

Title:

The Importance of Location in Fundraising

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Summary:

There are few things that are more important than location. It not only applies to real estate, but to fundraising too. Here are some tips to expand your horizons when trying to maximize your fundraising efforts.

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Article Body:

Location, Location, Location!

There are few things that are more important than location. It not only applies to real estate, but to fundraising too. Here are some tips to expand your horizons when trying to maximize your fundraising efforts.

Traditionally, fundraising efforts are concentrated on:

- Friends
- Neighbors
- Relatives
- Co-workers

Besides the usual suspects, there is a whole lot of money in other places right under your nose.

You have to go where the money is. The big money in fundraising is being located where people are shopping. They are out and about with cash or checkbooks in hand.

There's no better time than that for offering a quality fundraising product at these locations:

- Drugstores
- Home Improvement Stores
- Grocery Stores
- Shopping Malls

Drugstores - Nice entry-level sales spot. Generally have good sidewalk space

available.

Home Improvement Stores - Big weekend traffic spots. Lots of do it yourselfers diving in to their next project.

Grocery Stores - Prime hunting grounds for product fundraisers. A small, high-quality food item does real well here.

Shopping Malls - Hard to get approval for outside space, but a location near the food court is golden.

And don't forget the 800-pound gorilla: Wal-Mart - The Holy Grail of fundraising locations. A day spent fundraising in front of this high-traffic retailer is like being in fundraising heaven. You'll have more potential prospects than you can shake a stick at.

Because of the sheer volume of Wal-Mart shoppers, you'll need oversize signage to get your fundraising message across quickly before your prospects hurry on in

Casing the Joint Ahead of Time

You want the best location for your weekend fundraising table. Scope out the lay of the land. Check which entrance gets the most foot traffic.

Find out who is in charge at this location. Often it's the store manager, but occasionally it might require approval from the regional manager or shopping center management. Don't expect them to drop everything to speak with you. If necessary, set up an appointment to seek permission

Be prepared with a two-minute overview of

Who - Tell them who you (and your group) are

What - Describe what your fundraiser involves

When - Have a primary date and an alternate one picked out

Where - Identify the exact spot you'd like to use

Why - Give the specific reason you are raising funds

How - Summarize your proposed activities at their location

It's a good idea to have everything written up in a well-prepared letter. Stick to the basics as described above. If you have group letterhead, use it!

Make sure that everything will go smoothly. Ask for the name of the contact person for your chosen date. Get permission, preferably in writing, just in case the weekend manager didn't get the memo.

Setting Up for the Big Job

After you've cased the joint, you want to be prepared to pull off your fundraising bank job.

Location - There is often a separate set of entrance doors. You want to stake your claim right there. There should also be plenty of room for people to get by.

Signage - Look for good places to hang your signs and posters. They should be bright and bold with wording visible from thirty feet away. Highlight major benefits of the product and be sure to identify your purpose

Table Space - You want a large folding table, preferably 36x72. Place folding chairs on the side away from the door. Use a full-sized tablecloth to improve presentation.

Staffing - Schedule your fundraising teams with overlapping adult/child pairs. You want two adults and two children covering each 90-minute shift. Stagger the start/departure times by 30 minutes to avoid resource shortages.

Pulling It Off

To really break the bank, you have to have everything well planned. Timing and presentation are everything. You only have 30 seconds to capture your prospects attention and convince them to stop. Your fundraising should be well thought out in these areas:

Product - Make sure to choose a high-profit, cash and carry fundraiser. Fast food discount cards are excellent. So are quality food items such as cookies and gourmet treats like fudge. Sales items should be small, highly portable, and attention getting in their own right.

Samples - Product samples should be well-displayed and readily offered to each prospective client. In the case of food items, plates or trays of small nibble-sized morsels should be offered by the children involved.

Presentation - Sell the sizzle, not the steak! Accentuate product benefits, not features. Would you rather have a juicy, mouth-watering, flame-broiled Whopper or a hamburger?

Sales Patter - Talk a good game! Work from a loose script. Write down your best talking points as itemized bullets. Keep it short and simple. Tell them about your cause and be sure to ask for their help

Location Wrap

As you've seen, a great location delivers hundreds of potential customers right to you. All you have to do is stake your claim to the prime turf and go for it!

Don't wait for your next fundraiser to suddenly grow wings. Plan ahead and pull off your own bank job instead.

Maximize your fundraising success with location, location, location!