share their message—by video, newspaper story or person-to-person—with potential donors.

Make it personal. People relate to children. If yours is a child-related cause—and it usually is with Kiwanis—involves children in your outreach or promotions.

Bring it home. How does this need—and your funded solution—affect your community? Name the neighborhoods, schools or buildings involved.

Picture it. On posters, presentations and fliers, appeal to your audience by using photos of people your project helps or display architectural renderings of the proposed improvements.

Keep updated. Offer donors updates on the progress of your fundraiser and your project. Post details on your website, or keep in touch via social networks. If your fundraiser involves a sick or injured person, try www.CaringBridge.org as a way to share updates.

Train your front line. Make sure there’s at least one person who can answer donors’ questions. How much money does your club make from each box sold? Where does the money go?

After the Rancho Murieta, California, Kiwanis Club finalized its candy sale to benefit troops overseas, coordinators posted a thank-you note on the club’s website, giving readers a way to keep up on the cause. The candy vendor, See’s Candies, hosts a blogspot where veterans have shared their thoughts on what the packages mean to soldiers and also listed future sale locations.

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Look the part. Dressing up in certain colors or wearing your Kiwanis gear will get you noticed.

HOW DO WE MAKE IT HAPPEN?
CHOOSING A FUNDRAISER:
Stay local. Make the most of the assets in your area. Blueberry festivals in Michigan, golf outings in North Carolina and bike rides through the hills of Washington state take advantage of local produce, businesses and terrain to create cost-effective fundraisers while building a sense of community.

Search for talent. Every Kiwanian brings special talents to your campaign. Survey your members for hobbies and interests, which your club can build on to create a unique, homegrown fundraising idea.

Make a connection. Look for logical connections between your cause and your community. If you’re raising money to cover a young cancer patient’s medical bills, approach the child’s favorite dining spot about hosting a fundraising dinner.

Craig, Colorado. Kiwanians aren’t trained thespians, but that hasn’t slowed ticket sales for their annual show. The two-hour extravaganza—in its 65th year—involves every club member and entertains audiences with music, dancers and the event’s signature skits. Besides the community-building spirit of weeknight rehearsals, ticket sales net around US$12,000.

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Come hungry. Everyone’s gotta eat. Especially in a school, quick funds can be made by selling donuts, delivering candygrams or coordinating a benefit night at a nearby snack shop.

Shop wisely. Remember that the product you choose to sell is a reflection of your club. If you sell shoddy merchandise, it may hurt your profits—and your reputation.

Automate. Certain fundraising partners make Internet sales virtually seamless. Using their branding materials and messaging, link to the vendor’s site directly from your club’s site.

Read all about it. Check out the ads in Kiwanis magazine for reliable products available to resell as fundraisers. Past issues of the magazine at www.kiwanismagazine.org are full of fundraising ideas.

Make it painless. Some events are so fun, participants don’t realize they’re taking part in a fundraiser: Think poker or golf tournaments, treasure hunts, duck races. Something that builds teamwork and gets the competitive juices flowing.

Fund raising the easy way!

Spiral Wishing Wells have raised over $200 million for clubs, charities, and organizations, around the world. They are fun, don’t feel like solicitation, and very productive.

“We have had two Spiral Wishing Wells in our local shopping mall for over 20 years. They bring in $7,000 per year, and generate a lot of positive exposure for our Kiwanis club.” Jim Levesque, MA

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“We placed the first two Wells in a Super Wal-Mart where they raise money for Children’s Miracle Network. In 147 days, they have raised $2,519.38! Please ship two more Wells with our ‘Provided by Kiwanis’ signs on them as soon as possible. We already have one of them committed for the Golden Coral restaurant where we hold our meetings.” Jim Kissel, South Dakota

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*Suggested price; actual price is at the sole discretion of the group.
events, school dances or other big fundraisers. Don’t forget to check last year’s community calendar, because some annual activities may not be listed yet this year.

