

Fifty-One Plus Approaches, Projects, and Ideas That Work! **Your Group Can Use to Support**

(Don't let the first page fool you...
...there is a lot of meat on this one!)



1. Christmas trees

A great fundraiser at Christmastime is selling Christmas trees, wreaths, poinsettias, and other holiday decorations. Simply setup a tree lot in your church parking lot, staff it with volunteers, and promote it with large signs well down the road.

You can also offer Christian-themed ornaments, decorative yard art such as wire-framed angels pre-decorated with twinkling lights, door wreaths with bible messages, etc.

2. Garden sale

A garden sale makes a wonderful spring fundraiser. Emphasize your Christian theme with peace lilies, Easter lilies, and other plants symbolizing peace. Flower bulbs and wildflower seeds are always good sellers, plus you can make arrangements with a nursery for flowering shrubs such as azaleas.

Mulch or pine straw are also good revenue producers. You can even sell Father Dom's Duck Doo Compost, an organic fertilizer that supports a good cause.

3. T-shirts

Many church youth groups sell message t-shirts that appeal to today's youth. These can be custom produced by a screen print company or ordered in bulk from national t-shirt companies. Expect to pay about \$8 plus freight for shirts selling in the \$12-\$15 range.

4. Christian music

CD sales of Christian music groups are another easy way to raise funds. Focus on top selling groups and look for compilation CDs that feature hit songs from a variety of musicians. That way your music will have the broadest appeal. Take orders in advance and expect to pay 50% of retail price plus freight.

5. Auction

Hosting an auction is a fun way to raise money for your favorite cause. Seek donations from local businesses and ask everyone in your group to also ask their personal contacts. The more items donated the more

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you'll raise. To attract an even larger crowd, publicize your event well in advance with a press release.

6. Yard sale

A yard sale or rummage sale is another easy fundraiser. Put the word out to get as many items to sell as possible. Have it on a Saturday morning in a church parking lot and use road signs and newspaper classifieds to draw a big crowd. You can even turn it into a monthly event during good weather.

7. Music concert

A Christian-themed music concert can be a great family night or you could do the same thing for a teen audience. Be sure the groups you bring in have the right sound by asking for tapes or CDs. For bigger groups, you can pay a fee or give them a share of the ticket sales.

8. Fundraising bricks

Many church groups do landscape projects with laser-engraved fundraising bricks. Design a sidewalk, meditation garden, or outdoor patio fountain and incorporate the use of message bricks. Sell individual bricks that people can inscribe with a name and message of their choice. The bricks are surprisingly affordable and priced right, the project will raise amazing amounts for your cause.

9. Discount cards

Contact local Christian businesses for inclusion on a discount card for families. These usually retail for \$10 and expire after a year. If you supply the advertisers, you can get the cards printed for \$1 each which means huge profits. Sell these to supporters or to the general public with a sales table outside a grocery store or other high-traffic location.

10. Christmas carol-grams

Instead of going door-to-door caroling, assemble some talented singers, print up some flyers offering Christmas Carol-grams, and you're in business. Arrange to have a quartet deliver holiday cheer to a loved one's office, nursing home, hospital room, etc. Make sure your singers take flyers with them because this is a great word-of-mouth fundraiser!

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11. Church carnival

A family oriented carnival on church grounds is a great way to raise funds. You can contract for carnival rides with an outside firm, rent inflatable enclosed jumping areas that small children love, offer face painting, sell handicrafts, offer prizes for children's games, do a cakewalk, and dozens of other fun activities.

Sell inexpensive tickets from a huge roll that can be redeemed for each activity or to purchase food and drinks. Position several tables full of silent auction items donated by local businesses in a strategic place so they'll draw lots of bids.

12. Golf balls from above

This fun event involves dropping thousands of numbered golf balls from a hot air balloon onto a well-marked target area. Golf balls closest to the hole win cash prizes, goods or services donated by local businesses, or items purchased by your group.

Prize winners are those whose raffle ticket numbers match those on the winning golf balls. Set an aggressive goal of selling 10,000 raffle tickets priced at \$10 each. Obviously, you only drop as many golf balls as you've sold tickets for.

For example, you could offer a first place cash prize of \$10,000 and ten additional cash prizes of \$1,000 each. For tips on selling lots of raffle tickets, see the advice below under Christian raffle.

13. Charity auction

Auctions make good fundraisers and there's no reason why you can't put one together with a Christian theme. To get a good turnout, you must promote heavily with press releases, roadside signs, newsletters, emails, posters in local businesses, etc.

Approach all your supporters for donations of items or services to be auctioned. Handcrafted items, gift certificates, vacation rentals, and lawn services always draw a lot of bids. be sure that each of your supporters also works their own list of personal contacts for more donations.

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14. Bake sale

A well-promoted bake sale always draws a good crowd. It can be a Christmas cookie day, follow a Mothers Day or harvest theme, or any one of dozens of seasonal themes. Ask around and compile a list of good bakers and cooks, then strategize with them on how best to put this event together with a Christian theme.

15. Christian raffle

Contact local businesses for donated goods and services in exchange for substantial publicity. Put together a spreadsheet with dollar values of all prizes and assign them a position in the prize hierarchy.

Select your financial goal and price raffle tickets accordingly. Bear in mind that lower-priced tickets appeal to a lot more people, but you have to sell a lot more of them to raise the same amount of money.

Sell raffle tickets not only to friends and neighbors, but also to the general public. Get permission to set up sales tables outside popular retail locations. Use big signs explaining why your Christian group is raising funds.

