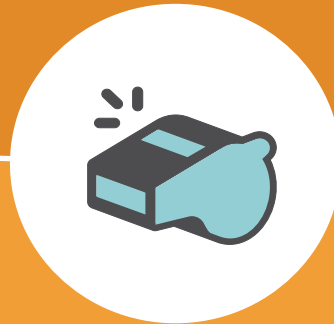
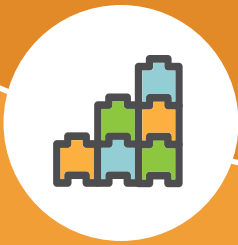


THE NONPROFIT'S GUIDE TO PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING

How to plan, launch, run, and wrap up
successful online campaigns



CONTENTS

Introduction to Peer-to-Peer Fundraising	3
Planning Your Peer-to-Peer Campaign	4
Do some research	5
Identify your goals	5
Determine your budget	6
Decide on the format	7
Build a team	10
Select a peer-to-peer software platform	11
Building Your Peer-to-Peer Campaign	14
Create a story	15
Determine your branding	15
Create a communications plan	16
Develop a communications calendar	18
Create content	19
Configure your peer-to-peer software platform	19
Determine your metrics	20
Launching Your Peer-to-Peer Campaign	22
Kick off your campaign	23
Recruit your fundraisers	23
Coaching Your Peer-to-Peer Fundraisers	26
Use email	27
Make it social	27
Get personal with phone and text	28
Segment. Segment. Segment.	28
Listen	28
Wrapping Up Your Peer-to-Peer Campaign	29
Analyze your campaign	30
Say thank you	31
Ask for feedback	31
Keep in touch	31
Take Your Peer-to-Peer Fundraising to New Heights	32



INTRODUCTION TO PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING

There's simply nothing like the peer-to-peer (p2p) model for extending your fundraising reach. It engages supporters to raise funds from their networks on your nonprofit's behalf. And, it lets your supporters translate their enthusiasm for your mission into dollars to help your organization thrive.

These days, p2p fundraising takes many forms. **While the traditional run, walk, and ride event model hasn't been possible lately, non-traditional p2p campaigns have gained an even more important place in fundraising.** In addition to filling the void from traditional in-person events, they're typically less expensive to pull off than run, walk, and ride events. And, for organizations that have been using a p2p software platform for traditional events, using the same platform for non-traditional campaigns is an efficient use of a tool that's already in place.

Some p2p fundraising campaigns and events are complex. But, when it comes down to it, a peer-to-peer fundraising campaign can be as simple as providing your constituents with an online portal where they can sign up to support your cause and ask their friends and family to donate to their campaign on behalf of your organization.

No matter what type of peer-to-peer fundraising campaign your organization embarks upon, you're not in it alone. In this guide, we've pulled together some top learnings from our work with hundreds of nonprofits on their p2p fundraising technology and campaigns to provide you with tips, tricks, and techniques for successful p2p fundraising.

We hope you find helpful ideas and fresh inspiration as you read through the guide.

Happy fundraising!

The Cathexis Partners Team

PLANNING YOUR PEER-TO-PEER CAMPAIGN

Running a p2p fundraising campaign or event can be challenging, involving a great deal of time and logistics. So, whether you're just starting out, or you're looking to polish your p2p approach, it's well worth it to take time for up-front planning.



DO SOME RESEARCH

You may already have several campaigns or events under your belt. But, it never hurts to examine what other organizations are doing. Many organizations run p2p fundraising campaigns. Consider signing up for one or two to take notes on how the campaign works from the perspective of a volunteer fundraiser.

Some things to pay attention to:

- How easy is it to set up a campaign?
- What tools does the organization provide you?
- What kind of coaching and support does the organization give you?
- What do you like/dislike about the process of fundraising for the organization?

FOCUS ON INSPIRATION

As you look at other organizations' campaigns, be sure to focus on incorporating ideas you like into your campaigns, and avoid directly copying other organizations' content and design.

Also, consider asking staff at other organizations about their p2p fundraising campaigns. Find out what lessons they've learned from past campaigns, and what advice they can offer you as you plan and execute your organization's own campaigns.

IDENTIFY YOUR GOALS

You can always jump right in to a p2p fundraising campaign or event. But, given the level of time, effort, and money you'll likely spend, you really should have an idea of what you want to achieve and how much money your campaign will raise. Here are some considerations:

- **Non-financial goals** — Think through the different types of supporters your organization has — those who benefit from your services, volunteers, board members, local businesses, etc. Of these groups, list the top five, 10, or 25 (or however many come relatively easily to you) individuals you think would be likely to participate. Then, multiply that amount by 10, and then multiply the resulting number by 5. You can use numbers that you're more comfortable with given past performance on your organization's various campaigns, but the thought here is that each of your core participants can recruit about X participants and then each of those participants can recruit about X people. This number will become your overall participant goal. Once you have your participant goal, you can think through other goals, such as number of donors. These numbers will depend on several variables including:
 - Type of campaign (walk, fun run, timed run, endurance event, virtual campaign, etc.).
 - Organizational reach. How big is your constituent base to start?
 - Market saturation. How many other organizations do similar campaigns?
 - Local, regional, and national social/economic factors.
 - Campaign marketing budget. How much can you spend on marketing to existing constituents and gaining new contacts?

- **Financial goals** — Campaign revenue tends to fall into three general buckets: sponsors, registration fees, and fundraising totals. If you plan to offer sponsorship opportunities, think through how many sponsors you would be able to secure at various levels of support. Determine if you want to require a registration fee, and if so, how much. Then, use your number of estimated participants to calculate your total registration revenue. Think through the different types of participants you identified and what you think each would be able to fundraise. Multiply that amount times the total participants to set a fundraising revenue goal. Add up the different revenue streams for a ballpark estimate of what you think your campaign will raise and a realistic financial goal for your p2p campaign.
- **Agreement on goals** — Be sure to speak to others at your organization to confirm that everyone is on the same page as to what constitutes a “successful” campaign, both financially and otherwise.

INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS: KNOW WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

Several providers of peer-to-peer fundraising platforms publish benchmark reports to help you understand what goals you may expect. For example, the Blackbaud 2020 Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Study provides engagement metrics and giving trends for peer-to-peer fundraising. Using benchmark information, you can start shaping your p2p campaign goals. Once you nail down your campaign format details (which you'll work through later in this chapter), you'll be able to revisit your goals and update them using benchmark information relevant to the type of campaign you have decided on.

DETERMINE YOUR BUDGET

Right on the heels of “how much will this campaign raise?” is the question, “how much will it cost?”. This is about available resources — both money and time. Consider the following costs before starting your campaign:

- **Staff time** for campaign strategy, copywriting for landing pages and emails, participant support and fundraising coaching, event management, campaign website management, and database management
- **Marketing costs** for things like graphic design, advertising, printing of flyers and posters, and postage for direct mail
- **Cost of online software** that allows fundraisers to create their own fundraising pages, send emails to friends and family, use social media to share their page, and accept donations online
- **Costs for any kickoff party** for fundraisers
- **Event costs** if your campaign is related to a physical event, such as a walk-a-thon

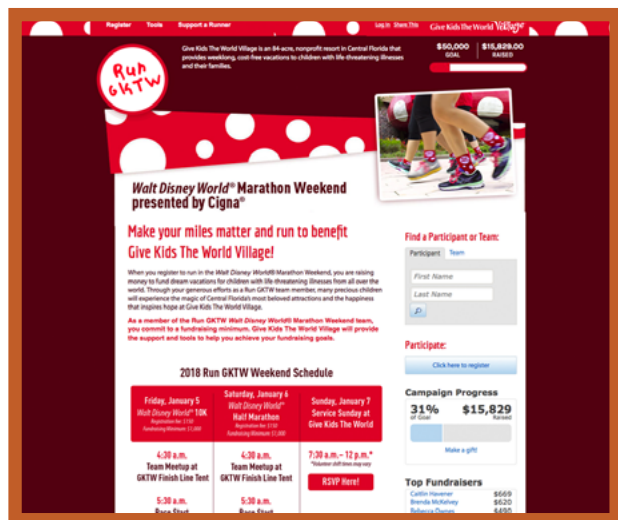
DECIDE ON THE FORMAT

It's important to have a clear idea of the type of campaign(s) your organization wants to create before you move forward with additional planning steps. The type of campaign you run goes hand-in-hand with your goals and budget: Your goals and budget should help drive the format of your campaign, and the format of your campaign may require you to go back to adjust your goals and budget.

Following are descriptions of four campaign types and their characteristics to help get you started:

Proprietary physical events — Most of these types of events are on hiatus at the time. They are nonprofit-hosted events that take place on a certain date. Participants sometimes pay a fee to sign up and also raise additional funds once registered. This campaign type includes standard walks, 5ks, and bike rides, and also unique campaigns like stair climbs, rappelling, and other campaigns that are coordinated by the nonprofit.

- **Effort level:** High. Often require a great deal of planning, marketing, and logistics.
- **Budget:** High. Often require sponsorships to cover the hard costs of the event itself.



Challenge/endurance/destination events — This is another type of event that is on pause at this time. They are events, such as the Chicago Marathon or any of the Run Disney events, that are hosted by an entity other than a nonprofit, with potentially multiple beneficiaries. This type of campaign allows a participant to register for an event that you aren't organizing, and still fundraise for your organization.

- **Effort level:** High. Often require a great deal of planning, marketing, and logistics, as well as coordination with the hosting entity.
- **Budget:** Moderate, though the hard costs of the event are often covered by the host.

Virtual campaigns — These are campaigns organized by the nonprofit, but without the porta-potties and logistics of physical events. With these campaigns, an organization provides an online environment for supporters to set up their own fundraising page in support of a campaign created by the nonprofit. The organization often will establish fundraising categories such as “workplace giving,” “athletic,” “in memory/honor,” or “special occasion” to help participants get started. The campaigns can be seasonal, annual, or “evergreen” (with no specific end date). These campaigns have a common brand and often a specific fundraising goal. Registration fees typically are not charged.

- **Effort level:** Moderate. But, a friendly warning: because these types of campaigns do not require the same level of investment required for a physical event, organizations sometimes forget to allow for the proper resources, time, and money to market the campaign. It can also be challenging to get people motivated to fundraise for a non-physical event, so it requires thoughtful planning and execution.
- **Budget:** Moderate. Most costs are related to staff time and marketing.



Independent fundraising, or do-it-yourself (DIY) campaigns

— These campaigns allow participants to host their own virtual or in-person events and invite their friends and family to the events to raise funds for a specific campaign for your organization.

- **Effort level:** Moderate. But, a friendly warning: as with virtual campaigns, because these types of campaigns do not require the same level of investment required for a physical event, organizations sometimes forget to allow for the proper resources, time, and money to market their campaign.
- **Budget:** Moderate. Most costs are related to staff time and marketing.

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING

Nonprofits of all sizes and missions are finding creative ways to use the p2p fundraising model to raise money and engage supporters. Here are a few examples of approaches that can get your supporters involved beyond traditional events:



TRIBUTE/MEMORIAL

These types of campaigns are increasing in popularity, and often are found in the “cause and cure” and “animal welfare” verticals of the nonprofit space. If you have a mission tied to supporting the fallen, injured, or lost due to disease, disorder, injustice, or war, consider providing your constituents with online tools to raise funds in the name of someone who has touched their lives.



SPECIAL DAYS

Everyone has special days, such as birthdays, weddings, baby showers, and other meaningful events in their lives. Ask your constituents to “donate” their special day to your organization by asking friends and family to donate to your organization in lieu of presents.



VIRTUAL DRIVES

Ask your supporters to get involved by creating their own virtual drives. Provide them with online tools and suggested email or social media content to help them ask their friends and family to donate. Set up the campaign on your website so that your supporters’ friends and family can place items in a virtual shopping cart that represent what you can do with the money they give with their donation amount. This approach can be used for food drives, clothing drives, houseware drives, etc.



ALUMNI CAMPAIGNS

If your organization is an educational institution, consider creating online campaigns that allow your alumni to raise funds for the programs at your organization that mean the most to them, such as athletics, scholarships, and research.



