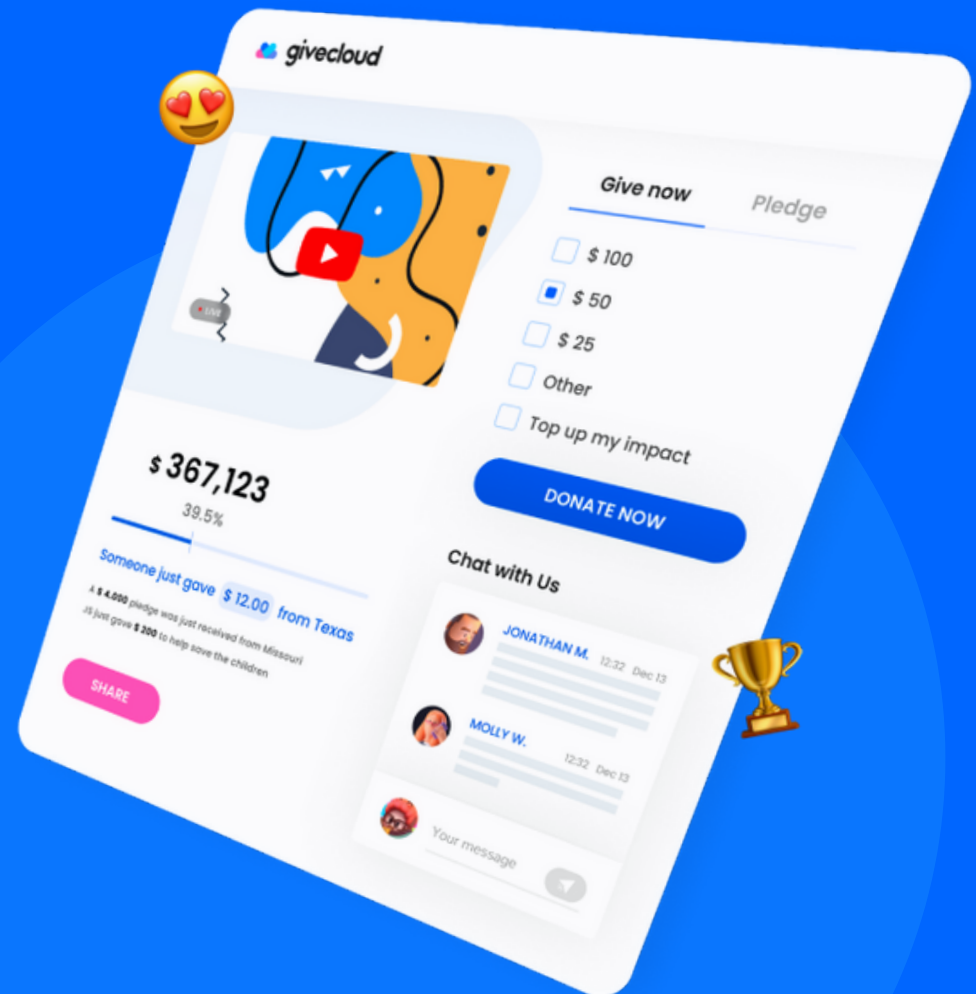


How To Run A Successful Virtual Event



BROUGHT TO YOU BY



givecloud

Are you planning an online gala, generosity party, or concert?

Turn these fundraising events into high-impact opportunities. Engage and excite your supporters like never before through **virtual events!**

Imagine an all-in-one fundraising page where donors can watch, give, engage, celebrate, connect, and share.

THIS E-GUIDE INCLUDES

- How a virtual event can help you boost donations and build trust
- How to decide what kind of virtual event you want to host and the best way to deliver it
- A step-by-step guide for developing your virtual event
- A communication checklist you can use for any virtual event

Why Virtual Events?

Why Virtual Events?

Virtual events enable you to expand your reach and boost impact. With effective marketing, you can access and engage donors that may not have been able to participate in-person due to their geographic location or other challenges.

This means your nonprofit can raise more by reaching more!

Plus, hosting fundraising events is also one of the most effective ways to increase donor retention. Virtual events provide an opportunity for like-minded, passionate advocates from around the world to connect with each other.

These experiences help your organization build connection, loyalty, and trust among supporters.

Virtual events are an opportunity to break down barriers and truly connect with anyone that shares a passion for your cause.

