



Photo Credit: [@giovaagram](#)

Courtesy: Pencils of Promise

# The Smart Guide to Strong Year-End Fundraising



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**01**

# **‘Tis the Season to Fundraise**

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**Year-end fundraising is an integral part of most nonprofits' annual strategy. Data from Classy's [State of Modern Philanthropy Report](#) tells us that nearly one-third of all giving on the Classy platform takes place between Giving Tuesday and December 31.<sup>1</sup> That's only about 9% of the total days in a year.**

The best way to execute a successful year-end fundraising campaign is to start planning early. In this guide, we'll walk you through some low-lift ways to transition from your Giving Tuesday fundraising strategy to a year-end appeal, share a list of opportunities that your nonprofit can leverage to maximize results, and provide an overview of how Classy's giving experience platform can help you achieve your year-end goals.

Remember, quality is far superior to quantity when it comes to your year-end fundraising initiatives. Rather than feeling pressured to tackle everything in this guide, be selective about which campaigns you choose this year. You're the expert on your nonprofit's unique goals.

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<sup>1</sup> Classy, *The State of Modern Philanthropy: Future-Proof Your Fundraising*. <https://learn.classy.org/the-state-of-modern-philanthropy-2021.html>

Abstract white line art on a blue background, consisting of several overlapping, elongated, and irregular loops that resemble stylized calligraphic strokes or organic shapes.

**02**

# **Engage Donors With a Strong Crowdfunding Campaign**

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**Rather than simply informing donors why your campaign goal is important, create a felt experience through an emotional connection with your audience.**

[Crowdfunding campaigns](#), best for story-driven or time-bound appeals, give you the space to communicate a sense of urgency with your supporters. Use media and text to show the impact of your donations, and ultimately help donors understand and become advocates for your mission.

Launch an independent year-end crowdfunding campaign to target a specific goal, or unite your Giving Tuesday and year-end appeals if they both aim to achieve the same result.

Whichever option you choose, a well-designed, cohesive crowdfunding campaign can help you unlock the generosity of donors who are passionate about contributing to your cause.

### **Option 1: Launch a Campaign Dedicated Solely to Year-End Fundraising**

You may find that your Giving Tuesday campaign goals are highly-specific to the November timeframe or a particular group of beneficiaries and don't necessarily target the results you're looking for in your year-end efforts.

If that's the case, launching two independent campaigns is the way to go. Just make sure to differentiate your year-end fundraising appeal with a unique campaign name, messaging, and landing page URL.

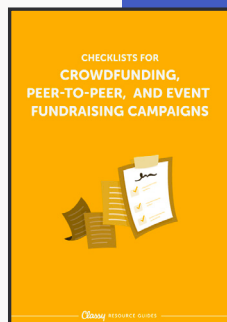
**Take a sizable step toward  
your year-end fundraising goals  
with these five best practices:**

1. **Create a standout hero block** with a customized headline image, compelling visuals, brand colors, a progress bar, and a clear call to action that's exclusive to year-end.
2. **Incorporate [impact blocks](#)** with strategic suggested donation amounts, detailed descriptions of the impact each gift will make heading into a new year, and high-quality images or graphics to engage your audience.
3. **Explain the “why” behind your appeal** with a clear and concise goal that is unique to your year-end fundraising campaign, supported by icons or infographics to break up the text.
4. **Build in interactive page elements** with an [activity wall](#) to keep your donors feeling appreciated, up to date, and excited to return and give again.
5. **Make it accessible anywhere** with mobile-optimized pages to ensure a seamless user experience regardless of the device your supporters are using.



**PRO TIP**

Re-engage Giving Tuesday donors with targeted appeals to continue supporting your efforts as the year closes out.



**Cover all of your bases before  
launching your next campaign**

**Download Your Checklists Now**

## Option 2: Unite Your Giving Tuesday and Year-End Campaigns

If you find yourself building out a year-end strategy that feels like a natural extension of your Giving Tuesday goals, combine your campaigns to save time and resources.

It's common for nonprofits to look at Giving Tuesday and year-end as two separate events, but thinking of October through December as a cohesive fundraising initiative can open your organization up to new possibilities.

Learn how to turn your Giving Tuesday page into a stellar year-end campaign with these simple steps.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The rate of contributions substantially increases as a campaign gets closer to its fundraising goal.<sup>2</sup>