CHALLENGES

Set up a “challenge” environment in which your supporters can sign up to do X if their friends and family donate a certain amount of money. Think “ALS Ice Bucket Challenge” and you’ve got the idea. There are virtually limitless “challenge” campaigns that you can create.

BUILD A TEAM

You'll need the right people in place to ensure your campaign is a success. The campaign will involve fundraisers, donations, a website, promotions, and general campaign/event management, so you will need people from across your organization to support various aspects of the campaign.

Here are some key roles to consider:

- **Campaign leader** — This person will be in charge of the entire campaign and pull together the right resources to ensure the campaign stays on track. This often is an event manager or director (maybe it's you?).
- **Executive leader** — This person will “sponsor” the campaign throughout the organization, helping the entire organization understand the campaign's importance.
- **Marketing manager** — This person will provide writing, graphic design, promotional help, and PR assistance to support the campaign. This may be the event manager or director, a communications team member, or an agency. No matter who serves in this role, it's critical to your campaign's success.
- **IT representative** — You'll likely need this person to step in at the beginning of your campaign to ensure any p2p software platform implementation and integration with other systems is completed correctly. This may be an internal staffer, or a third-party agency who supports your fundraising technology needs.
- **Finance manager** — This person will ensure that appropriate donation processes are in place so that your campaign donations are accounted for correctly.
- **Fundraising manager** — This person will work with participants to help them fundraise, and also help troubleshoot any website issues or general questions they may have. This may be the campaign leader, but it's important that someone has been designated the responsibility of overseeing fundraising.
- **Database manager** — This role could fall to someone who already manages your existing database, or you may need to train someone else on how to manage the aspects of your database that this new campaign will use.
- **Community cheerleader** — It's possible to run a p2p campaign without one, but having a “cheerleader” in the community — someone to evangelize your campaign and your nonprofit's mission — is a big help.
- **Other roles to consider** — These may include a logistics manager, volunteer and community engagement coordinator, recruitment manager, and sponsorship and corporate relationship manager.

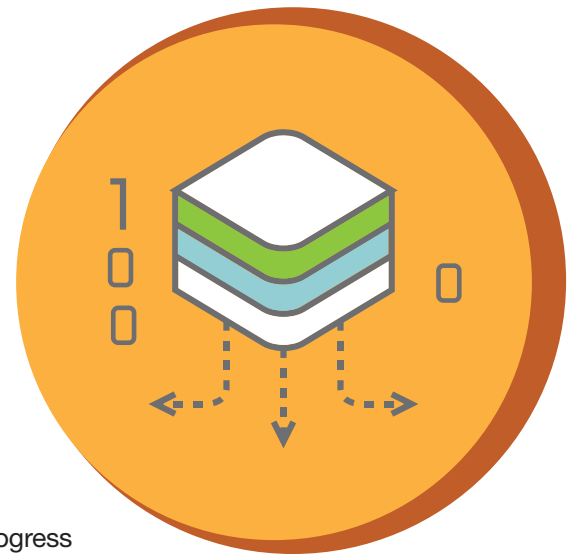
SELECT A PEER-TO-PEER SOFTWARE PLATFORM

Your supporters need a way to create their own online fundraising pages, send emails to friends and family, use social media, and accept donations online. In addition, you need to track campaign performance and communicate with fundraisers. So, you'll need the right software tool.

If you already have a p2p software platform in place that you like, great! Skip ahead to the next section. If you need to find your first platform, or are looking to replace the platform you have, here are some steps to help you choose a platform that's right for your organization:

- 1. Discover your p2p fundraising platform options.** [The Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Technology Landscape guide](#) is a great place to start before you do additional research. This is a great place to start before you do additional research.
- 2. Know your p2p fundraising requirements.** Before you commit to a platform, here are some areas to consider and questions to ask:
 - **Design** — Are you looking for ready-to-use design templates, or do you want a fundraising site that looks and feels like your organization's main website? Some platforms provide their own design with limited editing, while others give you the option to customize. Be sure to find out how much HTML/CSS knowledge is needed, if any, to maintain your campaign's site.
 - **Time** — Ask platform providers how much time it takes to have a functioning p2p website — from the time you sign a contract to when you can start fundraising. Some systems can be set up in a couple of hours, while others may take several days based on setup requirements. A quick setup isn't necessarily better; just be sure to understand the time requirements and weigh them against your needs.
 - **Compatibility** — What other systems does your organization use that your p2p platform needs to integrate with? Peer-to-peer events are a great way to capture data since your constituents are doing outreach for you. Be sure that you will be able to move data automatically from your p2p platform to your other systems so you can access this information and use it across your organization.
 - **Fundraising tools** — Get a good feel for how easy it is for participants to fundraise and what tools they have access to that will help them raise more. Some platforms have a separate fundraising center with a variety of tools, while others may have everything located on the person's fundraising page but offer less fundraising guidance.
 - **Responsiveness** — These days, most platforms are responsive (optimized for viewing on a wide range of browsers and mobile devices), but given how many people use a mobile device for p2p fundraising, this is a question you still should ask. Make sure that all web pages (not just the home page) are responsive.
 - **Payment processor/true cost** — Be sure to ask questions to find out the true cost of a fundraising campaign. For example, does the platform need an additional payment processing system, or is this included with the product? Sometimes there is a payment processing fee in addition to the actual cost of the product (and platform vendors aren't always transparent about this!).