Use a raffle flyer that describes the top prizes, recaps the funding need the raffle ticket sales will help meet, and asks for their support.

16. Bingo night

This is a fun family night that, due to Bingo's popularity, can draw several hundred people. You can find bingo game forms online or buy them from party supply stores. You can charge a small admission fee plus a dollar or two per game.

Keep things moving by using an experienced caller and a PA system so they can be easily heard above the crowd noise. You can make extra money through food and beverage sales, silent auction items, or with raffle tickets.

With a large enough crowd, you could also sell other fundraising products like two-for-one discount cards for pizza or other fast foods. Or, offer seasonal products like Christmas ornaments or custom

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silicone bracelets with phrases like "*Got Faith?*" or "*What Would Jesus Do?*"

In some areas, you may need a license for this event, so be sure to check local regulations.

17. Christian Events

A fun, family-oriented Christian event that's properly promoted will always raise substantial funds. And anytime you can get a big crowd together, you can include several more fundraising activities into the mix.

Divide the work so that key supporters aren't doing all the preparations and then working the event as well. That means recruiting twice as many volunteers as you think you'll need.

Once you've found a successful niche, make your Christian fundraising event an annual tradition.

18. Board Game Night

Kids love to gather with their friends, so why not turn a youth group gathering into a fundraiser? Plan a board game night on a Friday if it's during the school year, or anytime during school breaks depending on best availability.

Have families lend board games from home that are appropriate to the age group. A game that does not take too long to play works best since you want each child to play as many games as possible.

Each game costs a dollar to play. For younger age groups, small donated toys can be used as prizes for each game. Don't use anything very costly that cuts into your profits.

For older age groups, play rounds of games tournament style with a few surviving winners at the end of the evening. A playoff is exciting for the whole crowd.

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A prize for the final winner could be something as simple as a gift certificate to a local ice cream parlor, or a larger prize donated by a local business.

This can be an ongoing fundraiser done once a month or once a quarter. Once the word gets out, this will be the happening thing for the entire group.

19. Fifty Fifty Raffle

Most people are familiar with the fifty-fifty raffle. It is commonly used at youth sports events for a good reason. It's a great way to raise money and requires little planning.

Two part, tear-off style tickets can be purchased by the roll from most party or paper supply stores for a nominal price. Sell each raffle ticket for about a dollar each.

At the end of the event, draw a number and call it out to the crowd. The winner gets half of the proceeds, the youth group gets the other half.

Have one volunteer sell tickets at the raffle table in a centralized location, and another volunteer to work the crowd. Most of your church community will gladly participate and you'll find your youth group funds grow over time.

This can also be used as an ongoing fundraiser. Have a 50 – 50 raffle at nearly every church gathering to benefit the youth group. Worship service should be excluded for this type of fundraising.

Many winners will donate all or a portion of their winnings back to the youth group. Be sure to mention the generous donation in the newsletter. The reason is obvious!

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20. Video Game Tournament

You can easily put together a video game tournament as a fundraiser. Obviously, you'll need plenty of game consoles and TV sets, but those are pretty easy to line up.

You can do a tournament bracket and have elimination matches leading up to a championship showdown. Or, you can have high score contests where players can keep trying to outdo the record right up until the final bell.

There are many ways to make money such as with silent auctions of donated goods and services. Look for sponsors among video game retailers and youth-oriented businesses.

You can also sell food and drinks, conduct a raffle, charge admission to spectators, charge by the game or just collect an entry fee to cover all games played.

Easy Fundraiser Event Ideas

Among the questions that I hear constantly are:

"What fundraising events don't cost a lot?"

"What ones are easy to do?"

"Which ones make the most money?"

And what's the answer to those three questions? ***It depends!***

That's right. There is no one answer, no "one size fits all" solution.

Fundraising events vary tremendously

These types of fundraisers will vary greatly in cost, complexity, and results - based on a host of factors that are often not easy to control.

Events that don't cost a lot will often require more volunteer time to put them together. Ones that are easy to do are often not the biggest money makers.

And, sometimes you need a crystal ball to figure out which ones would produce the biggest net return. So, where does that leave us in our

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search for answers to our three questions? It leaves us with a set of options or choices for event-based fundraisers.

Which events don't cost a lot?

Generally, the fundraisers with the lowest cost are those that involve direct labor in exchange for a donation or contribution. Low-cost examples include the volunteer car wash or the charity bike ride.

Here, you want to use the "sweat equity" approach - volunteers sweat in return for equity for your nonprofit organization. The key is to get a large number of volunteers who, in turn, bring along multiple donations.

Revenue is generated in proportion to the publicity effort for the event, done either in advance --- as in the case of the bike- a-thon --- or done at the same time (street-side signs, etc.) --- for the car wash.

Which events are easy to do?

The events that are easiest to conduct are the ones that are fun and of short duration. Examples include a group dinner, a "make believe" beauty pageant, or a mystery dinner theater. Often, the largest part of the job is generating a good turnout. Communicating your need is central to all fundraising efforts, but for an event, it's critical. By making your event fun to attend and short in duration, you make it more attractive to potential supporters. The three types mentioned above are easy to put together:

21. Group Dinner

A group dinner involves organizing a group meal, usually at a restaurant although it can be potluck/buffet style as well.

Many restaurants are glad to host your get together and provide standard meal service while "rebating" back to your nonprofit organization roughly 15% of the total tab for your group's meals.

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22. Beauty Pageant

A "make believe" beauty pageant, such as that offered in the "Queen Almost for a Day" package, is another way to have fun and raise funds.

