

Fundraising, Digital and Otherwise

Shaaron Netherton and Darcy Shepard of Friends of Nevada Wilderness share winning strategies and creative tips for building your funding base. *From the NWSA 2013 National Stewardship Workshop.*

In their 2013 conference workshop on *Fundraising, Digital and Otherwise*, Friends of Nevada Wilderness' Shaaron Netherton and Darcy Shepard urged organizations to remember that fundraising involves cultivating relationships. Placing your donor as the hero at the center of your story is a winning strategy. So, too, is ensuring your donors feel part of your success.

They offered these techniques for cultivating donors:

- Send handwritten notes
- Invite people out to see the resource
- Phone calls from board members
- Talk to longer-term donors about legacy options
- Provide relevant information to donors
- Consider asking donors to expand on success by providing a matching grant

Digital fundraising is only a part of a broader fundraising strategy, but it is a part that is growing for many grassroots organizations, and it's a cost effective way to raise funds. Netherton and Shepard note that it's important to know your online audience and to recognize that some may not feel comfortable giving online, so make sure you provide information on how to send a check.

Tell stories about your organization that your audience can relate to.

Explore workplace giving options, where businesses match their employees' donations. If you're just starting out, study the fundraising efforts of successful nonprofits to see how it's done.

Additional tips for digital fundraising:

- Know your technology: Make sure the links work and go to the right places for more information, and make sure the donation link is everywhere
- Review your donation page – Is it easy and convenient? Does it accept different credit cards?
- Standardize your donate button -- red or orange, same place on every page, email
- Donors like to be a part of success; be sure to help them be by following thru to those who gave
- Analyze who gives; Track your visits – how many are opening links, visiting pages, etc.
- Set realistic goals, both internal and public fundraising goals
- Stay on top of trends – Paypal Here (free), Square
- Top technology trend-setters are moving toward electronic fund transfers (EFTs)
- Offer a different amount other than the typical set amounts (e.g. \$25, \$50, \$66.40 for X)

Funding Sources to Explore

- Crowdsourcing/crowdfunding <http://www.crowdsourcing.org/community/crowdfunding/7>
- Kickstarter <http://www.kickstarter.com/start>
- Good Search <http://www.goodsearch.com/>
- EBay Auctions; examples include Great Old Broads, Leave No Trace
- Groupon Grassroots (not currently taking applications) <https://grassroots.groupon.com/start-your-campaign/>
- TREC – webinars, publications, training <http://www.trec.org/>
- Statewide Big Give – one day giving competitions, opportunity for fundraising outside of your regular avenues
- Doublethedonation.com – based on volunteer hours <http://doublethedonation.com/>
- AHS' National Trails Fund (12/13/13 deadline), <http://www.americanhiking.org/national-trails-fund/>
- American Alpine Club <http://americanalpineclub.org/grants>
- Access Fund
http://www.accessfund.org/site/c.tmL5KhNWLrH/b.5023605/k.98B8/Grant_Guidelines.htm
- Whole Foods (.05 donation when shoppers bring reusable bags)
<http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/service/community-giving-donations-1>
- Lush Cosmetics' Charity Pots - seeking more partners
http://www.lushusa.com/on/demandware.store/Sites-Lush-Site/en_US/Charities-Support
- New Belgium Brews
<http://www.newbelgium.com/sustainability/Community/Philanthropy.aspx>
- 1% for the planet <http://onepercentfortheplanet.org/>
- Walmart - environment, education - 2/1 deadline <http://foundation.walmart.com/>

Events & Other Ideas:

- Making a difference Monday at a local brewery
- Local brewery makes a special brew; kick-off proceeds will go to the organization
- Restaurants – option to tack on a dollar to the bill
- Film Festival – ex: Banff, Wild & Scenic
- House parties thrown by board members for higher end donors
- Partnership with supermarket – logo on reusable bags
- Coop member donation
- Company grant programs – e.g.
- Oil & gas companies, mining companies
- Taking out company staff, engaging them in stewardship
- Federal grants and agreements – FS, BLM, FWS
- Sportsmens' groups
- Recreational Trails Program
- Specialty license plates
- Raffle for rafting trip or other outfitted adventure (check state regulations regarding raffles and note IRS rules)