Step-By-Step Guide For Developing Your Virtual Event

Decide What Kind Of Virtual Event You Want To Host

As you're trying to decide what type of virtual event to hold, set a clear goal for why you're hosting one to begin with. Here are some examples:

Raise \$10,000 for our charity to provide [x] services.

Recruit 100 new donors.

Retain 200 engaged donors.

Renew 25 lapsed donors.

Recover 100% board involvement in giving.

Share our story with x more people.

Decide What Kind Of Virtual Event You Want To Host

CONTINUED

Next, ask yourself:

Who's attending?

Understanding your virtual event audience will help you create the event of their dreams.

This is why donor data is key! Run reports in your database to get an idea of what your donors are interested in.

Let's say your main goal is to retain 200 of your most engaged donors from the last 12 months. Run a report in your CRM with their fundraising event history and demographic information.

Past giving will clue you in on what types of events they have enjoyed the most, such as galas or endurance events. Review demographic information, such as their age and location, to tailor the event even more.

If your donor base could spend virtual time with your organization doing anything, what would it be? What types of events would get your target audience excited? You want them to see your virtual event as a can't-miss opportunity.

Determine The Best Way To Deliver Your Event

There are lots of different formats for delivering live event content.
Here are two of the most common:

LIVE STREAM VS. PRE-RECORDED

This one really depends on your comfort level. If your team can script a live event and has the technology to pull it off, live streaming can be a lot of fun for donors. Pre-recorded video is recommended for those who are less comfortable engaging live or new to online events. This allows you to create compelling videos beforehand, so you can work out any kinks without donors ever knowing.

STREAMING VS. ON-DEMAND

Streaming means your event is available live on a specific day and time. This is the way to go for one-time events with speakers. On-demand means your event is available for a certain timeframe, and donors can watch and support your cause whenever they want. These events are a great option for virtual summits or conferences that can be watched over and over again.

Keep in mind that any live-streamed event can be recorded and leveraged as on-demand content.

Determine The Best Way To Deliver Your Event

CONTINUED

Regardless of which virtual event format you choose, make sure to test your “venue” ahead of time! Consider these top tips:

Include a calendar invite in your invitation email.

Test your format at least 24-hours before the event and make sure all technology is working correctly.

Test all aspects including any linked donation pages, chats, etc.

Send donors email reminders 1 week before, 1 day before, and 1 hour before the event starts with your donation page link.

Email all registrants saying thank-you with a donation link and any on-demand content.

Set A Realistic Timeline

Typically, it takes **8–10 weeks** to prepare and execute a killer virtual event.

Plan the logistics of your live fundraiser with your team at least two months in advance. Include every step leading up to the event date in your plan. When event planning, use shared docs so all team members can easily access event information.

Not sure where to start?
We've included a
Communication Checklist on
page 23 that can be used to
boost any virtual event!

Develop Engaging Virtual Event Programming

CREATE AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE

The key to creating a lasting impression with your donors during a virtual event is to [build momentum every step of the way](#). Here are some ways you can build excitement:

- Send a personalized video invite to your top engaged donors through text or email.
- Create beautifully-branded giving pages, emails, website design, and social media posts.
- Include an event landing page (“virtual event lobby”) for attendees to mingle before your event kicks off.
- Thank your donors for their gifts in real-time as they give at your virtual event.

Develop Engaging Virtual Event Programming

CONTINUED

CONSIDER A KEYNOTE SPEAKER

In the world of virtual events, you may be surprised to find that the keynote speaker of your dreams is more attainable than ever before. Travel costs are no longer involved, so it may be in your budget to hire a keynote speaker to headline your event. Make a shortlist of speakers you want to invite, so you have a few different influencers you can reach out to.

A keynote speaker does not need to have celebrity status. Think about the primary objective of your virtual event and the audience you're expecting to attend. There are plenty of [thought leaders or online influencers](#) that can inspire and engage event attendees without breaking the bank.

Develop Engaging Virtual Event Programming

CONTINUED

CURATE COMPELLING CONTENT THAT PROVIDES VALUE TO DONORS

It isn't good enough to find the perfect platform, spread the word, and hire the headlining act. You need to **build memorable moments** into your virtual event programming to achieve the greatest impact. Your virtual event is a representation of your nonprofit and what it stands for, so make sure it embodies your mission.

