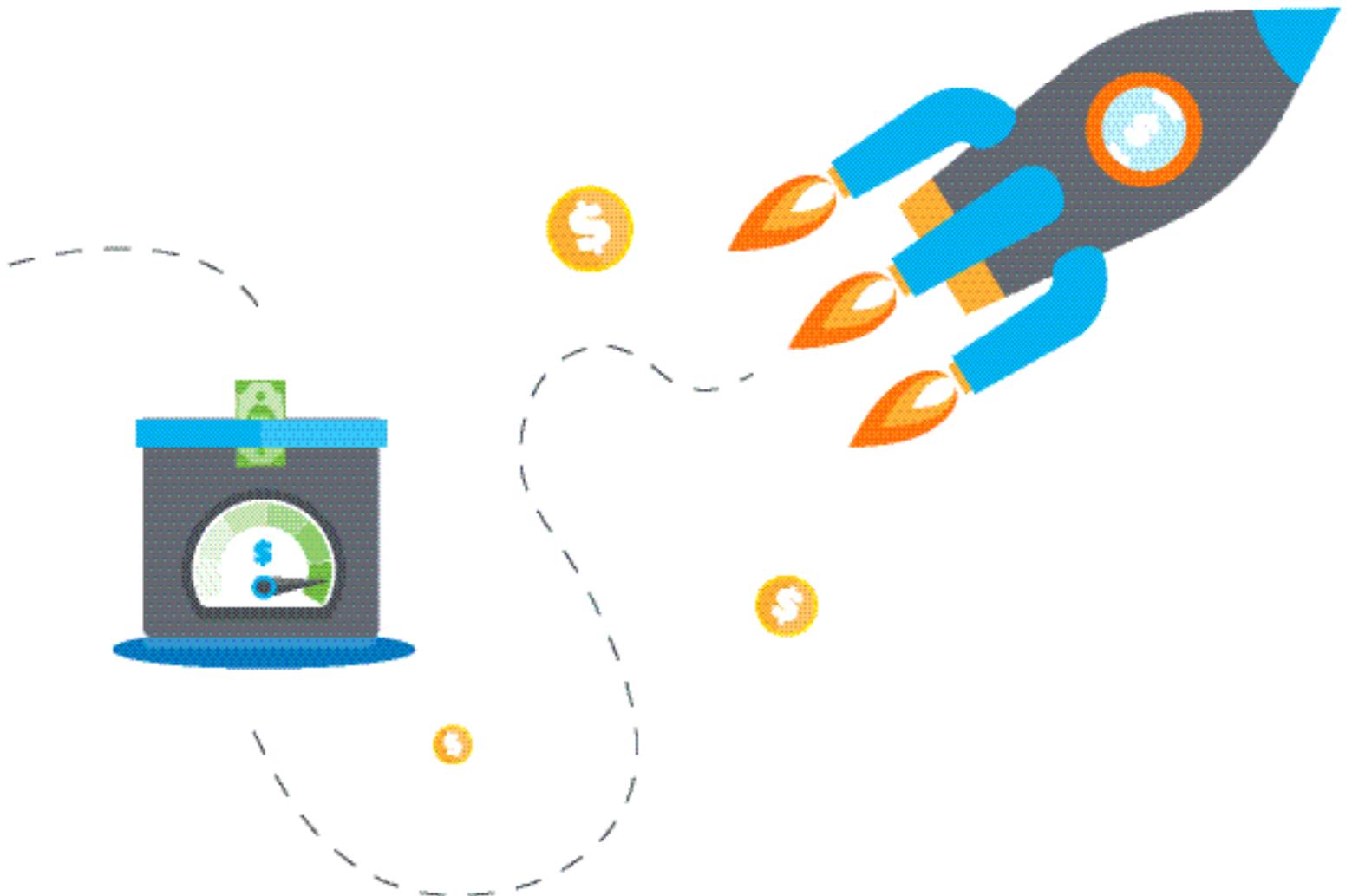


How to Supercharge Your Not for Profit's Year-End Fundraising





CONTENTS

- 1 Why Year-End Fundraising Is So Important
- 2 The Five Rules of Supercharged Year-End Fundraising
- 3 Step-By-Step Timeline for Your Year-End Fundraising
- 4 How to Incorporate Online Fundraising into Your Year-End Plan
- 5 The Four Key Principles of Great Online Fundraising

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WHY YEAR-END FUNDRAISING IS SO IMPORTANT

The last six to eight weeks of the year might be your organisation's busiest and most productive time of year. To better understand your donors' mindset and motivations for giving during this time, you need to remember why donors give to your organisation in the first place—they care about its mission and the important work your organisation does. So, your communications should be mission-centered to keep supporters engaged and excited about giving. You've already built strong relationships with them, and now they feel like part of the team. Keep that going and supercharge your year-end giving!