### Flip Your Giving Tuesday Campaign to a Year-End Appeal

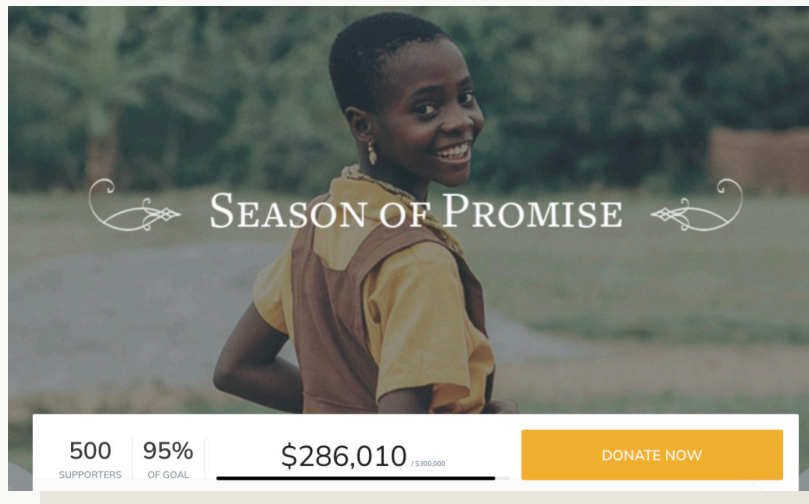
Instead of starting over after Giving Tuesday, build on the momentum you've already gained. Repurpose your Giving Tuesday landing page URL to save your team valuable time, provide a consistent place for donors to give, and build social proof by assuring your year-end donors that they're contributing to a winning effort.

Use a branded campaign name that applies to both Giving Tuesday and year-end to ensure it encompasses both appeals. **Pencils of Promise** coined Season of Promise as their campaign name to seamlessly unite their Giving Tuesday and year-end campaigns.

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<sup>2</sup> Kiva.org, "The Critical Link Between Tangibility and Generosity."  
<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/sds/docs/loewenstein/CriticalLinkTangibilityGenerosity.pdf>





The Salvation Army Western Territory  
shared their advice:

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Take the time to sit down and map out your strategy before you start building. Make note of sections that you'll need to update when you transition the campaign page. Then, when the time comes to change from Giving Tuesday to year-end, you're only making quick minor edits and you know precisely what to update.

## Here are a few ways to flip your campaign with a low lift:

- Ensure your branded campaign name and URL apply to a year-end appeal
- Refresh the main hero image on your campaign page
- Update any text on your campaign page that's tied to Giving Tuesday
- Tweak your donation form to communicate your year-end goal
- Sprinkle in relevant details in the "About the Campaign" section

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### TRY IT ON CLASSY

Easily customize your headline and background images, update your impact blocks, and refine your "About the Campaign" section in minutes to show how each year-end donation impacts your mission.

Since your campaign URL stays the same, you'll continue capturing and converting Giving Tuesday donors into dedicated supporters.



**03**

# **Prepare Your End-of-Year Appeals**

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**A series of solid year-end appeals plays a crucial part in reaching the right donors and hitting your annual goals. Mirror the branding and language you use in your emails across social media and direct mail to create a cohesive campaign and raise more for your mission.**

## **Elevate Your Email Outreach**

Craft an appeal that captures your audience and drives conversion by segmenting your email list and delivering a message that speaks directly to each group. Spark interest with a unique subject line and concise, compelling copy. Your message should instill a sense of urgency in your supporters and direct them to a clear call to action (CTA).



### **PRO TIP**

Unite your email and direct mail appeals. Convert your campaign URL into a compact web address to include in your mailers, or consider including a QR code that drives supporters to your donation page.

## 1. Develop a Specific Message and Story

Effective communication is the key to successful year-end fundraising.

Craft a message that will establish a deep connection with your reader.

**Here are a few ideas of what to include in your first email appeal:**

- A beneficiary's personal story that highlights your program's success
- A message from the field that brings supporters face-to-face with the work their support is enabling
- A personal note from a board or staff member about the progress you've made towards your mission this year
- A meaningful thank you to existing donors for being involved throughout the year and making such a large impact on your programs



Motivate your supporters by reminding them of the integral role they play in accomplishing your goals. After all, it's their donations that are driving your organization's impact.

Take this example from **The Trevor Project**. Supporters can easily see what, specifically, their contributions make possible for the organization and the critical problems they help solve.



## 2. Craft a Series of Emails

As you brainstorm a compelling narrative for your email, think about how you might create a larger story for a series of two or three emails.

### Why a series of emails?

People can easily miss or disregard a single message, even if they don't mean to. Send a few emails to maximize your chances of reaching more donors and boosting revenue.

Release your campaign to a limited audience prior to the general public with a strategic soft launch. Target your most loyal supporters with a personalized message highlighting their past involvement, and use language that creates a sense of exclusivity, especially if they give to your organization on a recurring basis. Introduce your campaign by explaining your motivation, providing all of the details, and clarifying your call to action. Leverage our [soft launch email templates](#) to get started.

Next, officially launch the campaign to your larger community. You can do this via email, social media, newsletters, or all of the above. Continue the momentum with at least one email per week to stay top of mind with donors. This is where campaigns with progress metrics come in handy to share updates with your audience.

At the end of each message, present a clear ask to donate. Keep it simple with just one CTA to avoid overwhelming your donors. It should be easy to spot with a high contrast button that stands out against the rest of the email and leaves donors with no doubt about what to do next.