You can also provide value to donors by understanding their circumstances. With limited attention spans and constant distractions at home, it's best to keep live stream events to one hour or less. Or, consider a day-long event with shorter sessions and a variety of speakers and segments.

Develop Engaging Virtual Event Programming

CONTINUED

GAMIFY THE EVENT

Gamify interactions to drive attendee engagement. Attending in-person events creates organic opportunities for donors to interact with one another, such as mingling at their tables. With virtual events, you have to create these moments.

You can gamify your virtual event through raffle prizes, silent auctions, team fundraisers, and award segments for top donors. A little laughter and a whole lot of fun will [create a lasting impression](#) for your attendees. Create contests, scavenger hunts, or trivia to encourage attendees to stay to the very end.

Setup A Remarkable Event Page

Your online event page can be the first and only impression your organization gets when someone is deciding whether or not to attend your event. Event organizers set the stage for donors to easily and enthusiastically say YES to attending your fundraising event. Your online event page should . . .

Outline important details of the event, such as the event lineup and sponsors.

Create an eye-catching header image or video.

(Did you know that featuring video content on your landing page could increase sales anywhere from 20% to 86%?)

Include contact info for your organization.

Have a clear call to action on a button (e.g., "Buy Tickets").

Be mobile-friendly and easy to share via email and social media.

Virtual Event Ticketing 101

Take Event Ticketing Above and Beyond

Configure the registration page to look clear and consistent with your organization's branding (e.g., custom fields, headings, images).

Easily track and export donor data, using audience data and check-in reports if you need to create lanyards, seating charts, or thank-you cards.

Create an automated, smooth process for attendees to cover service fees for you and get confirmation and tickets emailed right away. This makes it easy for donors to pull up your event link/code or scan a QR code to enter

Quick Tips For Determining Ticket Pricing to Drive Sales

For virtual fundraising events, less overhead costs means a lower ticket price (especially if you want attendees to donate at the event). Lower ticket prices for virtual events often means more new supporters from different locations will choose to attend.

Try [tiered pricing](#), so donors know they are welcomed at any giving level.

Offer [special deals](#) to keep sales peaking. It's common to sell lots of tickets when the event is first announced and then again right before the fundraising event actually happens.

Offer [strategic discounts](#) to keep ticket sales going in between these two sales peaks. Examples include group deals, location-based discounts, or raffle tickets.

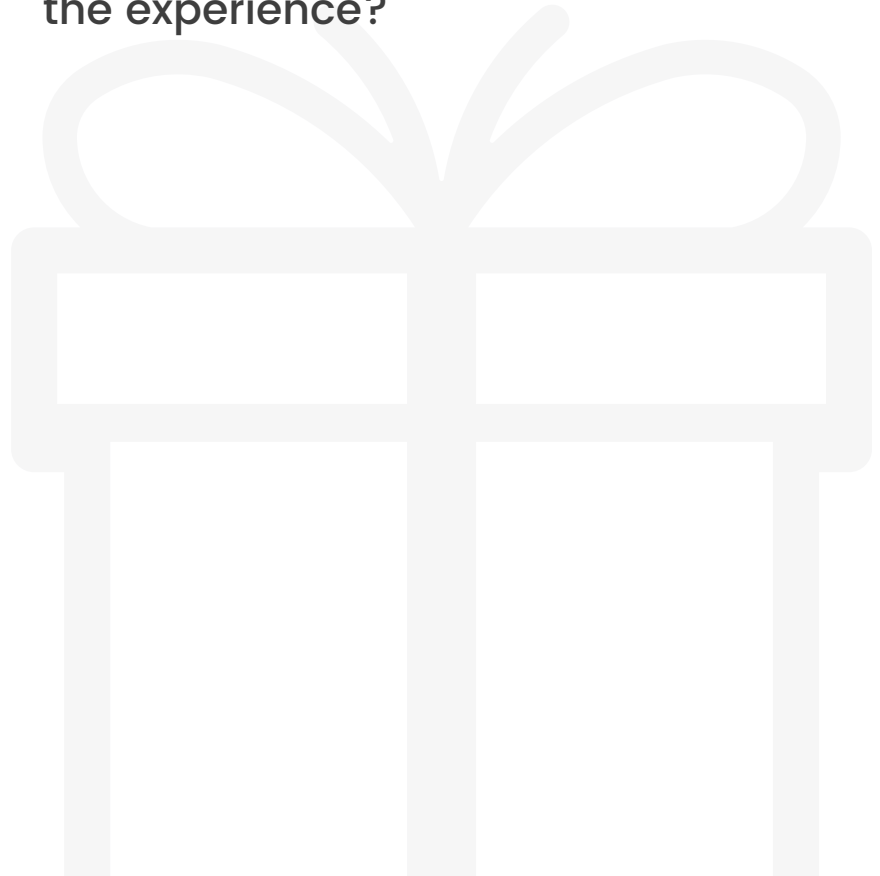
Quick Tips For Determining Ticket Pricing to Drive Sales