**Take a head count.** If your fundraiser is scheduled around a festival, holiday or other community event, take a quick survey on how many members are available. They may already have time commitments.

**Don’t compete with yourself.** Does your club have other fundraisers already happening? Keep them separate; try not to ask people to support different fundraisers all at once.

**Create a master schedule.** Break down big responsibilities into smaller tasks and give each task a deadline. Add product delivery dates, advertising deadlines and money due dates to your timeline.

**Count down the days.** Use your club’s favorite method of communicating to

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**The Lindenwald-Hamilton, Ohio, Kiwanis Club raises US$8,000 to $10,000 annually from its pancake breakfast. The event draws a crowd by first drawing media attention to a pancake flip-off between local celebrities. This April, Butler County judges and the mayor competed to see who could flip the most mini-pancakes onto a target board. The contest earned a write-up in the local newspaper, which told its readers all about the pancake fundraiser to help a community cause.**

**Get on board.** Jump on the bandwagon … if it’s heading in your direction. Find out what’s popular with your target group and get those items made with your cause emblazoned on them. Try these ideas: flavored popcorns, drawstring bags, wristbands, anything with an “earth-friendly” theme.

**PLANNING:**

**Assemble a team.** The size of your fundraiser will determine the size of your team. Choose a strong leader. Add members of the community from outside your club if they can valuably contribute.

**Get the inside scoop.** If your club is organizing a bowlathon, recruit bowlers to join your planning committee so they can provide real insights.

**SCHEDULING A FUNDRAISER:**

**Get in sync.** Before you schedule a fundraising event, check numerous community calendars. Avoid conflicting with big church

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**The Midland, Michigan, Kiwanis Club holds three regular fundraisers a year, making the most of each season: an annual rose sale in the spring, concession sales at the county fair each summer and ticket sales to an arts center’s travel film series from October to March. As one fundraising event is winding down, there’s just enough time to catch a breath and celebrate a job well done before gearing up for the next one.**
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**PROMOTING YOUR FUNDRAISER:**

*Make a name for yourself.* Grab media attention with a well-known warm-up act to set the stage for the main event. Have a celebrity cook-off to launch the sale of your cookbook. A well-known chef could suggest wine pairings as part of a TV news segment as she announces your club’s wine-tasting fundraiser later in the week.

*Make it obvious.* While the pancake breakfast crowd gobbles up your golden griddle creations, you’ll have a captive audience. Give a presentation, make table tents or display photo-filled posters to remind everyone what kind of impact their contributions are making. They may just leave a bigger tip!

**Grassroots promotions.** Arm every member with fliers so they can promote your fundraiser when opportunities arise. Also, post all the details on your club website.

**Be social.** Use Facebook or Twitter to update your “friends” and “followers.” Ask members to use their Facebook pages and Twitter accounts to talk about the fundraiser and introduce your cause.

**MANAGING THE MONEY:**

*Keep track.* If your fundraiser involves large cash or check donations, a treasurer should record names and addresses of contributors. This information will prove useful to follow up with thank-yous or for contacting past supporters in the future.

*Keep copies.* If you’re working with a fundraising product company,

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WHAT PUTS THE €, $ OR £ IN YOUR FUNDRAISER?
Kiwanis magazine readers enjoy reading about other clubs’ success. So share your story by emailing a summary of your event, along with fundraising tips, to shareyourstory@kiwanis.org. Your submission may show up in a future magazine or other Kiwanis publications.

And don’t forget photos. Action shots are preferred. Set the camera at its highest setting, and send the images in their original size and format, such as jpg or tif.

California’s Cloverdale High School Key Club updates their followers regularly through the club website and on Facebook. Even members who couldn’t make the weekly meetings and other supporters would know about the club’s Honk for Japan Day. Volunteers spent an hour in their community’s city plaza, urging passing vehicles to honk their horns. The club collected pledged contributions for each toot. The Internet and social media postings included all the details, especially the cause: aid for an earthquake-devastated village in Japan.
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