

Event Fundraising Ideas

General Raffle Guidelines

- According to IRS tax guidelines, raffles are not considered tax deductible donations.
- If hosting a large raffle (ie., a Grand Raffle), your state may require you to get a raffle permit.
- Tax receipts will not be provided by ALS TDI for raffle “purchases”
- You may adapt these raffles to meet the needs of your audience – the outlined ticket prices are only suggestions which have worked at previous events. A lot will depend on the number of people attending the event, attendee demographics, committee involvement, etc.

- **50/50**
 - Easy. Fun. People love doing it.
 - Give packets to volunteers/committee with a certain amount of tickets in each packet.
 - Sell one color of tickets for the first couple hours of the event. Do the drawing. Get people excited.
 - Sell the second color of tickets for the remainder of the event.
 - 5 tickets for \$20 is a good amount.
 - Do two drawings. One color earlier and another color later on.

- **100 for \$100**
 - Gift wrap 100 items (valued at \$100+).
 - Display items in two 6' by 6' wood frames attached to the wall, 50 gift boxes per frame.
 - Provide bid sheets for people to “purchase” them.
 - At check-out, they get their \$100 mystery item (nice items).
 - Goal: \$10,000.
 - This was just recently seen at an event in MN.
 - They sold 92 out of 100 items, raising \$9,200.

- **Balloon Raffle**
 - Get items such as gift cards, coffee mugs, jewelry, anything that can fit in a small bag—talk to friends who have gifts that are new and don't want.
 - Promote as items valued from \$10 - \$X dollars.
 - Put each item into a bag with tissue paper.
 - Put a label on each bag with numbers 1-200.
 - Get 200 balloons and tie a number (1-200) on each balloon.
 - People buy a balloon and get the corresponding number.
 - Sell them fast at the beginning of the night.

- **Blinking Buttons** (ie., Support ALS Research Magnetic Buttons)
 - Sell one for \$25 or 5 for \$100.
 - Each button is numbered on the back.
 - The buttons are worn to create “peer pressure” and a fun ambiance.
 - When purchased, a corresponding numbered chip is put into a raffle barrel.
 - The winning number is randomly chosen from the barrel.
 - The winner picks a live auction item prior to the start of the auction.

- No limit on the amount of money to be raised!
- An event can also make use of blinking buttons without the raffle, simply by giving them out in exchange for a donation made during the night or during an ask. Guests enjoy wearing them and it is easy to tell who has donated.

- **Champagne Raffle**
 - An idea if the committee can get a nice piece of jewelry donated (ie., diamond necklace, pearl necklace, etc.).
 - Expensive jewelry is difficult to sell on a live auction.
 - Have 200 champagne glasses ready on display.
 - Have bottles of champagne ready to be poured.
 - Post a sign next to the sales table with an explanation and the jeweler's name.
 - Sell tickets (\$25 or \$50 per ticket) for the chance to win the necklace. Every chance receives a glass of champagne.
 - Toss the tickets in a barrel once all tickets are sold, and draw the winner.
 - Have the jeweler pull the winner for good promotion and great exposure for the jeweler.
 - 2-part small forms needed (white is for the cashier, yellow is for the drawing) – purchaser prints their name, bid number and signs agreeing to pay regardless of winning.
 - 200 tickets at \$25 = \$5,000 or 200 tickets at \$50 = \$10,000.

- **Grand Raffle**
 - If the event will have a live auction, this is a must do.
 - Sell 100 tickets for \$100 (= \$10,000)!
 - Every ticket must sell before the live auction begins.
 - Prior to the start of the live auction, draw the winning "Grand Raffle" ticket.
 - Winner gets to choose any item off of the live auction.
 - If there are any live auction items to be excluded, make sure it is promoted in the program and by the auctioneer.

- **Hope Raffle (aka Chinese Raffle)**
 - We display approximately 20 items valued from \$250 - \$500 in our Hope Raffle.
 - Each item has a glass vase in front of it with the corresponding numbers.
 - Tickets are sold that evening near the Hope Raffle table and by floating volunteers.
 - The purchaser puts tickets into corresponding vases for the items they hope to win.
 - Each vase's numbers are tossed independently in a barrel and winners are drawn.
 - Have an easel with posters ready to enter the winners name or paddle number, or announce winners at a certain time.
 - Create packets for volunteers, family, committee members to sell tickets for the Hope Raffle ahead of time to their neighbors, colleagues, etc. All tickets must be received by the Hope Raffle committee two days ahead of time so tickets can be written out and dispersed properly.

