

FREE EBOOK

How to Develop Your GivingTuesday Marketing Plan



INTRO

GivingTuesday is one of those days that can sneak up on you if you're not thinking ahead, and then it can become like throwing a Hail Mary pass in the last second of the game—"we have no time to plan, but let's put everything we have out there and hope it lands on the right ears." That rarely works in football and even less in marketing.

We think there's a better way:

Give it the same thought and preparation you would an event campaign with a strategic plan. Start your marketing efforts several weeks before GivingTuesday hits and definitely by November. By November 1, you'll ideally want your GivingTuesday marketing gears well-oiled and ready to turn.

First step:

Define your goal. "Raise money" is a given, so what about taking it a little deeper? You may have a dollar amount you want to hit, or a certain number of donations, which is great—but have you ever thought of GivingTuesday as a way to create and expand your donor relationships? Like this:

Goal

Turn your prospects into donors and your donors into brand ambassadors.

When you think of it like this, you're not just focused on this one day of fundraising; you're thinking ahead to your next campaign and your next, and your next. GivingTuesday can be more than just a crowdfunding campaign—it can be a time to draw a crowd and then bring them with you into the future as a tribe committed to your cause and passionate about your mission.

So, where to start?

Get the word out. First, you've got to drive your message home. Did you know people need a minimum of 5–7 communications before they respond? You might feel like a broken record this fall, and especially in November, before donors even begin to really pay attention, but don't worry about overcommunicating your campaign. By the time you're sick of hearing yourself, that's when your audience is just starting to pay attention.

Next—and this is important—once you have supporters, turn them into ambassadors for your organization so they share with their network and encourage others to give too. Crowdfunding is about getting to your contacts' contacts. Consistent communication via [email](#), [social media](#) and any other means that will resonate with your audience is crucial in order to reach your goal.

Let's focus on marketing communications.

The success of your GivingTuesday marketing campaign rests on communicating in a way that grabs attention, inspires the donor and clearly asks for what you need without turning them off. It's a challenge, but we'll get you there.

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Start with these five marketing communication tips:

1. Look for reasons to be in touch so you aren't just asking for money.

- Give frequent campaign updates via email or social media.
- Publicly thank generous contributors via the tag 'n thank method on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. Every time someone gives to your campaign, tag them with a note of thanks so it shows up in their newsfeed and their friends can see it.
- Recognize donors in your e-newsletter.
- Put a face to your campaign with pictures of people who will benefit from the funds raised and keep your campaign focused on their stories rather than dollars.

2. Create a sense of urgency.

You can potentially generate a flurry of giving with any or all of these:



A deadline



A matching incentive



A contest



Entry into a raffle for taking a certain action



A reward

3. Reach out to people personally.

Send emails to folks you know would want to give. Once they give, thank them and ask them to share. Give them a blurb and campaign link to make it easy—this is a quick way to get to your contacts' contacts, like we mentioned earlier.

4. Send the word out over several channels.

You will likely rely heavily on email and social media to market your campaign, but don't forget about other marketing tools like:



Postcards



Flyers



Posters



Text messaging



Letters



Phone calls/messages

5. Thank people immediately.

Why wait until the end?

Once a person donates, say thank you. Even if they get an automatic receipt through your crowdfunding platform, send a personal note of appreciation and ask them to share your campaign page with their network.

Now that you have those 5 steps in your back pocket, let's take a deeper dive into specific marketing channels and create a plan for each.



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Where to post:

- Share your GivingTuesday landing page link on all your social networks (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, TikTok, Instagram, etc.)—wherever you have an audience and can gain traction.
- Don't forget about going live! Where's most of your audience? Use Facebook Live, go live on Instagram or TikTok—you do NOT have to be polished and rehearsed. Just speak from your heart, and maybe invite a loyal donor or two who's locked in on your mission.
- Don't be shy: Like and tweet about your own campaign site to start getting social traction.

When to post:

- Post at least once a day or every other day leading up to GivingTuesday.
- For every four posts, make one a direct ask for money and the other three something interesting or relevant to your audience. Think stories, interesting facts and stats, videos, easy infographics, compelling images, etc.

What to post:

- Photos of the people your organization serves who will benefit from your campaign (along with your campaign page link).
- Updates that bring people along on your fundraising journey.
- Brief snippets of how you will use the money raised.
- Tag and thank people who support you.
- Use hashtags to engage relevant and new followers.

Who to connect with:

- On Facebook and LinkedIn, search for groups related to your cause.
- On Twitter, search by hashtag to see who is talking about your cause or interests.
- Add new friends to your networks, and use all your platforms since you'll likely find different contacts on each site.

EMAIL MARKETING

While social media taps into the viral nature of crowdfunding, email is also an effective tool, especially for your campaign launch and updates because you know it goes straight to your supporters' inbox. You want to be smart about it so that your well-designed, beautiful emails also get opened and not sent straight to the trash.

Follow basic etiquette.