- **Other setup requirements** — Ask if there are any other “pieces” needed to set up a campaign. While a platform demo may look like it was easy to set up, that may be the case only if you already have other systems in place, such as a payment processor. During a demo, be sure to ask what all the different pieces are that will need to be created before your site can truly go live.
- **Offline data entry** — Do you need to enter offline registrations or donations? If so, make sure the platform allows for this.
- **Reporting** — What data do you need, and how easy is it for staff to pull reports? Are there dashboards that give you quick progress updates? Is it easy to download information that you may need on event day? Does the system collect information that will be useful for analyzing event metrics?
- **Creating new events** — Once you have one event set up, is it easy to create a new one? Be sure to weigh how much others in your organization will have to rely on you (or a developer) to set up a new event versus how much independence you can give them.
- **Ability to create security categories/roles** — You may not want everyone who works on a campaign or event to have the same access to the platform. Be sure to ask about the platform’s ability to restrict certain users’ access if you think that’s important.
- **Ability to grow** — Do you plan on adding more events or other kinds of campaigns in the future? Whatever the future holds, you’ll want to pick a platform that will give you room to grow.
- **Ease of use** — How easy is it for participants and donors to use the website? Test the platform from both a participant and donor perspective.
- **Special characteristics** — Many p2p platforms are set up for basic registering and fundraising for run/walk/ride events. But, does your virtual event or campaign have unique requirements? Some things to consider: Will people need to register or donate in honor/memory of others? Do you sell merchandise through the registration process? Do you want participants to be able to sell items and get credit for money they raise? Do you need to be able to hide fundraising pages for certain participants? Does your event require a fundraising minimum in which you’d like to be able to charge participants for what they don’t raise (called delayed self-pledge, or DSP)? Ask platform providers how they can handle anything unique to your event.
- **Additional assistance** — If you need help, how easy is it to contact customer service? Do they provide basic guidance on building your campaign, or are they there just to troubleshoot problems? Is training provided so you can understand how to use the p2p tool?



3. Rank your p2p fundraising wish list. Before you talk to p2p platform providers, rank your desired functionalities and features in order of importance based on internal discussions about what is best for the organization as a whole. Be sure to differentiate between what you need, and what features you can get by without. Knowing this before you speak with software representatives will help you eliminate certain options and steer the conversation in a direction that will be useful to you.

4. **Contact platform contenders.** Choose a handful of options that you'd like to explore more. Contact the platform vendors to set up times to talk.
5. **Ask questions.** The platform vendor's job is to make sure their product will meet your needs, but they are also salespeople looking for a new client. Ask about all of your must-haves, as well as other items on your wish list. Ask for examples (be sure to ask if the examples required custom work), a demo, and access to a platform "sandbox" so you can play around a bit. Ask what type of fundraising growth other organizations have seen, and compare these answers from one platform to another. See if they have a site where you can register and do a test run — as a participant, and also as a donor.
6. **Ask for references.** Ask the platform vendors to give you contact information for two or three references. Call or email the references and ask them about their experience using the software platform. Did the software meet the organization's needs? What challenges does the organization have with the product? What does the organization like most about the product?
7. **Make a decision.** Once you've explored a few options, weigh the platforms' ability to meet your needs against the platforms' costs. Choose an option that works for you now, and in the future. You don't necessarily have to pick one that will work for you 10 years down the road, but you also shouldn't have to change your platform each year as your organization evolves.

TO RFP OR NOT TO RFP

Some nonprofit organizations issue a request for proposal (RFP) when they need a new software solution. An RFP specifies an organization's requirements and their evaluation criteria for assessing proposals. An RFP is not required when you're looking for a software platform — following the steps in this section should provide you with the information you need to make a decision. However, an RFP can be a valuable tool if you would like to follow a more formal process. A typical RFP includes:

- A summary about the organization and campaign(s)
- An overview of the current technology environment, including items being considered for replacement and supporting platforms remaining in place
- Campaign functional requirements (front end and back end)
- The RFP process (steps, response requirements, and timeline)

BUILDING YOUR PEER-TO-PEER CAMPAIGN

You've got the foundation in place for a great p2p campaign. Now, it's time to start building it. Get your team together, roll up your sleeves, and dig in!



CREATE A STORY

To get your supporters excited about helping you raise funds, you need a compelling story to tell them and for them to tell their friends and family. Start by brainstorming ideas for your campaign, and then review the ideas with your campaign team. Consider the following aspects of the campaign with your team:

- What mission-critical problem does your campaign solve (why should someone donate)?
- What difference does one donation make (quantify this to help donors understand the impact of their donation)?
- How do you want people to feel about your campaign (emotionally touched, inspired, outraged)?

Once you know your campaign story, summarize it (actually write it down!), and use it as the “rallying” theme for your campaign.

DETERMINE YOUR BRANDING

Your campaign needs a brand. But, why, and what does “brand” mean in this case?

Simply put, your campaign’s “brand” is its name, design elements, and overall design — it’s what identifies your campaign as distinct from other campaigns (yours or other organizations’). When choosing colors, photos, and general design look and feel, keep in mind what emotions you want your campaign to evoke in your audience.

Your campaign brand should connect with your organizations’ mission, support your campaign story, and appeal to your audience. If you’re unsure of how to tackle your campaign brand, consider consulting with your organization’s marketing manager or bringing in a third-party agency to help.



CREATE A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The goal of the communications plan is to help your organization think more strategically and communicate more effectively about your campaign. There are a few areas to focus on when constructing your plan: campaign steps, audiences, message points, and communications channels.

Map out every step of your campaign. Start from the very beginning — the first moment you start speaking about the campaign, and write down every step you will need to complete during the campaign. Some phases to keep in mind as you're thinking through your campaign:

- Planning and creating your campaign (working with your staff, board members, and other internal stakeholders to build your campaign)
- Launching your campaign (getting the word out about what you're doing)
- Promoting your campaign (keeping the momentum going)
- Recruiting and coaching participants
- Wrapping up your campaign (sending thank yous and asking for feedback)

TIP: INCLUDE ALL THE STEPS

Read through to the end of this guide before you create the communications plan so you can be sure to include all steps and aspects of your campaign.

Consider your audiences. Think about the key audiences that you plan to engage with during your campaign to achieve your ultimate goal. Your audiences may include:

- Board members — to help with outreach and fundraising
- Staff members — to build and coordinate your campaign
- Volunteers — vital helpers in executing campaigns and events
- Existing donors — the people most likely to donate and spread the word
- Past participants — the people most likely to participate again and recruit other participants
- Community members — individuals or organizations who can help get the word out about your campaign
- The general public — people you don't even know yet who may want to support your campaign

Think through your message points. Once you've compiled your audience, segment your lists and determine what messages you want to communicate to each audience and when. Here are some message ideas to think about:

- Donate to our campaign
- How your gift helps our organization do [insert your mission]

- For campaign/event participants:
 - Register or make a donation for our event
 - Personal story from a past participant (consider using a video here for higher engagement)
 - Discount codes or incentives that your participants can use to register or earn when they reach a certain fundraising level
 - Fundraising tips to ensure your participants' success
- Email autoresponders — It's important to include autoresponders in your communications plan. Even though these are automated messages (sent when someone fills out a form or makes a donation), they should still be integrated into your overall strategy so that they remain cohesive with your other messages. Plus, you can get creative and use these emails to encourage additional actions from your donors and fundraisers.

