

Title:

Oh, No! Another School Fundraiser!

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Summary:

If you have children still attending school, then you probably know all too well the feeling you get when you receive a flyer stating the need for yet another fundraising event! That horrible feeling in the pit of your stomach that says you're going to have to contribute in some way, ...

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Article Body:

If you have children still attending school, then you probably know all too well the feeling you get when you receive a flyer stating the need for yet another fundraising event! That horrible feeling in the pit of your stomach that says you're going to have to contribute in some way, either buying something you really don't need and really can't afford, or by donating hours of your time, hours that you don't have either.

But do not despair. Life for fundraising people has got easier because of the Internet, and with computers in general, as you can use the computer to make your life easier in many ways. You can document the jobs needed to be done by volunteers, you can email volunteers to keep them all informed of meetings, jobs and the like, and computers can help you keep track of donors, donations, and so much more.

The trick with fundraisers is to find something that people want to buy from you, either a product or a service, and that you want to sell and promote. And of course, if the event is because you are fundraising for your school, ideally it should be something that will inspire as many students as possible to participate.

That rules out the good old favourite bake sale, as it is hard to devote the time to helping preschoolers bake for a bake sale, but with so many food allergies around, and fear of food contamination, I think those days are over. I remember how awful I felt when I baked for the school fundraiser, only to find

that my daughters had bought the goods so they could see what mommy's baking tasted like! I must admit, baking didn't happen very often because of a shortage of time, but I didn't realize my family felt so deprived!

Then there are car washes, and this one I like because the time involved can be limited to one day, or one weekend, and the kids can take part themselves, under adult supervision of course. Kids love to get wet on a nice hot day, so summer car washes often work well, and aside from advanced advertising, there is not a lot of preparation to do in advance, and very few funds need to be spent on supplies.

There are school fairs that can be lots of fun and they can raise significant income, but the level of organization means it is not for everyone. And there are so many more options, too many to list here.

Ok, so how else can computers help you, other than with the organization of your fundraising events? There are websites out there that provide you with a ton of advice and loads of suggestions that you can look at to see what fundraiser best suits your group. They suggest how to go about organizing it, how to advertise and promote it to your best advantage. There's information about how to target your fundraiser, in other words, lots of information about aspects of fundraising that you may not have even considered in the past.

One of the problems I always encountered with fundraising, was that I provided some goods to sell, but then was expected to buy some at the event too, so it seemed like a double hit to me. Instead, see if there is a section of the community that you can target. For example, our daughters always did very well when they were collecting donations by standing outside a liquor store. I don't know whether it was a guilt thing or not, but people entering the liquor store seemed to give more readily than those entering a grocery store! (Not all municipalities permit this kind of fundraising, so you need to check first.)

You need to consider what your expenses will be especially those needed in advance of your fundraising. Do you have the funds to cover this? Is it worth paying for advertising? Is it worth mailing to companies to ask for donations, or to others to ask for support? Who is likely to support your fundraising cause? Are there others out there that could be reached? Easily?

Yes, it will take a little time to read all this information, but it can be well worth it, as it may save you from having to organize a second event if the first one does not raise the funds you need. It gets you thinking about who you can sell your goods or services to, other than those already involved in your organization, who will benefit from your product or service, and how you can

reach them without huge expense and without a huge commitment of time.

So get a coffee, take a deep breath and re-evaluate your school fundraiser!