38%

of recurring donors would love to hear from the organizations they donate to on a recurring basis more often than they do today.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Classy, *Recurring Donor Sentiment Report*.  
<https://learn.classy.org/recurring-giving-sentiment-report.html>

### 3. Include Visual Content

Emotions drive donations. Connect to potential donors and invoke action by complementing your text with photos or video that allow your reader to experience your narrative. This is where visual storytelling comes in.

Take this email from **Love146**. The organization personalizes their message with an endearing photograph of a beneficiary. This simple visual demonstrates how the organization is working to solve a very real, very tangible, problem for those recovering from trafficking and exploitation.



**LOVE146**  
END CHILD TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

*What does my donation really do for a child?*

**YOUR GIFT TO LOVE146 ...**

- Provides a child recovering from trafficking with holistic care, journeying alongside them for as long as it takes.
- Meets a young person's practical needs of food, healthcare, and education as they heal.
- Supports a survivor to access and succeed in higher education and employment.
- Helps a victim to seek justice against their traffickers.
- Prevents trafficking by helping a child understand vulnerability, spot the signs of trafficking, identify healthy support systems, and learn skills they need to stay safe.
- Responds to a child who may be in danger by going to meet with them, listen to them, give them resources, and help them understand if they've been victimized.
- Equips a professional with an up-to-date and research-based child trafficking prevention curriculum, bringing it to youth in schools, juvenile justice and child welfare agencies, and other community settings.

**GIVE TODAY**





#### TRY IT ON CLASSY

Include a [progress bar](#) on your fundraising page to track donations in real-time and show your campaign's success to date. The [goal proximity effect](#) has proven that the closer someone is to hitting their goal, the more motivated people are to give.

Video can be an even more powerful medium for making appeals.

A short video taps into all of the viewer's senses, allowing you to establish an emotional connection with your audience. And best of all, you don't need everything to be of high production value to see high engagement.

Simply focus on content type and creativity when creating your next video, and strong storytelling tactics like descriptive language. Align with leading social media trends by creating brief, engaging content that entertains and engages supporters.

Videos improve email click-through rates, as proven by testing.

One marketing study found that including a video in an introductory email **increased the click-through rate by 96%.**<sup>4</sup>

Consider embedding your video below the text in your email to avoid distracting your readers' attention from the main message. You'll also want to keep the file size low to avoid buffering.

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<sup>4</sup> GetResponse, "GetResponse Study Shows Video Emails Increase Click-through Rates by 96 Percent." <https://www.getresponse.com/about/press-center/releases/01-12-2009.html>

## 4. Optimize Your Appeal for Mobile Devices

About 85% of people access email on their smartphones, which we can only expect to increase with time.<sup>5</sup> That means there's a high chance your year-end appeal will be looked at on a mobile screen. It's critical that both your appeal and campaign page are mobile-friendly so essential elements and functionality aren't cut off. A choppy experience can deter supporters from completing their donation.

A whopping 42% of people who view email on their mobile devices will delete emails that are not optimized for mobile.<sup>6</sup> Yikes! Don't let an unresponsive appeal be your own worst enemy.

On the Classy giving experience platform, **58% of traffic comes from mobile devices**, 27% of which is mobile traffic from social media.<sup>7</sup>

Nonprofits must be equipped to meet their donors where they're at to avoid the risk of leaving donations on the table.

It's also important to think about donors who prefer to pay from their phones. Today, there are several options available for nonprofits to easily offer mobile-friendly payment options such as digital wallets, ACH (bank transfer), PayPal, and Venmo.



When digital wallets are enabled, organizations on Classy see an 11-14% lift in mobile conversion rates.<sup>8</sup>

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5 G99 Firms, "Mobile Email Statistics."  
<https://99firms.com/blog/mobile-email-statistics/#gref>

6 Backlinko, "57 Key Email Marketing Stats for 2021."  
<https://backlinko.com/email-marketing-stats>

7 Classy, *The State of Modern Philanthropy: Future-Proof Your Fundraising*.  
<https://learn.classy.org/the-state-of-modern-philanthropy-2021.html>

8 Classy, *The State of Modern Philanthropy: Future-Proof Your Fundraising*.  
<https://learn.classy.org/the-state-of-modern-philanthropy-2021.html>



#### TRY IT ON CLASSY

At Classy, we designed a payment processor exclusively for nonprofits to make it simpler than ever to get funds fast.

Introduce digital wallets, mobile payments, and bank transfers to your donor base with [Classy Pay](#), our seamless integration with Stripe. Backed by industry-leading fraud protection, Classy Pay allows your nonprofit to keep security front and center for all transactions.

Classy Pay also includes low-cost transaction fees, automatic credit card updating, and more.

## 5. Match Your Holiday Appeal to Custom Forms

If your special appeal directs donors back to a generic donation form, supporters can quickly lose the emotional steam that your email's text and images helped create.



#### PRO TIP

Consider swapping out your general donation form with a customized holiday-themed donation form during the giving season.

Avoid confusing supporters or halting their emotional momentum altogether by providing a custom donation form that matches the look and feel of your email appeal.

Streamline your form's branding, images, and text to improve donor conversion and create cohesiveness across your campaign.