CONTINUED

You can also drive fundraising event ticket sales by [creating hype](#) around your event. The more popular supporters believe your event is, the more likely they are to be motivated to attend. Make sure they know that your fundraising event is a can't-miss!

Communicate scarcity (“Only X seats left!”) to encourage donors to act fast and snag a spot at your event. Referrals and the Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO) are powerful motivators, especially among younger generations.

Consider boosting excitement with offline content. Is it possible to develop gift boxes to be delivered to participant's homes that can augment the experience?



5 Best Practices For Ticket Sales

Check out these 5 best practices for ticket sales to close the deal:

#1

Have tickets **ready to purchase** as soon as you announce your event—even if you're still planning it! As soon as your supporters hear the announcement, more than one-third of them will be ready to purchase and would prefer to buy tickets as soon as they decide to.

#2

Use **email drip campaigns**. Organizations that use email drip campaigns see an increase in sales by 20%. Segment your emails by top categories such as active donors, lapsed donors, and volunteers. Then, be sure to set the event email series to exclude those who have already purchased tickets.

5 Best Practices For Ticket Sales

CONTINUED

#3

Leverage [social media](#). Create event promo tailored to each platform. If you have guest speakers, grow your reach by asking them to post about your fundraising event on their personal accounts and connecting with their audience.

#4

Write [compelling ticket descriptions](#).

Stay mission-centric and demonstrate the value of a ticket (“\$50 provides 10 meals for 1 child”).

Don’t forget to include clear instructions with all of the important details for your fundraising event (e.g., location, parking, login, password, attire, etc.).

#5

Try [early-bird pricing](#) and offer early adopters a 10–20% discount with a special promo code. Early ticket sales not only benefit your fundraiser, but it also builds momentum on your event page (“X tickets sold / X tickets left”).

Plus, capping your event at a certain number of attendees, even if it’s a digital fundraiser, creates a much-needed sense of urgency to drive ticket sales.

Put It Into Practice

When It's All Said And Done

Once your virtual event is over, take time to [reflect on how it went](#). Look at reports to understand your attendee's experience. Measure your success against your fundraising goals, and determine what you would do differently next time.

Within 24-hours, send four different event recaps and follow-ups:

- Attendees who donated
- Attendees who did not donate
- Non-attendees who donated
- Non-attendees who did not donate

Reflect on how the event went, thank your donors for their impact, and provide a different call to action based on which group you're talking to. For example, you could say, "There's still time to donate!" to those who attended but didn't donate or to those who couldn't attend.

For those who did attend, you could say, "Don't miss our next virtual event!" or invite them to stay connected with "Sign up for our newsletter!" or access a recording of the event with another opportunity to give.

[Download or print the next 2 pages to use as easy references when developing your next virtual event!](#)

Virtual Event Checklist

YOUR TOP TO-DO'S FOR EVERY VIRTUAL EVENT

READY ...

- Set your virtual event goals
- Decide what kind of event will best accomplish your goals
- Select the best platform for your event and all of the tech tools you will need



SET ...

- Set your timeline and plan everything that needs to get done leading up to your event date
- Develop engaging event programming
- Set up your event page and the platform you will be using
- Create a communication plan to spread the word



GO!