Determine your communications channels. It's important to determine how to send each message to your various audiences. The communications channels can include your organization's own existing channels, such as email and direct mail outreach. They also can include external channels such as TV, newspaper, and social media. Here are some communications channels to consider as part of your plan:

- Home page ad
- Landing and registration page for your event
- Email
- Direct mail
- Member or donor newsletters/magazines
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Text
- Print materials (posters, flyers, postcards, etc.)
- Public service announcements (PSAs) and local news coverage (TV, radio, newspaper)
- Print and online ads

DON'T FORGET THE PHONE

Yes, it can be time-consuming, but it can be a highly effective personal touch. Consider calling the captains of the Top 10 fundraising teams from last year's p2p fundraising event to let them know how grateful you are for their ongoing support and leadership. Or, ask your board members to call past donors, thank them for their support, update them on how the funds have been used, and ask them to support your current campaign.)

DEVELOP A COMMUNICATIONS CALENDAR

A communications calendar is an essential piece of every campaign. Your organization is probably already doing something similar for other initiatives, but if not, here are a few reasons to develop a communications calendar:

- Helps multiple staff members visualize the different messages, deliverables, and timeline
- Provides a big picture overview to avoid sending mixed or “competing” messages
- Ensures that your messaging is strong and receives the right traction

To start your calendar, write down the date of the last communication you’ll send for your campaign, and then work backward to add all of the other communications and prep work you’ll need to complete leading up to that last communication. If you want to secure any public service announcements or local media appearances, allow plenty of time to schedule. Often, this can take weeks or even months to arrange.

Putting together your communications calendar doesn’t have to be fancy. A simple Word document or Excel spreadsheet can do the trick. It also can be organized in different ways. An easy way to do this is by each channel that you will use to disseminate your message, for instance: email, printed outreach (magazines, postcards, flyers), purchased advertisements, and social media.

Here is a sample calendar:

Tentative Date Scheduled or to Post	Message Title/Subject Line	Key Message Points	Channel	Audience	Sent/Published Y/N	Notes/Comments
2 p.m. 3/15	Registration now open!	Registration now open *link to register *username reminder	Email	Monthly Email Subscribers List	YES	
As participants register	Thank you for registering	Confirmation email	Autoresponder	All event participants	Automatically sent	
As donors make a gift	Thank you for your gift	Confirmation email	Autoresponder	All event donors	Automatically sent	
TBD 4/2	TBD Message	TBD	Email	All past team captains	NO	Need copy from marketing dept
5/1	A Special Offer for Being Such a Fantastic Supporter	*Special promo code for donors \$xxx and above to use when they start a team and pledge to fundraise \$xxx	Direct Mail	All donors \$xxx amount and above	YES	Mail-house confirmed mail has been delivered to USPS
10 a.m. 5/14	Video: How Your Support Helps [org name]	*Video from CEO or Board Chair explaining how event participation & donations help the mission	Facebook post	All Facebook followers	NO	
10 a.m. 5/14	Video: How Your Support Helps [org name]	*Video from CEO or Board Chair explaining how event participation & donations help the mission	Twitter Post	All Twitter followers	NO	
9 a.m. 5/14	Video: How Your Support Helps [org name]	*Video from CEO or Board Chair explaining how event participation & donations help the mission	YouTube video	All YouTube followers	NO	Share to YouTube first and use link on Facebook & Twitter
9 a.m. 5/31	This is [insert name's] Story	*Story of one participant and CTA to register	Website story	All website visitors	NO	Need to update photo carousel on website and link to story
9 a.m. 5/31	This is [insert name's] Story	*Story of one participant *Fundraise tips *link to fundraise center & reminder to send emails	Email	All current event participants	NO	
9 a.m. 6/1	Did you forget to register?	*Thank you for returning captains *username reminder *link to register	Email	All past team captains	NO	
9 a.m. 6/1	Register today and get \$10 off	*Special promo code for Facebook	Facebook Ad	*targeting women ages 18-55 *within 50 mile radius of walk 8	NO	Check with marketing department to confirm ad has

CHAT WITH YOUR MARKETING TEAM

Be sure to work closely with your marketing department to ensure your communications don’t overlap with other planned messages. You also may be able to leverage other planned communications for your campaign.

This sample calendar is easily customizable and is just a starting point. [Here is a template to make getting started even easier.](#)

CREATE CONTENT

You have a campaign plan and a calendar. Now it's time to create your content. It may help to group together similar messaging. For instance, you can have a document for all of the website content (event home page, event details, frequently asked questions, contact information, etc.), and another document for all of your email content (autoresponders, email campaigns, etc.) and a third document for your printed materials (flyers, brochures, registration forms, pledge sheets, etc.) When creating your content, refer back to your communications calendar for timing and target deadlines. Refer back to your campaign story, and work closely with your communications team on messaging and branding. If there is a consistent theme that you want to carry through all of your content, be sure to include that — whether it's textually or through imagery.

It's also important to proofread your work. Set up an internal system to have other team members review the various content items (print, email, web, etc.) and provide feedback. Another set of eyes can help spot spelling or grammar errors, as well as identify any content that may be confusing to participants and supporters.

CONFIGURE YOUR PEER-TO-PEER SOFTWARE PLATFORM

If you haven't already, it's time to configure your p2p software platform. Configuration of the online environment can be broken down into a few phases:

- **Platform configuration** — Platform configuration refers to the items you as the system administrator can turn on and off, define in a text box, or drag and drop. This includes things like naming the campaign, setting participant type(s), and defining registration and donation forms. For a basic campaign, allow for four to eight hours of discussion and planning, and one to four hours for configuration (or longer if it's the first time your organization is using the platform).
- **Design** — When it comes to designing your campaign, it all depends on the software platform. While it's great to have more control of design capabilities, more control means more upfront time to configure than when dealing with a pre-configured or template-style platform. Allow eight to 32 hours of discussion on design and one to four hours for simple configuration via drag-and-drop and simple upload configuration. Allow anywhere from four to 40+ hours for custom coding of a campaign.