- **Silent Auction**
 - Should be organized by categories (Gift Certificates, Travel & Leisure, Sports, Artwork, Home & Garden, Wine, Kids Corner, etc.).

- Stand-alone items are the easiest for the auction committee (ie., items that don't need to be packaged into a themed basket).
- However, it is good to have some themed baskets on display – variety, looks nice.
- Close categories at different times. Best sellers should go last.

- **Live Auction**
 - Professional Auctioneer makes all the difference.
 - Maximum number of live auction items = 35.
 - Trips, furniture, unique experiences, dog, items that are “special,” will generate most interest and highest bids.

- **Appeal for Research Dollars**
 - Someone talks about the cost of research—“\$100 for 1 minute of research.”
 - Pass out a form explaining research costs and asking for donations to pay for a certain number of minutes.
 - Print on a bright color.
 - Have volunteers “man” the tables and pick up forms from people who have completed the forms.
 - Straight cash – nobody is put on the spot.

- **52-card Raffles**
 - Depending on the demographics of the crowd, an organizer could have two or three 52-card raffles for an event.
 - Split up a deck of cards (52) and give each volunteer a determined number.
 - Have the auctioneer or the promoter explain how it works.
 - Sell 52 cards at \$50 or \$100 each (depending on what they can win and what the audience can handle)
 - When the sellers find someone interested, tear the card in half. Give the purchaser one side of the card. Seller writes their name or bid number on the other side of the card.
 - Putting some money out for the prize is ok since the organizer will know that they are going to raise \$5200 (assuming selling for \$100 – try to shoot for this amount).
 - Once all 52 cards are sold, hold the drawing.
 - Some ideas for items:
 - Large flat screen TV
 - Moped
 - (12) dinners for 4 at the area's nicest restaurants – Epicurean Package
 - 40 bottles of wine from around the world graded 93 or above
 - Be sure to keep organized and clearly announce what card won the item.

- **Wine Cellar Raffle**
 - Encourage every guest to bring a bottle of wine to the event via invitation and save the date.
 - When guests arrive, take each guest's bottle(s) of wine and give them a raffle ticket for each bottle of wine brought (or sell tickets for additional price).
 - At the end of the evening, decide on how many winners you want (1 or several) and divide the wine among the winners.

Other Helpful Hints

- Create a Committee.
- Each Committee should have specific responsibilities. (ie., decorations, desserts, historian, ad sponsorships, auction, corporate sponsorships, PR, finance, etc.).
- Encourage committee members to engage their neighbors, book club, office staff, family, etc. into sponsoring items for the hope raffle, live auction, silent auction, etc. Essentially, collect money from these groups of people and purchase an item on their behalf at a good price (on ebay, at Costco, at cost, etc.).
- Encourage committee members when having a birthday party, holiday party, etc. to say “in lieu of gifts” bring a donation for ALS TDI.
- Of course, get out in the community and procure donated items for the silent auction, live auction, etc.
- Sell Ad Sponsorships. This is the easiest money.
- Locate Corporate Sponsorships.
- Try to get everything donated – beer, wine, balloons, signage, music, auctioneer, etc.
- Collect from people items that they have received as gifts (brand new) that could be sold in the auction or put in the balloon raffle.
- Trips—do supporters, committee members, etc. have time shares, cottages, summer homes, ski homes, etc. that could be donated?
- Try to get “experience” items – something that you can’t put a price on. ie., concerts, meeting a famous person, attending the PGA, etc.
- RSVP cards should always say “I am unable to attend but wish to contribute \$_____.
- Include on the RSVP cards the opportunity to purchase Ad Sponsorships or Corporate Sponsorships.
- Committee names should always be on the invite, or invites should include personal notes so the recipient knows how they “got invited.”
- Each committee person or family member should submit a long list of people to invite. The larger the database the better – as they will likely collect many flat donations.
- Sending a save the date never hurts, especially when supplies are cost effective.
- Wouldn’t hurt when sending out the save the dates to include a letter about the patient or why the fundraiser is being held.