#### DID YOU KNOW?

Supporters are nearly 70% more likely to give a second donation if they used a branded page the first time they made a contribution.<sup>9</sup>

## 6. Adjust Your Giving Levels

Appeal to particular cohorts of supporters without inadvertently downgrading larger donors with a few easy approaches.

Before sending out your email series, segment your donor base by average gift amounts. Whip up customized donation forms with specific messaging for each group and adjust the suggested giving level options accordingly.

The image shows a mobile-optimized donation form for 'STEPPING HOME'. The form is titled 'Cheers to New Beginnings!' and asks 'How often would you like to donate?' with a dropdown menu set to 'One-Time'. Below this, it says 'Choose a one-time amount' and displays five buttons: '\$500', '\$250' (highlighted in red), '\$100', '\$50', and '\$25'. There is a link 'Donate a custom amount'. A checkbox is checked for 'Dedicate my donation in honor or in memory of someone'. Below that, it asks 'Would you like to credit this donation to a specific fundraiser or team (optional)?' with a text input field. At the bottom, there are four payment method buttons: 'DONATE WITH Google Pay', 'PayPal', 'CREDIT CARD', and 'BANK ACCOUNT'. The form is branded with the 'STEPPING HOME' logo and 'powered by Classy' at the bottom.

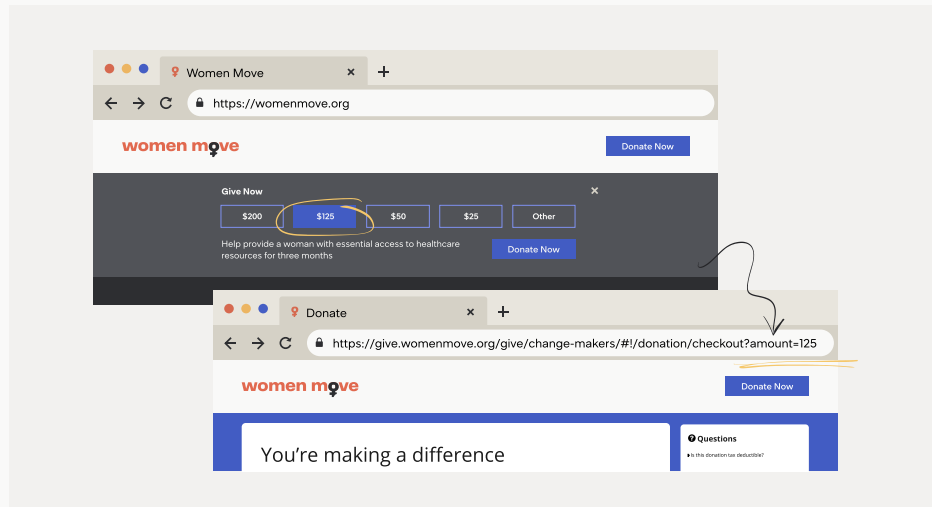
<sup>9</sup> Giv, "Fundraising Statistics: Incredible Insights to Raise More [Updated for 2021]." <https://www.qgiv.com/blog/fundraising-statistics/>



### TRY IT ON CLASSY

On Classy, you can create as many custom donation pages as needed in order to optimize your donor experience. Our tools also allow you to add [pass-through parameters](#) to the end of your donation website address to offer more control over the suggested donation amounts that display.

Average gift size tends to increase during the holidays, so provide a default suggested donation amount per segmented group to encourage an upgrade, or add pass-through parameters to the URL to encourage a particular giving level. By some accounts, the average online gift size **more than doubles** during the month of December!<sup>10</sup>



Whatever giving levels you suggest, keep an eye on your conversion rates to see how they perform. Classy offers an integration with [Google Analytics](#) that allows you to track conversions and see what your supporters are responding to.

<sup>10</sup> NP Engage, “5 Facts About Online Average Gift Size”.  
<https://npengage.com/nonprofit-fundraising/5-facts-about-online-average-gift-size/>

## 7. Acquire and Upgrade Recurring Donors

Take advantage of the organic influx of support that comes with the giving season to establish predictable funding for your mission and allow supporters to give effortlessly over time.

Acquiring new donors and upgrading existing ones can help establish a consistent stream of revenue, improve cash flow, and provide much needed support for the new year ahead.

### To gain new recurring donors, consider these acquisition tactics:

- Identify repeat supporters with donor insight reports, like [Classy's Returning One-Time Donors Report](#)
- Thank donors for getting involved in previous Giving Tuesday or end-of-year campaigns and include a recurring donation CTA to encourage ongoing support
- Send targeted appeals based on existing donor data so each message sounds like it was written specifically for that reader
- Present your donors with [multiple frequencies](#) to give (e.g. annual, semi-annual, quarterly, monthly, or daily)
- Use our [Donation Page Checklist](#) to optimize your recurring donation form

**183%**

YoY growth in recurring donations on Classy in the last three quarters of 2020 and first quarter of 2021.<sup>11</sup>