PLATFORM SET-UP: HELP IS AT HAND

Enlisting the services of a firm like Cathexis Partners can help ensure your platform is set up to work the way you need it to, while freeing you to focus on your campaigns.

- **Content** — The following is required content that you may or may not have control of depending on the platform :

- Campaign home page
- Default personal and team fundraising pages
- Donation and registration thank you pages and autoresponder/receipt emails
- Other built-in campaign pages

Content creation, editing, and implementation can take eight to 40 hours for a simple campaign.

OPTIONAL, BUT HIGHLY RECOMMEND CONTENT (NOT SUPPORTED IN ALL PLATFORMS):

- Additional campaign pages such as Sponsors, About, FAQ, Participant Support, etc.
- Suggested emails and social media posts for participants and donors
- Additional autoresponders such as fundraising milestone or time-released emails (e.g., seven days after registration)

DETERMINE YOUR METRICS

The metrics you decide to track should mirror the goals you set at the beginning of your campaign. You'll need a way to track your progress and should make sure that your software is set up to monitor what's important to your organization.

Think about metrics that will allow you to see how you're doing in terms of:

- your goals,
- the effectiveness of certain outreach efforts, and
- general status information that you can use to adjust your campaign strategies if needed.

The exact metrics you track will be unique to your organization, but here are a few key metrics to get you started:

- How many people have signed up
- Average amount raised per fundraiser
- How much money the entire campaign has raised
- Total number of donations
- Average amount of each donation

- Week-over-week growth of fundraising and participant totals
- How many people have started to fundraise*
- Number of teams*
- Number of self-donors*
- Someone's connection to your cause (and which connection types are your biggest supporters)*

**These metrics could be useful in terms of communicating with participants. For example, you may send different coaching text to someone who has raised \$0 vs someone who has raised \$500. You may also speak differently to a team captain vs. someone who is signed up to participate individually.*

In addition, here are some other items to consider for determining the effectiveness of your campaign's communications/advertising efforts:

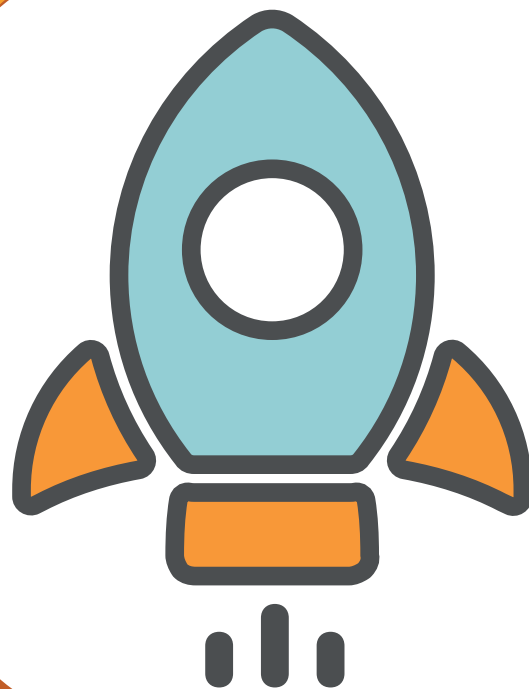
- If you're using web ads, consider setting up Google Analytics.
- If your software allows for discount/promo codes, use a unique code in each ad to track its return.
- Perhaps include an optional question during registration that asks how someone heard about your event/campaign.

It's easy to get caught up in all the metrics you could run, so be sure to identify what's important early on. Make sure your platform is set up to capture this information, know how often metrics will be run (you may want to run some at the beginning of each week, some before and after a large communications push, and some once the campaign is over), and who will do the reporting. Setting clear expectations in these areas will help you spend your resources wisely.



LAUNCHING YOUR PEER-TO-PEER CAMPAIGN

Everything's in place: your plan, your calendar, your content, your platform. You're ready to go. Now, it's time to open the virtual door and get your supporters fundraising!



KICK OFF YOUR CAMPAIGN

Sending an email and direct mail to your current and past donors and participants is a good way to get the word out and recruit supporters to fundraise for you. But, why stop there? Think about other communications channels that reach beyond your donor list: social media, your website, signs at your organization's events, public service announcements, local morning TV news shows — all of these channels can be used to announce your campaign. To build anticipation, announce your campaign well in advance, including a “countdown” (via your website, email, and other communications channels) leading up to the campaign launch.

DON'T FORGET YOUR TEAM

Be sure to notify your organization's internal stakeholders that you're kicking off the campaign so they can prepare to answer any questions from supporters.

Also, consider a “soft launch” for your campaign in which you have staff members, board members, and your most involved constituents register to begin fundraising ahead of the official launch. Then, when other constituents, frequent site visitors, or others come across the campaign, they'll see that it already has interest. A soft launch can also help to identify any bugs or confusion with registration or donation processes before your campaign really kicks off.

RECRUIT YOUR FUNDRAISERS

Now that you've kicked off your campaign, how do you get participants to sign up? How do you turn constituents who may have donated once or twice to your organization into fundraisers? How do you make sure previous participants return? And more importantly, how do you turn people who aren't your constituents (yet) into fundraisers?

Identify your audience. Just as you'll use a variety of communications channels to kick off your campaign, you'll need to use a variety of communications channels to recruit fundraisers. The key is to make sure that the message fits with the channel and the audience most likely being reached by that form of communication. In other words: know your audience.

Taking the time to tailor each message to a specific audience with a specific call to action does make a difference. Just remember, your audience may know little or nothing about your campaign, so communicate accordingly. A few ideas:

- **Look at the data.** Fully explore the data that you already have on your constituents. Where has your organization seen the best response? Through email, social media, or maybe even snail mail? Looking at your data can also help with other challenges, like who are possible candidates for sponsorships (where do your constituents work?).
- **Ask questions.** Using a survey tool or posting questions on social media is a great way to get to know your audience better. Ask specific questions to make sure that you are getting useful information. And, once you have it, make sure that it's noted in your constituent relationship management (CRM) system. Incentives or

contests can be used to help make the process fun. This method can be used for existing constituents or for people who are brand new to your organization.