Your group needs only a location, some volunteer contestants (including men), and a paying crowd to cheer on their laughable favorites.

23. Mystery Dinner Theater

Inviting everyone to a Mystery Dinner Theater creates another fun evening that produces a nice amount of revenue for your group.

Line up a large meeting room at a local restaurant, recruit your thespians from among the gregarious types in your community and you're ready to go.

Pre-packaged scripts are available from several suppliers. For a list of suppliers and scripts email us at Contact@CompassionateCapital.org.

Which events make the most money?

Your fundraisers will be at their most profitable when you generate a massive turnout combined with a willingness of your patrons to open their pocketbooks.

Examples include school-based Athlet-a-thons and exclusive black tie charity auctions. These types of special events require a lot of effort to promote, coordinate, and conduct. Many layers of volunteers are needed to staff all the positions for these two types of fundraisers.

A key aspect to the revenue generating power of special events like auctions and Athlet-a-thons is a strong personal tie-in. With an auction, people will spend more money than they ordinarily would because there are both bargains and tax deductions involved.

With a school-based Athlet-a-thon, the personal tie-in is a direct sponsorship of a child's achievements. The personal connection is the strongest motivator for opening the pocketbook to its fullest extent. Always make sure to include that aspect when putting your plan in place.

Three Fundraising Event Ideas

These three fundraising events work well for any size group. To maximize your success, you must create awareness within the community of both the specifics of your fundraising event and the reason why your group is raising funds.

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Both are important to any fundraiser, but they are absolutely critical for pulling off a successful event. You have to generate enough publicity to draw a sizable audience and you must motivate the attendees to support your program.

So, which fundraising events shall we talk about?

Three Event Ideas:

24. Get The Picture
25. Rubber Duck Derby
26. Clean Comedians

24. Get The Picture

Get The Picture is a name I coined for portrait event fundraisers. The idea here is to offer family portraits, glamour shots, vintage photos, and other "dressy" pictures.

You'll need a central location with plenty of room for costume changes, picture-taking backdrops, and a waiting area. The best times are usually Saturdays. Pre-sell the event with flyers and "reserved session" tickets.

You'll want to get photo commitments up front from 250 people to make this worth your while.

Your sales pitch should "Focus on the Fun:"

- Capture The Moment (before it slips away)
- Dress up Picture Party (be there or be square)
- Goofy Faces Wanted! (yours included)

Or tug at the heart:

- When's the last time you sent a family photo Christmas card?
- They're not getting any younger... Get a portrait!
- Mother/daughter, Father/son - Pictures last a lifetime!

Your group can coordinate with a local photographer or partner with a national photography chain. One that I recommend is Vista Studios.

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They offer a 10x13 family portrait for \$8 and your group gets paid \$6, plus additional performance bonuses.

Here's the link: [Vista Studios](http://www.vistastudios.com) – www.vistastudios.com

25. Rubber Duck Derby

The Rubber Duck Derby is an easy and fun fund-raising event that can be scaled in size to fit your group's supporter base. The actual event, crazy as it may sound, involves racing rubber ducks down a local waterway.

Your local community "adopts" the ducks for a chance to win valuable donated prizes. Duck races have become a unique and profitable event for many charities.

Your group sells a ticket linked to a number that's painted on one of the racing rubber ducks. Depending on the prizes involved, tickets are priced somewhere between \$5-\$10 a ticket.

A standard size for a race is 3,000 rubber ducks, but you can adjust that up or down depending on the size of your group and the amount you need to raise.

Large plastic bags full of the ducks are simultaneously emptied into the water. The winning duck is the one that floats to the finish line first.

It adds a little extra zing to the old-fashioned raffle ticket sale. Prizes can also be awarded in various categories to add to the festivities. Many groups organize their "race" around a group picnic near the waterway and make a leisurely afternoon out of your fundraiser event.

A company called Great American Duck Races can supply you with everything you need.

Here's their website info: [Duck Races](http://www.games-group.com) – www.games-group.com

26. Clean Comedians

The third of our fundraising events is Clean Comedians. They offer over 50 performers capable of meeting almost any entertainment

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need. These hilarious entertainers will have your audience rolling with laughter -- and no one will be offended!

All you need to coordinate is a hall or auditorium and arrange an audience. Sell tickets up front or at the door. If you want to make additional funds, you can also offer food items as well.

If your group is small, partner with another organization and split the profits. Many groups are reporting record giving with this unique "*Bucks through Yuks*" approach.

Hundreds of schools have used Clean Comedians for years to provide top quality entertainment for their students. From stand-up comedians and impressionists - to musicians, magicians, and jugglers - their performers provide outstanding, clean entertainment for any group.

Not only are these guys hilarious entertainment, but each performer also has several messages focusing on important issues students face today.

Performances can be arranged at this web site: [Clean Comedians](http://www.cleancomedies.com) - www.cleancomedies.com

27. Funny Beauty Pageant

Everybody loves fundraising events that are easy to do. One of our favorites, that we touched on in the previous article, is "Queen Almost for a Day".

Dubbed by the supplier as an event-in-a-box, this fun fundraising event comes with everything you need except contestants and an emcee.

Of course, you'll need some type of stage and seating for your paying audience, preferably a school auditorium. But, you can also make do with a large meeting room so long as your contestants have some place to parade.

The contestants dress up in ditzzy costumes that they throw together to outdo each other in committing serious fashion faux faux.