**23%**

of one-time donors who start a recurring gift subscription go on to make an additional one-time gift on top of their regular donation.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Classy, *Impact Report 2021*.  
[https://learn.classy.org/rs/673-DCU-558/images/classy\\_impact-report-2021.pdf](https://learn.classy.org/rs/673-DCU-558/images/classy_impact-report-2021.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Classy, *The State of Modern Philanthropy: Future-Proof Your Fundraising*.  
<https://learn.classy.org/the-state-of-modern-philanthropy-2021.html>

**To upgrade existing recurring donors, include these elements in your email appeal:**

- **Clear explanation** of how each dollar makes a difference
- **Thank you for all previous gifts**, and an ask to recommit at a higher recurring amount
- **Detailed list of all donor perks** and incentives

The lifetime value of recurring donors is **440% greater** than one-time donors,<sup>13</sup> which is why dedicating a portion of your end-of-year appeals to growing your recurring giving program is so valuable.

## 8. Measure and Learn From Your Results

Year-end is the time to take a closer look at metrics and performance to get ahead of your goals for the new year. Make every campaign more successful by collecting, measuring, and analyzing the right data.

**For your email campaign, try tracking:**

- Email open and click-through rates
- Total amount of money raised from email appeals\*
- Number of new donors acquired\*
- Number of upgraded donors\*
- Percentage of existing donors who gave again
- Average donation size
- Conversion rate on each donation page

\*Overall and through each donation form

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<sup>13</sup> Classy, *The Ultimate Guide to Recurring Giving*.  
<https://learn.classy.org/guide-recurring-giving>

**For your general website, try tracking:**

- Sources of visits that result in donations
- Conversion rate on your main form
- Average gift size
- Percentage of new vs. existing donors

Nonprofits have access to many software solutions that can help track these metrics and several others. From email marketing tools like MailChimp or ConstantContact, to free tools like Google Analytics, you can gain valuable insights that will help you improve your campaign and understand current successes and shortcomings.



**TRY IT ON CLASSY**

Classy offers thoughtful [integrations](#) with MailChimp, ConstantContact, and Google Analytics so your team can take a deeper look at conversion rates, streamline your data analysis, and develop custom experiences with ease.



**Once you have the data in front of you,  
ask yourself these questions:**

- Which channel brought in the most donors?
- If you sent out multiple emails, which one secured the most donations?
- Did donors easily find their way from the email appeal to your checkout page?
- How often did they complete the transaction process?

## **9. Keep the Momentum Going Through the New Year**

Seasoned fundraisers know that year-end campaigns don't end in January. Campaign follow up is the most crucial element to setting up long-term success for your organization.

An automated thank you email immediately following each donation is critical, but don't forget to launch a formal follow-up campaign in the weeks after. This additional touchpoint allows you to interact on a more meaningful level with each donor and preview what's ahead for the coming year.



**Here are 15 ideas for content to include in your follow-up campaign:**

- 1. An annual impact report** to demonstrate what your organization has accomplished
- 2. A visualization** of how the money raised during your campaign will be distributed and used
- 3. Examples of direct impact** your year-end campaign will have on your organization
- 4. Total amount raised** through your campaign and events
- 5. Total number of new and existing supporters** that came together for your cause
- 6. Examples** of how funds have already been used
- 7. Examples** of how funds will continue to be used throughout the year
- 8. Your goals** for the upcoming year
- 9. Sign up opportunities** to get early updates on new campaigns
- 10. A feedback form** to gain first-hand insight on your donor experience
- 11. A detailed message** of appreciation for your donors
- 12. Social assets** for donors to share their impact with friends and family
- 13. Upcoming events,** campaigns, or volunteer opportunities
- 14. An ask to subscribe** to your blog and newsletter, and to follow you on social media
- 15. A compelling CTA** to turn their one-time gift into a recurring donation

Celebrate the milestones your community achieved together, reinforce how donors directly contribute to the success of your organization, and include why and how they should continue to be involved in your mission.



**04**

# **Lean Into DIY Peer-to-Peer Fundraising**

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## In addition to your year-end crowdfunding campaign, what if you gave your donors a way to make an even bigger impact?

Empower your volunteers, ambassadors, board members, and loyal supporters to fundraise on your behalf by promoting your existing year-round peer-to-peer campaign, or launching one this giving season if you don't already have one in place.

## Support Your Fundraising Goals With This Additional Revenue Stream

[DIY fundraising](#) takes the form of a traditional peer-to-peer campaign, but without the pre-set end date. Create and share a branded campaign page on your website, and invite fundraisers to build customized fundraising pages from that foundation to reflect their personal goals.

The best part is that once you've set up your peer-to-peer campaign, you can let it run as long as you'd like as an additional stream of revenue to support your goals.

Let's consider the numbers. On average, an individual fundraiser on Classy will raise \$475, and **4 out of 5 donors acquired** by individual fundraisers are brand new to the organization.<sup>14</sup>

That means if just ten people created individual fundraising pages for your campaign that motivated five of their closest friends to donate, you get your cause in front of 40 new donors with minimal effort.

