

Title:

Selecting The Right Fundraiser

Word Count:

498

Summary:

How to advice on selecting the right fundraiser for school, church, or youth sports fundraising. Evaluation criteria and decision factors are provided to help you select the right fundraisers for your group.

Keywords:

fundraiser, fundraisers, fundraising, fundraising ideas

Article Body:

Selecting the right fundraiser is the most important decision you'll make. Among the key factors are the timing of your fundraisers each year, the quality of the merchandise, selling considerations, delivery considerations, and ultimately, the net profit to your organization.

Think of yourself as running a small business building a reputation for innovation and quality products. What are your financial goals versus expected unit volume numbers, sales revenue versus profit percentage, quality of goods versus cost, acceptable market price points, etc?

If you think like a business leader, then you're on the right track.

First choose a type of fundraiser

There are different types of "best" fundraisers and you have to select what's best for your organization at this particular time.

Your fundraising choices are:

- 1 - Event-based fundraisers
- 2 - Direct donation fundraiser
- 3 - Fundraisers with immediate product delivery
- 4 - Fundraisers with delayed product delivery

The first decisions you have to make are on the fundraiser category, selecting a fundraising company or distributor as your supplier, and then the actual fundraiser itself.

Decision factors

How do you make that decision? A professional fundraising consultant can often be a big help. You can also check the web, use your personal contacts, review your group's past records, etc. Most importantly, take some time to gather the information you need to make the right decision.

You can design a simple survey that you can give to past organizers and other key influencers such as local merchants and organizational leaders. Offer clear choices to ease evaluation of replies. Print it out and get quality feedback from within and without your organization on what's worked well before and what needs improving.

Then, put together a spreadsheet for evaluating and ranking fundraisers. Break the ranking criteria into categories with sub headings in text boxes across the spreadsheet. Numerical rankings should be assigned to what criteria are most important to your group at this particular time for this fundraiser.

Things to consider when evaluating offerings:

1. Quality of the merchandise items offered
2. Quality of support materials provided such as catalogs
3. References of supplier
4. Availability of free samples or catalogs
5. Service level of supplier such as pre-sorting goods, etc.
6. Hidden costs such as freight, paying for brochures, etc.
7. Hassle factors like replacement goods and refunds policies
8. Special delivery needs such as refrigeration for some foodstuffs
9. Specific needs of organization
10. Previous vs. projected financial performance

Seek wisdom from past experience

Results will vary with the amount of fundraisers done previously, number going on at same time (yours and others), time of year, etc. Look at this fundraiser in context of others - done this one before, done it every year, competing group just did it, or our cheerleaders did this one before and it was a big hit.

Successful past fundraising ideas could and should be repeated, but remember that your customer base is often close to eighty percent the same customers from year to year. Spice it up; try something new and different that will increase your revenue.