Why are donors more motivated to give during the year-end season?

- Holidays inspire people to want to help causes bigger than themselves
- Donors look for last-minute tax deductions before the year ends
- There may be money leftover in an organisation's charitable giving budget

To inspire donors to give, you must dedicate time to creating a successful year-end campaign.

THE FIVE RULES OF SUPERCHARGED YEAR-END FUNDRAISING

1

Your year-end campaign messaging needs to be consistent with year-long messages.

2

Don't use unsustainable gimmicks; make your asks mission-focused.

3

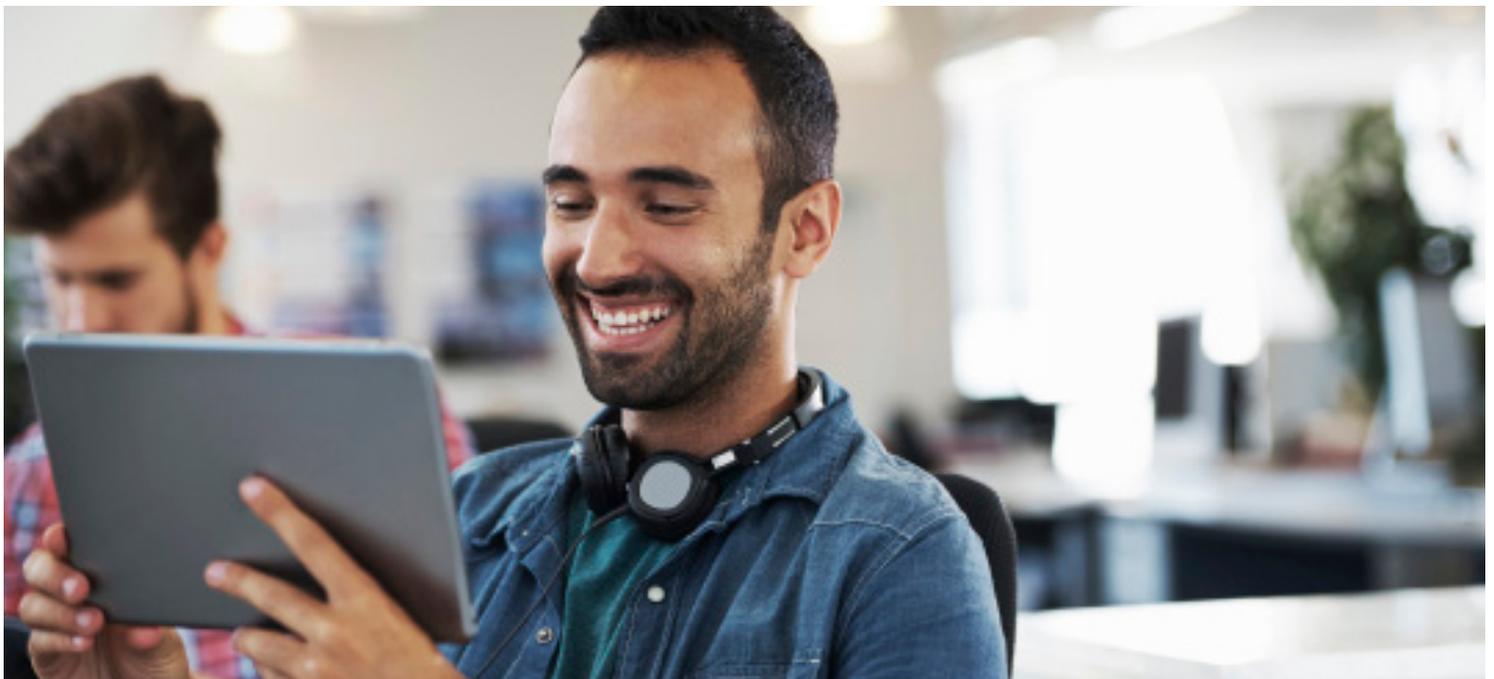
Use a multichannel approach to make asks.

4

Cultivate donor relationships throughout the year.

5

Run your year-end giving campaign like a true campaign, not an individual ask.