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The script stays in the hands of the emcee, who introduces each participant with a hilarious background story. The contestants only have to answer one question -- which allows them to focus on milking their portrayal for additional laughs.

Adding to the fun, male contestants strut their stuff to cheers and catcalls. The winner is chosen by audience response and receives several goofy prizes that produce even more hilarity.

All in all, "Queen Almost for a Day" is a winner in the easy to do fundraising events category.

The cost for the script and instructions is \$125.

Find out more at [I Want Fundraising](http://www.iwantfundraising.com) – www.iwantfundraising.com

28. Mondo Yard Sale

A fundraising event that doesn't cost a lot is having a "Mondo Yard Sale," usually coordinated as a group effort and conducted in a high traffic location such as a school or church parking lot.

As with any yard sale, advance publicity is as easy as putting up signs advertising the event.

Have your supporters scavenge their closets, attics, and garages for unwanted items. Don't bother with individually pricing anything. Just place it out for display with other similar items and get what you can for each piece.

A multi-family yard sale like this will draw Saturday morning shoppers in droves, so be ready to start early. Expect your first customers at the proverbial crack of dawn.

Having a good mix of items is helpful as not all your buyers will be searching for the same things. Popular items include furniture, tools, clothing, and toys.

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You can increase your donations, volunteers, and net proceeds by offering a percentage split to donors of large ticket items. They get rid of the old lawn mower and when it sells for \$40, they keep \$20.

Don't forget to engage in a little give and take with your customers. Part of the fun of a yard sale is bargain hunting, so make sure all your sellers understand the art of making the deal.

29. Charity Golf Tournament

In our category of fundraising events that make a lot of money, consider the charity golf tournament.

These fundraising events combine a fun activity with your needy cause in a way that allows you multiple opportunities to raise money.

The first profit area is adding a markup to the standard greens fees. An extra \$25 per head can add up quickly in a large tournament.

As a nonprofit organization, you can also obtain a discount on those fees that can be as much as 50% off on the right course if you pick a normally slow day.

Another way that you can make money in golf fundraising events is to have your participants seek sponsorships from family and friends. This can be as simple as asking for a donation of \$1 a hole from each of their sponsors.

Or your golf fundraising events can include something a little more complicated like an amount per stroke or a donation when their foursome wins a hole in a best ball format.

You can also seek sponsorships from local businesses in a way that allows them to promote their business. Use approaches such as signage at the tee and green identifying the company who is sponsoring that particular hole.

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For larger events, you can work with suppliers who can include hole-in-one prizes, vacation packages for the winners, etc.

These firms specialize in coordinating and conducting these types of fundraising events, so working with one allows your group to focus on increasing participation and pledge activity.

My recommendation for a good firm is Champion Golf Events.

Find out more at [Champ Events](http://www.champevents.com) – www.champevents.com

30. CAP Follies - Fundraising Events That Are Easy To Do

One fundraising event that's easy to do is staging your own amateur musical revue.

For special events fund raising financial success, it's a must to get a support package from a supplier that includes just about everything you need.

A company called Christopher Allen Productions, aka *CAP Follies*, supplies all the music, fantastic costumes, scripts, and even a director!

Staging an amateur musical revue is a unique, exciting way to accomplish your fund raising goals. A *CAP Follies* is great for commerce, community relations, and discovering the "hidden talents" of participants!

First-timers are often surprised not only by the amount of income a fundraising event like *CAP Follies* can generate, but also by the positive impact the project has on the entire community.

You need only provide contestants, a place for the performance, and an audience. Among the theme choices are Box Office Review, Hooray For Follywood, Barnum's Animals, and Let's Get This Show On The Road.

These type of fund raising events bring out the ham in everyone. People look forward to repeating these each year.

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Find out more at [CAP Follies](http://www.capfollies.com) – www.capfollies.com

31. A Night at the Races - Events That Don't Cost A Lot

Among the fundraising events that don't cost a lot of money is hosting "A Night At The Races."

You re-create the atmosphere of being at the racetrack with an all-inclusive fundraising event package.

Rental includes horse races on video or 16mm films, official racetrack programs, wagering tickets, daily doubles, play money & a complete instructional guide.

Your guests wager "funny money" on the races and receive a "drawing ticket" or additional "funny money" if they win a race.

At the end of your event, a drawing or an auction is held for prizes.

Volunteers from your organization solicit prize donations from local merchants. You offer food and refreshments and make a profit on the "donation fee" charged to attend your event.

Additional revenue can be accomplished by printing your own Race Programs and selling advertising space. Another interesting idea is to "Sponsor-A-Horse" for prize drawings.

You have a choice of selecting Thoroughbred Racing, Harness Racing or Greyhound Racing in the desired racing format.

These "Racing Kits" contain enough supplies for an audience of 200 people to play the basic six (6) races within each Standard Basic Kit.

Find out more at [A Night At The Races](http://www.anightatthereaces.com) – www.anightatthereaces.com

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32. A Bed Race - Events That Make A Lot Of Money

A good example of a fundraising event that makes a lot of money is hosting a Bed Race.

A Bed Race involves rolling beds down a local street and having local businesses, organizations, and clubs sponsor the beds.

Teams consisting of 5 member race in two-bed heats until the winning bed is determined.

You're probably thinking that this fundraiser sounds like a bad fit for all three categories - it would be an awfully large amount of work, cost a ton of money, and probably wouldn't even recoup expenses.

Well, you're way off base and I'll tell you why.

First, there's a company called Bed Race USA that has this event down to an art, if not a science.