- Take event ticketing above and beyond
- Test everything and run through the tech with your team
- 3, 2, 1 ... Action!
- Review how your event went and debrief with your team



Communication Checklist

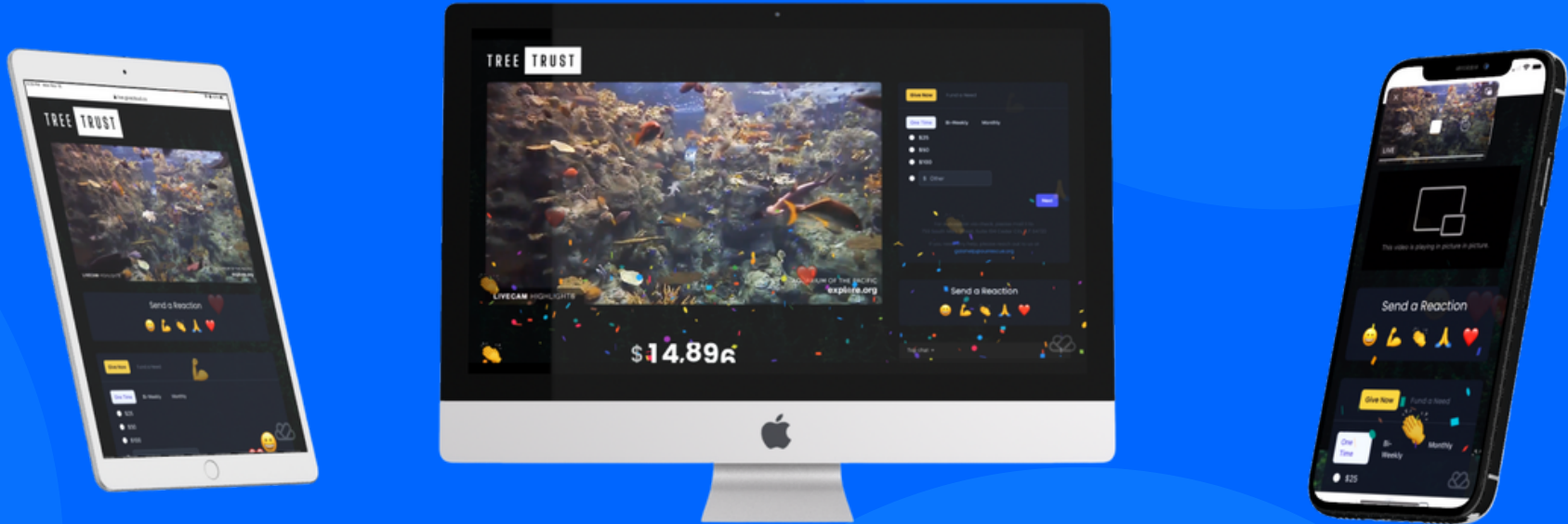
TO BOOST ANY VIRTUAL EVENT

BEFORE YOU LAUNCH	PRE-LAUNCH	ONCE YOU'RE LIVE	POST-CAMPAIGN
COMMUNICAITON GOAL			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a community of advocates Reach 25–30% of your campaign goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a communication timeline Schedule everything ahead of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor plan as it's implemented Engage with supporters to build community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate support, share impact of funds raised, and provide next steps
CHECKLIST			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design campaign page Reach out to campaign advocates Ask supporters to commit to giving early and sharing your campaign once it's LIVE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a timeline for campaign Choose campaign channels Draft and schedule all communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-launch Launch day Progress posts Final push 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage on social media 15–30 minutes every day Update scheduled posts as needed Create new posts to share between scheduled posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behind-the-scenes Thank donors Stretch goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate total raised and show appreciation Give supporters next steps Schedule email to demonstrate impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 month later 6 months later 1 year later

Ready to take a step into the new and exciting world of virtual fundraising events? The tools and support you need are right at your fingertips. At **Givecloud**, we will be there every step of the way, helping you minimize cost and maximize donor engagement. Bring your fundraising event to the next level with our new, all-in-one [Virtual Events by Givecloud](#).

Our Virtual Events feature motivates generosity like never before:

- **Livestream your fundraiser globally and expand your reach**
- **Accept payments directly through the broadcast Create excitement with a live ticker, progress bar, and confetti**
- **Engage and energize with emoji reactions Enable live chat for even more robust interactions**



The best part? The entire process can be created on Givecloud —from ticket sales, to registration confirmation emails, to tax receipts after a donation is made during an event.

Say goodbye to depending on several different platforms to pull off your virtual event. Say hello to one simple control panel that can manage all of your day-to-day operations!

[Try Givecloud – It's Free!](#)