RAISING REVENUES: EVENTS & VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING

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chescocf.org/covid-19
## From Nonprofit Crisis Management Checklist: Raising Revenues

- **Stewardship has rarely been more important. Reach out and talk to major donors.**
- **Diversify revenue streams by seeking new sources of funding that will be available because of the pandemic. Keep an eye out for rapid-response funding efforts by foundations, United Ways, and others during this crisis, and apply as appropriate.**
- **Step up fundraising to respond to this crisis, recognizing that economic market decline and uncertainty will concern most donors. Listen to donors; let their feedback guide you as to when to restart the solicitation of both big and small gifts.**
- **Talk to foundation program officers, both those who have supported you and those who might. Seek to loosen restrictions on current grants to deal with this crisis.**
- **Design and implement virtual special events, to take the place of in-person fundraising events. Brainstorm ways to keep them fun and sociable online.**
- **Refine your longer term special events that require large in-person gatherings. Consider smaller groups and virtual options.**
- **Advocate before public officials to restore aid, provide new types of funding, or both.**
COVID-19 has drastically changed the way society must approach events & nonprofit fundraising.

- There is an increased demand for essential programs & services.
- Nonprofits are scrambling to raise the funds to operate.

*Our aim in this session:*

- Navigate event cancellation
- Explore event re-design
- Refine online fundraising options
1. STAY CALM & CONTINUE FUNDRAISING!!

- Let donors know how COVID-19 is affecting your nonprofit. Ask for what you need.
- Accept online donations. Make sure you are receiving, depositing, & thanking for checks.
- Use video acknowledgements, personal emails, hand-written notes, & phone calls to acknowledge contributions.

How has your nonprofit been communicating with donors during this crisis?

[Link to website: chescocf.org/covid-19]
EVENTS TO DO:

2. COMMUNICATE TRANSPARENTLY

- Remind supporters that event cancellation does not remove the need for program & service funding.

- Before refunding tickets for cancelled events, provide the opportunity to convert each ticket purchase to a donation to your nonprofit. Simply send a contribution receipt for the full amount.

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EVENTS TO DO:

3. INSTEAD OF CANCELING, POSTPONE OR GO VIRTUAL

**Postponing**

- Puts the health & safety of your guests first.
- Uncertainty of when social restrictions will be lifted & even after they are lifted, many people will not want to congregate.

**Going Virtual**

- Able to reach a broader audience.
- New experience for guests.
- Any event can be turned virtual, as long as you look at key components, use creativity, & re-design the plan!

*What fundraising events can you EASILY turn virtual?*

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VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING TO DO:

4. GET CREATIVE AND HAVE FUN!

- Create an experience for your guests that makes them feel like they are attending an in-person event.
  Ex. dress up
  Ex. crack open a bottle of wine

- Use the virtual format to your advantage.
  Market your virtual fundraiser as unique, new & exciting!

[Image: Virtual Reality: Making an Online Fundraiser Connect with Donors]

[External Link: chescocf.org/covid-19]
VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING TO DO:

5. DEVELOP A VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING PLAN

- Involve your staff, board, & volunteers in the planning process.
- Determine target audience & how to best connect with them virtually.
  Ex: social media, Zoom
- Research digital tools.
  Ex: Give Smart, text-to-give, Facebook Live
- Have your staff/board/supporters film videos for the fundraiser.
  Ex: Board Chair introduce the event, nonprofit director outline the program, and community members toast to the success of the event

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VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING TO DO:

6. USE DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS TO ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE

- Ex. Social media, email marketing, video messaging.
- Use this opportunity to build & strengthen your nonprofit’s presence on social media – try out new platforms!
- COVID-19 is forcing the world to go digital – don’t get left behind.

What digital platforms have you had the most success with?
What digital platforms do you want to learn more about?

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VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING TO DO:

7. COLLABORATE WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS/VENDORS

- Every organization & business is feeling the impact of COVID-19.
- Reach out to organizations your nonprofit has a strong relationship with to collaborate on virtual campaigns.
  Ex. Film your auctioneer auctioning off items
  Ex. Share recipes from your food vendors for guests to make at home
EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL FUNDRAISERS FROM LOCAL CHESTER COUNTY NONPROFITS

- Barn at Spring Brook Farm
  Virtual Spring Fundraiser

- Chester County Fund for Women & Girls
  Virtual Making a Difference Luncheon

- French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust
  Forge Your Own Adventure Iron Tour

Please describe how your nonprofit is planning a virtual fundraiser.

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- 8 Steps for Successful Fundraising During the Coronavirus Crisis (Amy Eisenstein)
- Coronavirus Impacting Your Nonprofit? Here’s What to Do (Network for Good)
- Challenge our Thinking – Events Amid COVID-19 (Hilborn: Charity News)
- COVID-19 is Accelerating Our Move to Digital — Charities Must Act Now to Keep Up (Canada Helps)
- Events Strategy: Maintaining Momentum in Uncertain Times (KCI)
- Pro Tip | Your Unexpected Coronavirus Opportunity (Hilborn: Charity News)
HOPE TO SEE YOU NEXT TIME!
PLEASE INVITE BOARD & SENIOR STAFF COLLEAGUES

Food For Thought

**Online Video Discussion of Nonprofit Crisis Management Topics**

Best Practices in Tough Times Designed for Nonprofit Senior Staff & Board Members

Grab your computer & a drink
Log on from home Weekly on Tuesdays
Starting 4/28 from 1:15-2:00 PM
Free

**Topics**

- **4/28**  Crisis Management: Survey Results
  Crisis Communication
  Thought Leader: Karen Simmons, Beth Kralis & Jamison Ludgate

- **5/5**  Strategy, Program & Service Modification
  Thought Leader: Karen Simmons & Mike DeHaven CPA

- **5/12**  Managing Fiscal Stress
  Thought Leader: Bob Ferguson & Kathy Wilczek CPA

- **5/19**  Raising Revenues: Events & Virtual Fundraising
  Thought Leader: Beth Kralis & Jamison Ludgate

- **5/26**  Raising Revenues: Gifts & Grants
  Thought Leader: Connie Carter CFRE, Krys Sipple CFRE & Corrine Sylvia CFRE

- **6/2**  Raising Revenues: Stewardship
  Thought Leader: Beth Harper Briglia, CPA, CAP

**Register at**

[chescocf.org/explore/food-for-thought/](chescocf.org/explore/food-for-thought/)

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