STEP-BY-STEP TIMELINE FOR YOUR YEAR-END FUNDRAISING

Your year-end strategy should begin around the **end of November** and last about **six weeks**. The first official ask should be in the first week of December.

ONE

Prepare your campaign.

Create an all-encompassing theme for your end-of-year campaign, and determine a clear direction on what the campaign's donations will go toward.

TWO

Warm up your donors.

Introduce your donors to the campaign theme and your specific fundraising needs. By including information about the campaign in your regularly scheduled newsletters, website, email messages, and social media, you'll have more opportunities to make your donors aware of the need. During this step, you should also put together a campaign committee to oversee the year-end fundraising efforts.

THREE

Start making the asks.

After your donors know about the campaign, it's time to make the asks. Remember to stay consistent with your year-long messaging throughout your marketing materials. Call your major donors, and reach out to your board for a year-end gift. You can make your asks through a variety of different channels, such as direct mail letters, emails, or social media posts that point back to your organisation's website.

FOUR

Follow up with donors.

Be persistent! Keep reminding donors to make gifts. Most donors give on the last day of the year; remind them through follow-up calls, letters, and social media so that your organisation is top of mind when they go to give.

FIVE

Track results and thank donors.

Treat your year-end campaign like any other campaign for your not for profit. Make sure to track overall and individual donation results, and enter them into your donor-database management system. At the end of a campaign, don't forget to thank your donors for their generous gifts and your team members for their hard work.

HOW TO INCORPORATE ONLINE FUNDRAISING INTO YOUR YEAR-END PLAN

As organisations turn towards digital as a means of fundraising, you should be aware of the major differences between traditional and online campaigns.

- Attention spans are short online; gain and keep supporters' attention swiftly and deliberately.
- It is much easier to spread messaging quickly online than through traditional channels, so your message needs to be shareable and share-worthy.
- Digital channels lend themselves to data measurement. Use this knowledge to your advantage to determine how many people engage with your campaign by looking at email-open rates, click-through rates, and social media shares.

THE FOUR KEY PRINCIPLES OF GREAT ONLINE FUNDRAISING

1

Relationships matter.

Most of your year-end donations will come from strong relationships with your donors. Your relationship management can't be passive, impersonal, or quick. Although digital channels will lead to more successful fundraising campaigns, the online space isn't the promised land. Your not for profit's online goal should be to build and continually strengthen relationships.

3

Trust is an issue.

Establishing trust online can be a challenge but it's important to build lifelong support from loyal donors. To improve trust in your donor relationships, be sure to showcase testimonials, videos of your work and clients, and easy-to-access contact information. It helps to be active on social media too.

2

It's fundraising—you have to ask!

Online fundraising mirrors offline fundraising. Your asks need to be concrete and specific, so you can begin to build transparent, trusting relationships with donors.

4

Messages spread online, but only if they are easily spread.

Your campaign's message should be emotionally-compelling and easily understandable. People share missions they feel connected with and passionate about helping. To reach the greatest amount of potential donors, make sure your asks are small, reasonable amounts.

Bonus Tip: Don't forget about major donors!

Major donors play a big part in you reaching your fundraising goals, so don't exclude them. They can greatly affect your fundraising, but they probably won't give unless they're asked. They may be more likely to give because of tax liabilities and the end of charitable budgets. And don't rely on a fundraising letter to create engagement. These donors expect in-person meetings or personal phone calls.

CONCLUSION

The end of the year is a busy time for your not for profit, but it can be extremely rewarding if managed well. It's important to get to know your supporters throughout the year by providing consistent and thoughtful messaging. These communications should be multi-channel and always focused on your mission. If you follow this approach, when the end of the year comes, you'll have solid relationships with trusting supporters who are as passionate about your cause as you are.

About the Author

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Joe Garecht is a not for profit fundraising consultant, author, speaker, and founder of The Fundraising Authority. Joe has been a professional fundraiser for over a decade and during that time has served as a development director, executive director, and fundraising consultant to numerous not for profits and political campaigns.

As the executive director of Business Leadership Organized for Catholic Schools (BLOCS), Joe led the effort to raise \$50 million in endowments for individual schools, raise \$4 million

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Joe is the author of *How to Raise More Money for Any School*, *The Silent Auction Handbook*, *The School Fundraising Formula*, and *Raising Money Without Going Crazy*. All four books are available on Amazon. For more great information on how to raise money, visit Joe on the web at www.thefundraisingauthority.com.

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