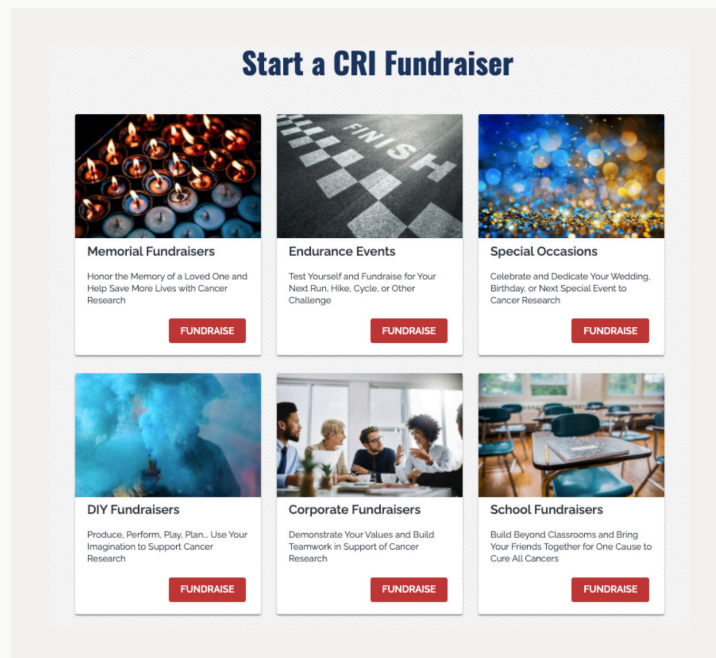
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<sup>14</sup> Classy, *The State of Modern Philanthropy: Future-Proof Your Fundraising*. <https://learn.classy.org/the-state-of-modern-philanthropy-2021.html>

## How to Get Your DIY Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Campaign Up and Running

If you already have a year-round fundraising campaign in place, simply email your supporters, direct them to your website, and ask them to create a personal fundraising page for the giving season.

The Cancer Research Institute offers six year-round options for their fundraisers to select from. Once they choose an option, such as “Special Occasions,” the prompt to start a personal fundraising page pops up.



If you haven’t already established a year-round fundraising campaign, launch one this giving season to capture donations from people who are ready to give. Once it’s live, let it be an ongoing fundraising strategy to help support your efforts during low-traffic times and supplement your future year-end fundraising campaigns.

Here are a few DIY peer-to-peer campaign elements we recommend getting started with:

- Create a clear custom headline
- Include two calls to action (to fundraise and to donate)
- Maintain brand consistency on your parent campaign
- Hide the progress bar
- Display a leaderboard



#### PRO TIP

Tailor the messaging and themes of your DIY peer-to-peer campaign around the holidays to optimize supporters' experiences and maximize the chances of their involvement.

## Motivate Your Supporters to Raise More on Classy

### Classy for Facebook

Our [Classy for Facebook integration](#) allows fundraisers to duplicate their personal fundraising page to Facebook in just a few clicks, enabling your nonprofit to raise more for your mission. Your fundraisers can then earn donations through their Classy fundraising page and their Facebook fundraising page, with the campaign progress remaining in sync.

## Milestone Emails

[Amount Raised Milestone Emails](#) allow you to automatically send an email to fundraisers when they raise a specific amount to thank and encourage them. Simply enter the target amount you want to trigger the email and let Classy do the rest.

[Percentage of Goal Milestone Emails](#) send an automatic thank you to fundraisers when they raise a specific percentage of their fundraising goals. Once you enter the target percentage you would like to trigger the email, you're all set.

As you move deeper into the campaign, increase communication with the people that are actively raising money for you. Call your top fundraisers, thank them for all that they've done so far, and motivate them to cross their fundraising finish line.



**05**

**Close Out  
the Year With  
an Event to  
Remember**



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Hosting a special holiday-themed event during a time when people love to get out and give back can be an exhilarating way to kick off your campaign. In this section, we'll go through tips, strategies, and best practices to up-level your event, whether it's hybrid, virtual, or in-person.

## Define Your Objective and Audience

Everything you do for your event should ladder back up to a clearly-defined goal. Start by identifying the “why” behind your event and determining what experience you hope to provide your attendees.

### Defining your event's intention and purpose will help you:

- Determine the format of your event (hybrid, virtual, or in-person)
- Identify a target audience to invite
- Tailor a theme that will help you achieve your objective
- Boost attendance rates, donation volume, and donor acquisition

### Some holiday-themed event ideas might be:

- Holiday galas
- A toy drive or virtual sale
- Themed runs or walks
- A New Years Eve dinner or happy hour
- Holiday concert

Specific objectives help you attract the right audience and establish the appropriate details for your event. If you're going hybrid or fully virtual, identify which type of event would do the best in an online environment. Concerts, endurance events, and dinners are great options, but don't be afraid to try something new.

## **Always Offer a Virtual Fundraising Option for Holiday Events**

Virtual fundraising events allow organizations to break through geographic limitations and engage new and existing donors around the world.