They provide the entire package - everything you need to host a fundraising event bed race.

You get a detailed 100-page manual, the racing beds, event banners, event t-shirts, and even a videotape to show to prospective sponsors.

Second, Bed Race USA even comes to your community to help you solicit major sponsors and bed race contestants.

Not only that, they come four different times - 120, 90, 30, and 7 days prior to the event.

Your organization is still responsible for various logistical tasks, but everything that you need to do is spelled out in the manual.

Third, this type of fundraising event lends itself to massive amounts of free publicity, particularly if you enlist the help of a local radio station, newspaper, or TV station as a participant/broadcaster.

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Find out more at [Bed Race USA](http://www.bedracesusa.com) – www.bedracesusa.com

Your group can make a lot of money when all the ingredients to a successful fundraising event are not only present, but pre-mixed and ready to bake to perfection.

That's all there's room for in this article. Look for further follow-on articles in the fundraising events series in the near future.

33. Raise Funds By Bowling For Bucks

A bowling fundraiser is another fun way to raise funds. The group event is simple to put together. Simply arrange with a bowling alley to rent a group of lanes, or the entire building, and start soliciting teams.

One way to raise a lot of funds is to charge a large entry fee for each foursome, for example, \$60 each. Obviously, if you're going to charge that much to play, you'd better make it a lot of fun.

Another way to fundraise is to do a bowling marathon and get as many participants as possible to come in and bowl. In exchange for a reasonable donation, of course.

To help cover expenses, you can also charge a small admission fee for spectators. Encourage families to attend by offering free tokens for the game room.

Publicity

Invite lots of people and seek out plenty of publicity. Contact local radio and television stations well ahead of your event. Make sure non-bowlers know that there will be plenty of fun things to do besides bowl.

Maintain a contact list of potential participants and put a calling tree to work to raise the number of participants to the maximum level.

Post info on free sites like Craig's List and get flyers out to all the leagues.

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Prizes

Bowlers can also compete for prizes such as most strikes, most gutter balls, highest game, lowest score, best team, etc.

You can offer comical, hand-made trophies or the more traditional mantle-ready versions. Just make sure that the focus remains on having fun.

Costumes

Some groups make their bowling fundraiser a costume event and award prizes for different costume categories like funniest, worst, most original, best team costume, etc.

Give your event a theme that inspires the participants to wear outrageous costumes such as "Hollywood Bowl" (movie stars) or "Space Bowl" (Star Wars and Star Trek characters).

Profit Boosters

Add extra fundraising capabilities to your bowling event such as silent auctions, raffle tickets for donated prizes, selling food items, running a cash bar, offering discount bowling passes, etc.

With raffle tickets and silent auctions, be sure to publicize these well ahead of time. Offer raffle tickets for sale ahead of time to people who can't make it. You can also start your silent auctions ahead of time to increase bids.

At the end of the night, run a live auction for the best donated items and announce the winners of all the various prizes, raffles, costume awards and bowling trophies.

Emphasize that it's all about having fun for a good cause and your bowling fundraiser will be a big success!

33. Country-style Fundraising Event

What exactly is a cow chip fundraiser? It's a country-style fundraising event that combines guessing where a cow will answer nature's call with a cow pie with raising funds for your favorite charitable cause.

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Turn the cow chip bingo event into a big party and include multiple fundraising activities and you'll be amazed how much you can raise!

How it works

Line up a location with a flat grass field and plenty of parking. A soccer field or high school football field are good choices. The field will need to be roped off and divided up into squares that are appropriately marked.

Each square is then sold for a set price and square numbers are assigned through a drawing system. Price your squares reasonably so all will sell, but high enough to raise considerable funds. For example, you could offer 500 squares for \$20 apiece.

Offer half the total amount taken in as the prize for the winning ticket. In the example above, you would promote the \$5,000 prize offered in your cow chip fundraiser.

The fun part of it is that instead of doing a drawing to select the winner, the winning square is the one where the cow leaves its first cow pie.

Fundraising event activities

Obviously, it isn't that exciting to just stand around and wait for the winner to drop, so you want plenty of other fundraising activities going on. Providing live music and food will help draw a much larger crowd.

For instance, you could have a pig roast or offer traditional barbecue. You can set up a stage area where a live band can entertain or even offer a battle of the bands.

Make it a family event by offering children's activities like face painting or an inflatable moonwalk. Have a bake sale booth.

Attract older children with fun events like a home run derby or judge a speed pitching contest with a radar gun.

Setup tables offering donated items through a silent auction or hold a live auction for popular goods and services such as spa treatments or vacation trips.

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You can even hold a big raffle in conjunction with your event. Raffles featuring big prizes like a new car or a big screen television can raise substantial amounts all by themselves, so combining one with a big turnout event is a no-brainer.

Publicity

Due to its unusual nature, a cow chip fundraiser is sure to attract media attention. Put together a press release kit a month ahead of time and get it to all the major media outlets in your market.

In your summary paragraph, highlight the prize and how the winner is chosen, as that's usually the only part that's read. Give your event a newsworthy angle by including pictures of your blue ribbon cow or bull and your organizing committee.

Fun stories often make local newscasts, so play up the 'Let the Chips Fall Where They May' angle.

Offer a spot as Grand Marshal to a local television personality and have them announce the winner. This kind of publicity lays the groundwork for making this fundraising event an annual tradition.

Summary

By combining multiple fundraising activities with your event, you can raise incredible amounts of money. The key is to make it fun and draw a big crowd by getting lots of publicity.