- **Attend events.** If your organization holds symposiums or other events (in-person or virtual) that are informational and not fundraising related, these are perfect opportunities to meet an audience who is already familiar with your mission. Ask if you can set aside time at the event to talk with supporters, learn more about them, and tell them about your campaign.

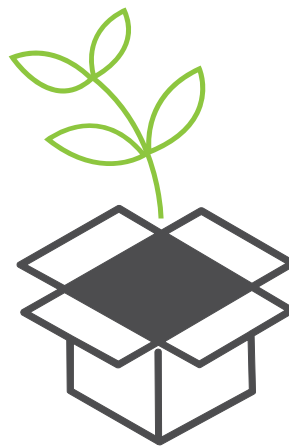
Know what to say and when to say it. Once you know your audience better, what do you say to them? Recruitment messaging should begin with the obvious, such as “Registration is now open” and “Please join us again this year” as soon as registration is available online. If your platform offers the ability for return users to log in, be sure to add that to your communication as a reminder. Early bird specials (discounts off registration fees or other perks) are a great way to entice any audience (new or returning) to your event. Once registration is in full swing, move to more mission-focused messaging such as “How your support helps (your organization name)” and “This is (person who has benefitted from your mission)’s story” to help persuade your audience. Send these types of messages 10, five, and two weeks out from your event. As you get closer to the big day, you can remind your audience that they still haven’t registered. Depending on your type of organization, you can keep this communication on the lighter side, or write with a greater sense of urgency. This is also a great time to offer registration incentives or challenges to help with the final push.

WHAT ABOUT YEAR-ROUND CAMPAIGNS?

You can use the messaging above if there is a date associated with the campaign, but what if it’s an evergreen (year-round) campaign? In this case, you’ll need to start with the standard, (“Registration is now open”), and add more mission-focused messages throughout the entire year. Since you won’t have a physical event, you should also connect your potential fundraisers with each other. This type of messaging can include invitations to virtual discussions or events to help bridge the distance between your supporters.

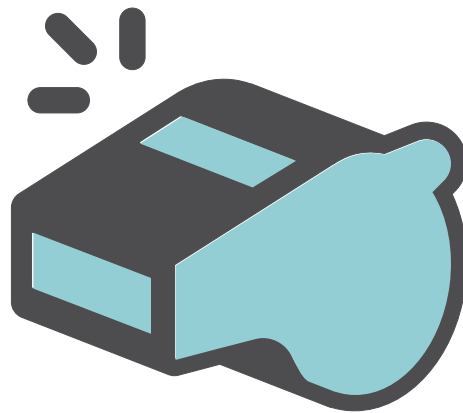
Think outside the box. Once you've reached out to your constituency, start looking at other groups who may be interested in your campaign:

- **Start with companies that are sponsoring your campaign.** Check with their HR department to see if you can visit the company (virtually or in person) to let their employees know about your campaign. Ask if you can assist them in starting a team so that in addition to sponsorship dollars, you are also getting their employees involved.
- **Visit or call shops in the vicinity of your event.** (Virtual campaign? Don't worry! Simply apply this suggestion to shops around the physical location of your organization.) Ask if they'd like to start a team or join a community team that you've created for this campaign as a way to spread goodwill and get involved. If creating a team isn't their thing, ask to leave information about the campaign for their employees or customers.
- **Rinse and repeat** with schools, churches, synagogues, mosques, civic groups, girl/boy scout troops, sororities, fraternities, etc.



COACHING YOUR PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISERS

Your fundraisers have a connection to your mission and want to take on the extra work of fundraising for your nonprofit. Help them support your organization by providing fundraising tools, tips, and encouragement throughout the campaign.



The whole point of communicating with your fundraisers during your campaign is to keep them informed and motivated. So, keep your messages to them succinct and fun. Use bullet points, graphics, and videos to make communications easy and interesting to read. And, be sure to keep content varied and compelling, giving them a reason to open and read your messages.

THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR FUN

Your organization's mission may be serious, but there are still ways to add fun to your campaign. And, fun is important for keeping your fundraisers engaged and motivated: Create campaign-specific fundraising "thermometers" and social media badges that fundraisers can use to show off their progress. Consider offering incentive/appreciation gifts such as t-shirts, hats, or stickers for fundraisers who reach specific milestones. Enter top fundraisers into a drawing for a prize. Consider offering a silly pledge — like throwing a pie at your executive director — each time a fundraiser meets a specific goal.

USE EMAIL

Weekly emails are a great way to inform and motivate your fundraisers throughout the campaign. A few ideas for what to share with fundraisers each week:

- An article highlighting a top fundraiser
- Tips on "how to raise \$X this week"
- A thermometer of funds raised so far
- An example of what funds can do for the organization's mission (for example, a \$50 donation can feed a family of four for X days)
- An inspirational story about someone who benefitted from your organization's mission

MAKE IT SOCIAL

Take advantage of social media to keep your campaign vibrant. Post images and stories about your campaign and your organization's mission. Post a video of a staff member giving fundraising tips or talking about the importance of the campaign. Share pictures and stories of those who benefit from your organization's work. And, don't forget to ask your fundraisers to re-post, re-tweet, and share your posts so you can get your message out to more people. Creating a hashtag for your campaign can make it easier to cultivate and share messages from your supporters.

GET PERSONAL WITH PHONE AND TEXT

We often forget about the power of one-to-one communication. Consider picking up the phone and calling your fundraisers. Ask them how things are going, and thank them for their hard work. Also, consider writing a personalized note, perhaps signed by your executive director or a member of your board, to thank fundraisers for their support. And, while it may not be quite as personal as a phone call or a handwritten card, add texts to the mix — they're a great way to send a quick virtual high-five to fundraisers as they reach milestones.

SEGMENT. SEGMENT. SEGMENT.

In all of your communications with fundraisers, be sure to segment your lists and tailor your messages accordingly. For example, if your campaign allows for the formation of teams, send tailored messages to team captains with tips and encouragement for motivating their team members. You also should have different messages for your top fundraisers, and even for fundraisers from past p2p campaigns (who you can continue to encourage to sign up to fundraise this time around).