As the industry plans for a world where in-person events and community engagement opportunities are once again possible, it's essential to remember that virtual fundraising options should remain a key component of your year-end strategy.

### **Virtual fundraising allows your nonprofit to experience:**

- Broad participation on a global scale
- A wealth of data to track attendee interactions and online donations
- New content-sharing opportunities
- Low overhead expenses
- Increased awareness of your mission

In Classy's [2020 Why America Gives](#) report, 30% of survey respondents said they supported or participated in a virtual charity event since the start of the pandemic. Of those respondents, 60% said they donated and/or raised more in the virtual environment than they have for past in-person events.<sup>15</sup>

Engage both in-person and virtual audiences by livestreaming particular elements of your event on platforms like Facebook live, Youtube live, Fondi, and Zoom, or creating an in-person incentive for top fundraisers, like a concert or holiday party.

Capitalize on the virtual trend by reaching a wider audience online, boosting your visibility, and continually expanding your reach.

## Invite Donors to Fundraise for Your Event

Empowering your event attendees to fundraise on behalf of your organization is a great way to multiply your revenue potential.

Classy's [registration with fundraising campaign type](#) can help you do just that. Enable [fundraising commitments](#) to challenge your supporters to raise a specific amount by a specific date. If they don't hit that number with donations from family and friends, they can cover the difference.

Fundraising pages, generally, deliver much higher returns than a flat registration fee. In fact, an event typically raises **4.5 times more** when attendees are activated as fundraisers in registration with fundraising campaigns.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, this fundraising model regularly introduces new donors to your organization whom you can nurture and steward into lifelong supporters.

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<sup>15</sup> Classy, *Why America Gives 2020*.  
<https://learn.classy.org/report-why-america-gives-2020-charitable-giving-trends.html>

<sup>16</sup> Classy, *The State of Modern Philanthropy: Future-Proof Your Fundraising*.  
<https://learn.classy.org/the-state-of-modern-philanthropy-2021.html>

Remember, a person can only give so much on their own. You can enable supporters to raise a lot more when you equip them with the right fundraising tools. To assist with participants' success, create a fundraiser toolkit that provides each supporter with the guidance they need to register, create their fundraising page, engage their network, and reach their goals.

**Here are a few key items to include in your fundraiser toolkit:**

- Step-by-step instructions on how to set up a fundraising page
- High-level tips for success
- Storytelling examples
- Key messages ready for social media
- Email templates
- Outreach tips
- Stewardship tactics
- Contact information and FAQs

## **Focus on Post-Event Tactics to Keep Donors Engaged**

The value of a holiday event extends far beyond the live engagement itself. Repurpose your event data, content, and donor insights to steward relationships with your supporters, grow your presence on social media, and create new touchpoints to engage, educate, and retain donors far past year-end.

## Send a Timely, Sincere Thank You

Boost your donor retention by sending a thank-you email immediately after the event. Although seemingly basic, donors are more likely to return to give again when they feel acknowledged and appreciated.

**When crafting your follow-up email, be sure to include:**

- A summary of the campaign results  
(e.g. total amount raised, number of donors, top donors)
- Photos or videos from the event
- A sincere thank you for their gift
- A CTA to make another donation or stay engaged  
with your nonprofit (e.g. follow on social media)

## Lean Into Social Media

A holiday event provides ample new content for your team to repurpose across social media. Capture this opportunity to re-engage your donors post-event by exploring a few of these simple ideas:

- **Give a shoutout to top donors** across your accounts, and be sure to send them a meaningful direct message
- **Publish your fundraising results** and congratulate those who helped you achieve your goal
- **Thank your sponsors** to emphasize their impact and motivate them to continue supporting your mission
- **Create a highlight reel** of your event's most compelling moments
- **Share testimonials and quotes** from event attendees to gain additional exposure

## Build a Post-Event Landing Page

Create a single landing page to share all of your campaign results, photos, videos, and key event information. If you plan to host this campaign again next year, keep the landing page up year-round to encourage registration. Include a call to action to encourage attendees to follow you on social media for year-end fundraising updates, and to consider a recurring donation to make their gift go further.





**06**

## **Running Out of Time?**

**Here's How to  
Maximize Year-  
End Revenue in  
Just 10 Days**

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**If you're pressed for time or resources, we've got a full list of quick-win activities your nonprofit can take to see some year-end returns.**

## **Optimize Your Donation Form for Year-End**

Create a high-performing donation form to tell a compelling story about your mission that reinforces people's desire to give and helps supporters feel more connected to your cause.

**To optimize your donation page for conversion, be sure to:**

- Maintain brand consistency with your typical colors, voice, and tone
- Include custom, high-quality visuals
- Use clear and concise messaging to explain your mission
- Customize your suggested donation values
- Include a recurring giving donation option
- Offer your donors multiple ways to give (e.g. ACH, credit card, digital wallets like Apple Pay and Google Pay, PayPal, Venmo)
- Allow donors to cover a portion of their transaction fees
- Customize your email receipts to reflect your cause



To further optimize your form, consider enabling [domain-masking](#) to reflect your brand. Our customers can hide the domain name of their Classy campaigns and replace it with one of their choosing.