- Don't send the link to your campaign page. Write a brief email with a call to action.
- Use a professional email marketing tool like [the one Firespring offers](#).
- Never CC your contacts and expose people's emails.

Create distribution lists.

- Before you start, pull together your contacts into a distribution list or third-party email marketing system.
- As you gain new supporters, export their addresses and import them to your email system.
- Segment your list into 1) a mass email list and 2) your "online street team" list—these are your constituents that you can count on to spread the word for you with their social networks and act as a voice for your org.

Adjust your email signature.

- Create a signature that everyone on your team/board can use in their email to advertise your campaign. It's a free marketing tool and takes seconds to implement.

DONOR MATCHES



By nature, humans are procrastinators—that's why it's important to motivate supporters to give now, not later. Incentives work well with crowdfunding campaigns to create a sense of urgency, and one tactic that's particularly effective is donor matching. This is when you challenge your community to raise a certain amount so another donor can match it.

With donor matching, it's all about the marketing.

- Set a deadline to make it clear.
- Create that online street team we just mentioned to help you spread the word and enlist influencers, if possible.
- Identify a group of people you'll ask to give early and help you gain momentum. Have them donate on your campaign page and leave encouraging public messages, even if they only give \$1.
- Develop a plan to promote your donor match via email and social media channels. Remind them that you can't achieve the match without them.
- Consider having a match or donor gift when you achieve a set number of donors to the campaign.

A donor match tool creates heightened intensity and generates a frenzy of activity, but it will only work if you get the word out.

THE \$1 ASK STRATEGY

This is a marketing tool that's very effective with crowdfunding campaigns. The basic premise is that when you ask for just \$1, people usually give more. Here's how it goes:

The task: Solicit \$1 donations on your social media platforms—all of them. Try to get everyone you know to post about the campaign. If people have similar friends, it will flood social media feeds and make it look like a popular campaign. Even though you're asking for a small donation, people almost always give more.

How: Write a blurb you can circulate to your online street team so it's easy for them to copy, paste and share. Creating a prepackaged way for people to request a small donation means you'll likely get more buy-in. They can easily use it in an email blast too. We have some examples of what those could look like below.

The main strategy: Keep up the encouragement through social posts and email reminders. The most successful campaigns send email updates and post on social media daily because people need reminders. Remember when we said you'll get tired of your own voice just as people start paying attention?

Here are some example blurbs for \$1 campaigns that people could edit based on their personal involvement with your organization (that would all include a link to the campaign page for easy donations, of course):

1. Friends! My [son/daughter] is going to volunteer at an orphanage in the Dominican Republic during spring break with <name of nonprofit>. We need money to get them there, so we're raising funds to help support everything from travel to all the extras that we'll need to shower love on the kids at the orphanage. Would you donate \$1 in [your kid's name]'s honor? If even just half of you did that, we could raise more than \$[amount].
2. I've helped coach the swim team at the YMCA in Harlem for years. But it's underfunded, so we're doing our first ever crowdfunding campaign to raise the funds to support the coaches, travel, etc. Would you donate \$1 in [your kid's name]'s honor? If even just half of you did that, we could raise more than \$[amount]. Who can part with \$1 today?
3. Over the years, my family has been helped by <name of nonprofit> more than we can put into words. Right now, they're raising money to expand their space and create an after-school gym and computer center where kids can come to hang out, feel safe and have fun until their parents are home from work. Your donation of even just a buck can help make this happen. Anyone have \$1 they're willing to spare today?

PULLING TOGETHER A LAST-MINUTE CAMPAIGN

Let's stop for a second and get real: Maybe it's the middle of November and you're just reading this thinking, "Great. Guess I'll have to wait till next year."

No, you don't! You still have time to pull together a successful GivingTuesday campaign—but you have to get busy. Here's what we suggest:

- Send your annual appeal to arrive the week before Thanksgiving. Is it ready or can you get it ready?
- Use GivingTuesday to promote your organization, encourage giving to those less fortunate and asking for year-end gifts.
- Be sure your marketing and promotions for GivingTuesday use the same theme and messaging as your year-end appeal—which makes it easier, you're just coming up with one look and feel, right?
- Use your social media promotions for GivingTuesday to reinforce year-end giving, but make sure they will also appeal to new donors who may not have received your year-end appeal.

So, you really can still be a part of GivingTuesday without going through all of the steps—you may need to hustle in November to get a few things ready and put together. It's worth it, we promise!

But our number-one recommendation is to make GivingTuesday its own appeal with the ideas and steps in this booklet that will drive your organization to success.

If you'd like more ideas where these came from about GivingTuesday or any other campaign—or you'd just like to toss some general marketing ideas around to see what best fits your organization—we have great news: Right now, we're offering a [free strategy session](#) with one of our marketing strategists. You'll get 30 minutes to focus on your brand, your org and the best ways to achieve your nonprofit's goals.

And we mentioned it's free, *right?*

[SIGN UP FOR A STRATEGY SESSION](#)