TIP

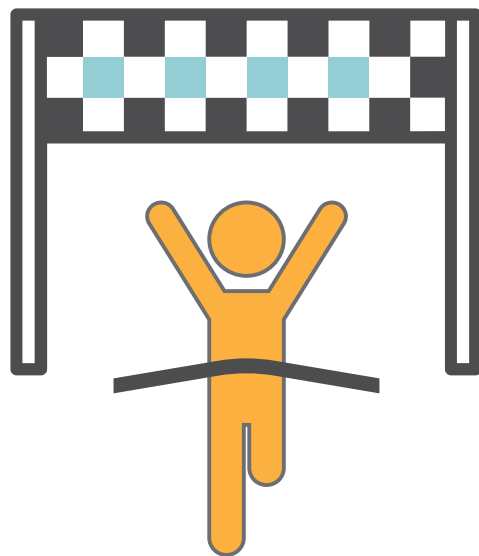
Segmenting your audience can become fairly complex, but it doesn't have to. Just be sure to think about your key audiences and what will keep them engaged with your campaign.

LISTEN

While it's important to get feedback from your p2p fundraisers once your campaign ends (more on that in the next chapter), remember to listen to them during the campaign, too, so you'll know what's working and what's not. Use short online surveys as your campaign moves forward so your fundraisers can give you feedback. Regular in-person or virtual get-togethers are another way to solicit feedback from your fundraisers and let them share lessons learned with each other. Make sure contact information is easy to find on your website, as well as in the communications you distribute so that people can reach out to you for help. You may want to consider an incentive (for example, an organization logo item) to give to people who complete a survey or provide feedback as a way to encourage more responses.

WRAPPING UP YOUR PEER-TO- PEER CAMPAIGN

You did it! The campaign or event is over. There's nothing left to do but pat yourself on the back and go home! Right? Not quite. There are still a few things you need to do to wrap up your campaign and ensure that your next one is *even better*.



ANALYZE YOUR CAMPAIGN

In addition to reviewing your campaign's status on a regular (weekly and monthly) basis, take time after the campaign to review the results, keeping in mind the initial goals and metrics you established prior to the campaign launch.

- **Gather the numbers** — Once all of your donations are entered, run final reports for the quantitative metrics you set earlier. How did the campaign do compared with the goals you set? What goals were too low or too high, and why do you think that was the case? How effective were your different marketing efforts? Look for metrics including total participants, total funds raised, number of returning participants, and average fundraising per participant. Plus, dig deeper to find trends such as amount raised based on registration date, number of emails sent, and whether or not someone updated their personal or team fundraising page.
- **Look at other factors** — Just as important as the numbers are the qualitative aspects of a campaign or event. How much staff effort did it take? What did participants like/dislike about the continuum of the event: registering, fundraising, and the event itself? Was the website easy to use for both participants and staff? NOTE: You will have been listening to participant feedback throughout the event, but be sure to include post-event feedback (more on that later) in your analysis.
- **Debrief with your campaign team** — Bring together everyone who was involved with the campaign to review your original campaign goals, discuss campaign results, and consider lessons learned. Be sure to take notes so you'll have them to look back on as you start work on your next campaign.
- **Start thinking about the next campaign** — Now that you have a p2p campaign under your belt and data to show your results, you can start thinking strategically about your next campaign. If you're going to continue with the same format, perhaps your focus for the next campaign will be to improve fundraising. If your campaign wasn't as successful as you'd like, maybe changing your campaign structure would help. Or maybe fundraising was really successful this time and your strategy will be to focus on recruiting more participants, retaining those who participated this year, and getting more people to fundraise.

GET FRESH PERSPECTIVES

Being receptive to feedback from staff and constituents, and enlisting services from a firm like Cathexis Partners, can give you new ideas and perspectives to help you plan your next campaign.

SAY THANK YOU

Your fundraisers have worked hard, and while you have thanked them throughout the campaign, be sure to send them a wrap-up thank you email, and maybe even call your top fundraisers. Let them know how much money your organization has raised due to their support and commitment, and tell them what your organization will be able to do with the funds raised. In your messaging, you can include pictures and stories to highlight features of the campaign. And, just as you held a kick-off event to get the ball rolling with your campaign, consider inviting your fundraisers to a wrap-up event — virtual or in-person — to recognize your participants' great work.

ASK FOR FEEDBACK

While the experience is still fresh in their minds, send your p2p fundraisers a survey with questions that address what worked, what didn't, and how you can improve your next campaign. Some questions you may ask:

- On a scale from one to five (with one being easy and five being difficult), how easy was it for you to set-up your own campaign?
- What tools did we provide you that were *most* helpful?
- What tools did we provide you that were *least* helpful?
- What tools did we not provide that would have been helpful?
- What did you like *most* about the process of fundraising for our organization?
- What did you like *least* about the process of fundraising for our organization?
- What can we do to improve our next campaign?



It's also helpful to leave an open comment area where people can provide feedback. They may include additional information that isn't covered by another survey question but can help improve your event for the next campaign.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Just because your campaign has ended doesn't mean it's time to stop communicating with your fundraisers. In fact, your fundraisers typically are your most loyal supporters. So, keep them engaged with regular updates on what your organization has done with the funds they helped raise, and they'll be even more likely to help you again with your next campaign. Also, be sure to keep them on your newsletter distribution list, and include them in some of your year-round campaigns so they are up-to-date on all of your organization's activities. As soon as you have the kick-off date for your next p2p campaign, be sure to let them know that, too.

TAKE YOUR PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING TO NEW HEIGHTS

There's virtually no limit to the number of ways you can use the peer-to-peer model to raise funds and engage supporters. With a little inspiration, some time, and the right peer-to-peer tools for the job, you can take your campaigns in exciting new directions.

At Cathexis Partners, we help nonprofits like yours to implement and use technology to raise funds and spread the word about their mission affordably and effectively. Our services include peer-to-peer fundraising strategy and software implementation.

Contact us today, and let's talk about how you can take your peer-to-peer fundraising to new heights.



www.cathexispartners.com

773.274.0769