You can also allow donors to dedicate their gifts in honor or memory of someone, and offer them the option to send a postal notification, eCard, or email to the honoree.

## Send a Quick Two-Part Email

If you find yourself scrambling to put together a multi-part email series, don't worry. There's a shortcut you can take.

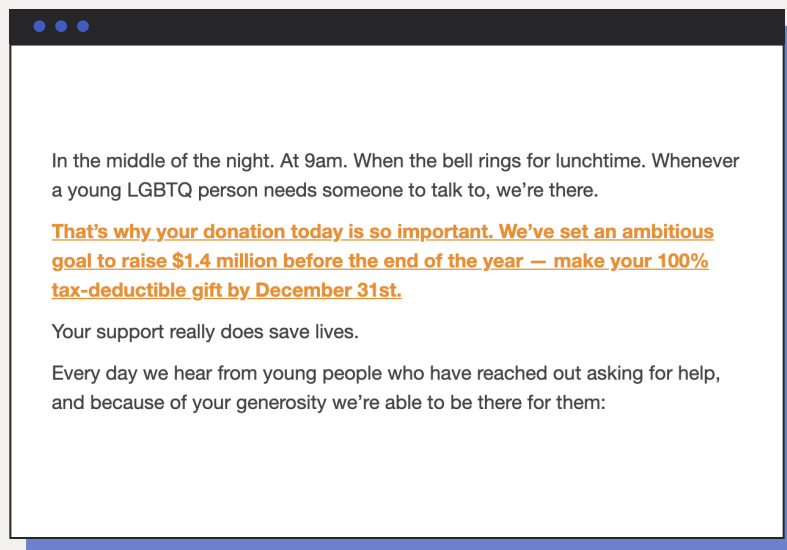
Drive supporters to your donation form with just two powerful emails.

**Email 1:** Define your year-end fundraising goal and use the time crunch to your advantage to entice donations with a sense of urgency. Make your call to action clear and concise to eliminate any doubt on how to make a gift.

**Email 2:** This is where you want to get right to the point and reserve email real estate for impact. Bring forward any images of beneficiaries or a personal story for this send, attached to a "last-minute chance to give" message to close out the year. It's a good time to remind donors of their last opportunity to nail down tax-deductible donations.

The key to this two-part approach is making each email a seamless extension of the other. If your first message shared the story of a particular beneficiary with photos or video, carry the visuals over to your second email. Write a short message reflecting the initial narrative and remind donors it's their last chance to contribute.

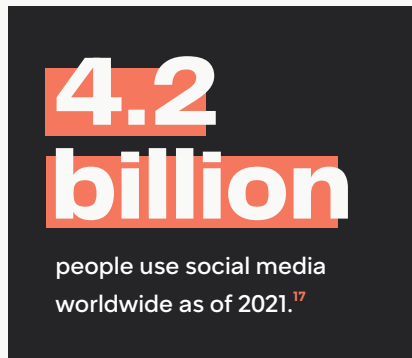
Take this example from **The Trevor Project**. This last-chance call to give is clear and straightforward and reminds donors that there's a sense of urgency behind their ask.



**Consider a few of these best practices when crafting your email subject lines to increase open rates:**

- Keep it short
- Emphasize a sense of urgency
- Show the value of your donor
- Include a number
- Pick the right time to send

## Lean Into Social Media



You're tight on time, and today's consumers love short-form content on social media. That sounds like a win-win for a big impact heading into the final months of the year.

Consider creating graphics that tell a supporter all about your cause and incorporate live video from volunteers, staff, top donors, and beneficiaries to entice others to donate. All you need is an established donation form and website URL to place within each of your posts to drive a strong impact.

Increase your posting cadence the week leading up to Giving Tuesday to boost visibility of your fundraising efforts and get donors excited. You could even place a countdown on your Instagram stories, allowing donors to set a reminder and get an alert when your campaign is live.

The best part about a social strategy is that it lends itself to timely posting. The best results will come from your posts on Giving Tuesday or the last days of December. No one will think about how far out you might have planned your content.

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<sup>17</sup> Hubspot, *The Digital 2021 Global Overview Report*.  
<https://blog.hootsuite.com/simon-kemp-social-media/>

<sup>18</sup> Classy, *The State of Modern Philanthropy 2020*.  
<https://go.classy.org/reports/the-state-of-modern-philanthropy-2020>



**07**

**Take Action**

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**Year after year, the giving season remains the most active time for nonprofits. With these tips in hand, you will be able to capitalize on this brief period to elevate your impact and maximize your year-end fundraising potential.**

And remember, keep your supporters updated with additional events and campaigns, encourage them to stay involved, and keep the fundraising excitement alive well into the new year.





# Email Templates for Giving Tuesday Through Year-End

Use these email templates to craft an efficient email marketing strategy for year-end.

[Get the Email Templates](#)

*Classy*