Live music and unusual food are big draws as are family-oriented fun. Auctions and raffles can also be included to aid your cause.

The bottom line is that a cow chip fundraiser is the way to go!

34. Organizing A Successful Car Raffle

Putting together a car raffle is not as hard as you think. The key ingredient is having a large group of ticket sellers who market the raffle chances to the general public. Everything besides ticket sales can be handled by just a few people.

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Get organized

Divide the main tasks and focus on three areas: design, product, and marketing.

Design your raffle around a desirable car or SUV as the main prize. Include a cash equivalent option for people who don't want the vehicle. Offer several smaller cash prizes to increase interest.

Product should be highly desirable with a considerable status quotient. Think dream car, not transportation. The other part of the product equation is a clear statement of specific benefits the funds raised by the raffle will produce.

Marketing is key to your success. Your press release should sell the human interest story behind the raffle, not focus on just the prize. What's the money raised going to do? Sales flyers should include a color picture of the car and bullet points of features and secondary prizes.

Select a desirable car

You want to offer a vehicle that's highly desirable such as a Lexus or Mercedes. Raffling off a cheap car is actually more difficult than doing one with a luxury model. Why? Because people dream about owning one, so you're selling a piece of the dream.

Partner with car dealer

Approach the manager of a local car dealer with a win/win offer. You get a good deal on the vehicle, say 25% off list. They get free publicity while still turning a small profit after all the dealer sales incentives are factored in.

Leverage their status by listing them on your raffle sales materials, asking if their existing customer base could be mailed a raffle offer letter, or possibly even holding your prize drawing in their showroom.

Offer additional prizes

Include multiple prizes besides the grand prize. They can be cash awards, consumer electronics items, gift certificates, vacation getaways, etc. The key is to broaden the appeal of your prize package and increase the perceived chance of winning something.

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Do the math

Number of tickets offered times ticket price equals three times vehicle cost. Why? Because you want to make 50% profit, you might not sell all your raffle chances, you'll need to cover additional expenses, and you'll need to payout your supplemental cash prizes.

For example, when raffling a luxury car that costs \$50,000 you want to gross at least \$100,000, if not \$150,000. Setting aside \$15,000 of the gross to cover all other costs and prizes, you would still raise \$35,000 even if you only sold two thirds of the tickets.

Price tickets to sell

Lower cost tickets will actually outsell higher-priced ones because they are more affordable to a wider slice of your target market. You don't want the chances to be priced too low though as that will actually lessen total revenue.

A happy medium is usually the \$20 to \$50 range, depending on the vehicle's price range.

Ticket sales tips

With raffles, you have to sell tickets in large volumes and that means going where people are. Get permission and setup sales tables outside high-traffic retail locations such as grocery stores, book stores, home improvement stores, mass merchants, and anywhere else where there are a lot of people there to spend money.

Use large signs in front of and behind your tables that clearly explain why you are raising funds. Sales signs should say things like "*Win a new Mercedes!*" or "*Imagine winning a new Lexus!*" and not "*Car Raffle - \$50.*"

Obviously, you still want each of your sellers to target family, friends, neighbors and co-workers with a carefully crafted sales script that assumes they want to purchase tickets and it's just a question of how many. For more tips, read my article on selling raffle tickets.

Prize drawing

The car dealer's showroom is a great place to hold your prize drawing. Make it as much of an event as possible by including a live radio

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station broadcast. Use a local celebrity to draw the winning ticket. Take lots of pictures and get your event in the papers the next day.

Summary

You can do this. The key is marketing your tickets to thousands and thousands of people. Go where they are already shopping. Make them an attractive offer on a chance to win the car of their dreams.

Repeat sales process every weekend until all tickets are sold. Your prize drawing should be fun event even without someone winning a new car. Include good food, music, radio station live broadcast, and local celebrities as master of ceremonies. And above all, have fun!

35. Car Washes

Car wash fundraisers are a proven money-maker in virtually every community. All you need are willing volunteers, a high-traffic location with good visibility, and some attention-getting signs.

You can put a car wash fundraiser together on short notice, but they work best with a little planning. Here's how to get started...

Getting Ready To Wash Cars

1. Line up a location with good main road frontage
2. Ensure it has suitable water access
3. Assemble supplies list – hoses, buckets, wash towels, dry towels, squeegees
4. Assign each volunteer an item from the supplies list
5. Make 8-10 poster board signs in high-contrast colors
6. Arrange your volunteers in 2-hour shifts
7. Get advance publicity, if possible

Car Washing Tips

1. Organize your group into teams - Promotion, Sales, Wash, Dry
2. Promotion team attracts new clients with signs
3. Sales team explains offer (use flyer for quick info) and up-sells clients with extra features or secondary offer

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4. Wash team soaps, scrubs, and rinses each car
 5. Dry team gets water residue off, vacuums, does tires, etc.
 6. Use at least two lines and wash two or more cars at once
 7. Wash cars for six to eight hours (Saturday 9:00 to 3:00 preferred)

Your fundraiser's success will depend on the weather. If you can wash 12 cars an hour (one every 10 minutes in each line), you can easily raise \$600- \$1000 in one day.

Remember to put together a quick flyer that includes the reason why you're raising funds and clearly states the price. You can even offer some extra services for an additional charge such as providing high-gloss tire treatment or vacuuming interiors.

Car Wash Fundraiser - Success Tips

1. Location, location, location!
2. Sell car wash fundraiser tickets in advance
3. Use a flyer that clearly explaining why you're raising funds
4. List all prices concisely in large, bold type
5. Up-sell to include additional services
6. Partner with another group if your head count is low
7. Increase revenue with an extra offering such as a [2-for-1 pizza savings card](#) or selling boxes of doughnuts.

