

How Design can help you maximize your fundraising on Giving Days

Let's start by answering the question...what is a Giving Day? For non-profit organizations, a giving day is a 24-hour fundraising period where you rally your donors around a particular cause or event, raising awareness and crucial funds. It is a day to create a sense of urgency around fundraising.

The most popular and well-supported giving day, #GivingTuesday, falls every year on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. While #GivingTuesday started as an American event in 2012, it now has international reach, with a record four million donors donating nearly \$380 million in 2018.

Integrating giving days into your overall fundraising campaigns is a good idea. A great one, actually. Imagine raising \$50,000, \$100,000, or more in just one day! With a well-planned and flawlessly executed giving day campaign, you can achieve this goal or whichever one you set for your organization. Here are a few ways you can do this by working closely with your design team:

- Include your web and graphic designers in the initial campaign planning stages. It may seem obvious, but you'd be surprised how often teams plan a fundraising campaign without thinking about design in the initial stages. You may have pie in the sky ideas for the website or an unrealistic timeframe for printed pieces. Including your design team at the onset will help you determine what is possible and in what timeframe it's doable.
- Set clear, realistic goals that align with your overall strategy and that can be measured for success. Design will differ depending on your giving day goals. Are you trying to acquire new donors, increase monthly recurring revenue, increase social media impressions, all, or none of the above? Whatever your goals, your design team can create pieces with them in mind by using appropriate photos, content, graphics, etc.
- Branding. Branding. Branding. Your Giving day campaign, whether it is an international, local or individual giving day, *must* be branded to the nines. On international and even local giving days, some donors will receive dozens of solicitation emails so yours have to stand out. Your designer should brand your emails, social media, ads, etc. so that it is easy to spread the word about your campaign. This should include a name for the day (if it's an organization-specific giving day) and a hashtag to include on social media. Your brand and message should be cohesive and carry over from your website to your email to your social media content all the way to any live installations you manage to secure with a corporate partner.
- For giving day campaigns, it is important to create separate donation pages branded specifically to the giving day. This makes it easier to track donations and metrics.

Your design team can include certain elements like a 24-hour countdown clock (a great way to create a sense of urgency and excite supporters to get involved), ongoing fundraising progress, separate peer-to-peer fundraising pages, a donation-matching module, and as always, an easy way to become a recurring donor.

- Every giving day campaign needs compelling content to generate social media interaction, drive engagement, and bring in donations. Your giving day content should be a fresh mix of video, photos, e-Card images for dedicated gifts, infographics with compelling data, and specific social media images.
- Have fun! On your team and with your donors. Giving Days can be super stressful so let your designers help you put the fun back in fundraising by designing interactive activities or games to use on social media. Have fun with it and remember to give a special shout out to the winners.

Taking the time to plan your giving day campaign can go a long way towards its overall success. Don't forget to thank the donors that supported you on this very important day. While many donors might be long-term supporters, it's likely that you will gain a few first-time supporters during your giving day. Thanking these donors and following-up with other engagement opportunities is a great way to build lasting relationships. When thanking your donors, be sure to include how much was raised and the impact their support will have on your work.

Finally, compare your results to your goals, determine what worked and what can be improved upon, and start your planning for next year's successful giving day!

About the Author

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Karen is a Communications Professional, Copywriter and Editor with 15 years of experience in the non-profit sector. She creates strategy and content to help businesses and organizations engage and retain donors, increase fundraising, boost conversions, and more.