Free car wash

Alternatively, you can advertise a free car wash and just ask for donations for your cause. Often, this can raise more cash than stating a specific price, because people will see a group of volunteers working hard and having a good time, and may actually donate more money than you would have charged.

Final Advice

Make sure to keep the event fun for all your participants and your customers. Play upbeat music. Provide soft drinks and snacks to keep the energy level up.

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Keep safety in mind when trying to attract customers. Be sure to get volunteers to hold and wave signs toward passing traffic, not just volunteers to wash cars.

If you have time, increase your turnout by getting your car wash fundraiser some advance publicity coverage in the local newspaper, or by posting roadside signs a day or two ahead of time.

36. Yard Cleanup

A yard cleanup fundraiser is extremely fast and easy to put together. Simply create a set of instructions for your group detailing what to offer, what to say, and how much to charge.

Like most fundraisers, the target market is family, friends, and neighbors. Depending on the age of your participants, your offerings can range from simple lawn care all the way up to mulching flower beds or pruning tree limbs. In many climates, autumn is a great time to do this fundraiser, because leaf clearing is always a needed service during those months.

Create a flyer describing your fundraiser and clearly list your prices for the various cleanup options. Assign a fundraising quota to each participant.

Offer some individual and group performance bonuses. There's nothing like a team pizza party or passes to amusement attractions to motivate a youth sports group.

37. Community Cleanup

Another free fundraiser, a community cleanup - also known as a trash bag fundraiser, performs a valuable community service while also providing a significant revenue opportunity. Organizing a community cleanup project is a way to raise funds and send a positive message about your group at the same time.

This type of one day or weekend fundraising event is very similar to the Athlet-A-Thon or Fun-A-Thon concept. Here your group's

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participants solicit pledges from the usual suspects - family, friends, and neighbors. Have local businesses donate trash bags and recruit parents and relatives with trucks to haul what you collect.

Pledges are tied to a specific attainment goal such as the number of pounds of trash collected or the number of road miles cleaned of debris. You'll need to create a one-page overview of your cleanup program and a pledge signup sheet.

It works best if your overview specifies a suggested range for donations, say anywhere from a penny to a dime a pound for a large project. An amazing amount of garbage can be collected from a local stream or illegal dumping area, so it's not a bad idea to also put a maximum limit on a pledge amount of \$20.

Have local businesses donate trash bags and recruit parents and relatives with trucks to haul what you collect.

Do the math and you'll be surprised at how much money you can generate. Assuming 50 participants, each of whom has five pledges of a penny a pound, if you collect a ton of garbage, your group will raise \$100 per participant or \$5,000.

38. Combining Calendar Sales With A Raffle

Calendar fundraisers have always been popular with nonprofit and school groups. The idea is pretty basic - assemble some great photos, have a batch of calendars printed up, and offer them for sale to your supporters.

Now a new twist has been added to this tried and true fundraiser - adding a cash raffle and including it in the cost of the calendar.

A cash calendar fundraiser offers a way to increase the net profit without requiring much in the way of additional work. Let's take a look at the pricing and see where the extra profit comes from.

A calendar fundraiser is ordinarily priced around \$10 with an upper range of \$15 for custom calendars with your group's submitted pictures.

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A cash calendar fundraiser bumps that price up to \$20 with the extra funds going toward the cash prize raffle. Depending on total sales, there can be a single prize drawing or a series of drawings with ever larger prizes.

So, in a situation where 1,000 calendars are sold, a plain calendar would go for an average of \$12 or \$12,000 total. Net profit would be \$5 per calendar or \$5,000.

By adding the cash raffle ticket, the 1,000 calendars gross a total of \$20,000 with the same calendar production expense. That means that an additional \$8,000 in revenue has been produced.

The cash raffle prizes awarded would be approximately 50% of that additional revenue, or \$4,000. That money could be distributed in weekly prize drawings or in a single raffle drawing.

The bottom line is that the cash raffle adds the other 50%, or \$4,000, of the additional revenue to the net profit. So the cash calendar nets your group an extra \$4,000 for the fundraiser with little additional effort.

Considerations

Of course, there are some important considerations. Many localities require a permit for raffles and other games of chance. A few even ban them as gambling related activities.

In addition, your calendar sales volume needs to be fairly high to offer large cash prize drawings. If your group is only selling a hundred calendars, it might not be worthwhile to add the raffle aspect.

And a higher priced calendar won't sell as well as a lower-priced one, unless the prize money is sufficiently large enough to get people excited about winning.

And lastly, don't forget that a calendar with great pictures will almost sell itself. If that means paying a little extra to have the pictures your group wants instead of generic ones, the extra sales will cover the extra costs.

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After all, who wants to look at an ugly calendar all year?

39. What exactly is "doing the right thing" anyway?

Think about it.

When you conduct a fundraiser, you are sending a message to your volunteers and your supporters. That message contains a value statement about your organization.

Doing the right thing means putting your organization squarely behind a bigger need than just your own cause.

That doesn't mean that your group necessarily gives up a portion of the net from your fundraising efforts, but rather that you direct those efforts to also accomplish a greater good.

After all, what type of message are you subconsciously sending your community if the only cause your organization advocates is satisfying your own group's monetary need?

Your fundraising activities should periodically give something back to the community. You can support another worthy local cause or support something larger by being "earth friendly."

What are some examples of Earth Friendly fundraising?

▼ **A candy fundraiser** where a portion of the proceeds are earmarked to accomplish a noteworthy environmental goal.

▼ **A recycling fundraiser** that raises funds on an ongoing basis while reducing landfill waste.

▼ **A cleanup effort** that produces visible, tangible results that benefits your community.

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40. Organic Candy Fundraiser

A specific example of an Earth Friendly product sale are the Newman's Own Organics chocolate bars and chocolate cups offered by CrunchTime Environmental Fundraisers.

These delicious 1.2 ounce chocolate bars come in six different, but equally scrumptious flavors.

On each \$1 candy bar, your group earns a minimum 55% profit margin, compared to the usual 45-50% offered elsewhere.

In addition, 35% of the profits generated for CrunchTime by your fundraiser will be used to "adopt" tropical rainforest acreage in your group's name.

If you're worried about the taste of an organic chocolate bar, "fahggedaboutit." This candy is delicious!

It's just one more example of how Newman's Own has brought great quality to other consumer products like spaghetti sauce and popcorn.

You'll be pleasantly surprised how profitable "doing the right thing" can be with an environmentally friendly candy bar.

Find out more at [CrunchTime Fundraising](http://www.crunchtime.org) – www.crunchtime.org

41. Toner Cartridge Recycling Fundraiser

Recycling printer cartridges and old cell phones is another way that your group can raise money on a year-round basis.

Keeping the plastic parts and the toner/ink residue out of your local landfill may not seem like much, but Americans dispose of more than 100 million laser printer or inkjet cartridges each year.

It's easy to set your organization up. Participation is free with the largest recycling firm, FundingFactory.

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Collection boxes are supplied at no cost and prepaid shipping labels are already attached to boxes. Your group's name, address, and account number are included on labels.

Your group places the collection boxes at local businesses and other convenient locations such as at retailers that sell new printer cartridges. Many times a person buying a new cartridge brings in the old one to ensure a perfect match.

Every time a box is full, you call UPS and arrange for the box to be picked up. Then you replace it and start the process all over again.

Your group can collect cash or earn technology prizes for your recycling effort, demonstrating once again that "doing the right thing" pays handsomely.

Find out more at [FundingFactory](http://www.fundingfactory.com). – www.fundingfactory.com

42. Cleanup Fundraiser

The third type of Earth Friendly Fundraiser, organizing a community cleanup project, is yet another way to fundraise and send a positive message at the same time.

This type of one day or weekend fundraising event is very similar to the Athlet-A-Thon or Fun-A-Thon concept. Here your group's participants solicit pledges from the usual suspects - family, friends, and neighbors.

Pledges are tied to a specific attainment goal such as the number of pounds of trash collected or the number of road miles cleaned of debris. You'll need to create a one-page overview of your cleanup program and a pledge signup sheet.

It works best if your overview specifies a suggested range for donations, say anywhere from a penny to a dime a pound for a large project.

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An amazing amount of garbage can be collected from a local stream or an illegal dumping area, so it's not a bad idea to also put a maximum limit on a pledge amount of say, \$20.

Do the math and you'll be surprised at how much money you can generate. A ton of garbage, or 2,000 pounds, can really add up to some big fundraising profits.

At a penny a pound, one ton is worth \$20 per pledge.

Assuming 100 participants, each of whom has five pledges of a penny a pound, if you collect a ton of garbage, then your group will raise \$100 per participant or \$10,000.

That's not bad money for "doing the right thing!"

Give some serious thought toward inspiring your group to put together an Earth Friendly Fundraiser this year.

You'll be proud of what your volunteers' hard work will accomplish and you'll have plenty of proceeds to put to good use for your own cause.

43. Sales of Just About Everything!

<http://www.efundraising.com/>

How To Get Fundraising Product Samples

Many groups would like to see a fundraising sample before finalizing their fundraiser product choice. In the past, it's been difficult to find a reputable company that will send you some free samples without obligation.

Well, the good news is that eFundraising, a division of Reader's Digest, will send you to www.fundraiserhelp.com/free-samples.htm you want without a big hassle. All you have to do is fill out a simple form, tell them what you're looking for, and you're in business.

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Fundraising Samples Available

There are free samples available for most of the product lines they carry. The fastest way to get yours is to order them right now by phone at this toll-free number **(866) 884-8804**.

Available samples:

44. Popcorn

Fundraising popcorn is packaged in your choice of youth sports styles, so specify what type of team you are raising funds for. It's available in four delicious flavors and in nine fun themes including baseball, soccer, band, cheer, football and more!

45. Cookie Dough

One of the best selling fundraising products in history, cookie dough has mass appeal and delivers big profits. Plus, this cookie dough is the non-refrigerated mix where you just add butter and eggs, so there's no delivery hassles.

46. Pizza

Choose from French Bread style pizzas, or standard full-size 12" or the three-pack mini-size 5" pizzas. These are available in favorites like Cheese, Sausage, or Supreme combinations.

47. Cheesecakes, Pies & Other Desserts

Talk about mouth-watering selections! The pies and cheesecakes in this fundraiser catalog will have every customer ordering two or more. And when you taste your free sample, you'll want at least that many for yourself!

Important Note - Due to the high dollar value of the cookie dough, pizza, and cheesecake offerings, there is a \$15 charge for the first sample and \$4 more for each additional one up to a total of six samples. However, you also receive a \$50 coupon off your order, so you actually come out \$15 ahead. Click here for more details on www.efundraising.com.