A practical guide to Livestream Fundraising
The essentials to get started today
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Preface

In early 2018 when COHORT3 set out to research the *livestream fundraising market* we thought we were looking at the future of fundraising. All the signs were there - a new, innovative, technology-fueled and rapidly scaling business model, partnered with a Millennial/Gen Z consumer base empowered, and passionate to the point of possessive about *their* online culture. Then we started interviewing the key players, and what emerged was the final element – a deeply entrenched desire to give back – a culture of philanthropy. *We were on to something.*
Introduction

There's a relentless quest among development professionals these days for the next generation of donors and fundraisers. That, coupled with a search for the next new, highly differentiated fundraising platform for strategic growth. And a real sense that these two things are linked. One begets the other. Or it's a chain reaction - technology shapes the culture, the culture molds the experience, and the right philanthropy emerges from that experience. Indeed, just such a model exists, and it's called livestream fundraising.

Livestreaming is new, it's different, and it very likely represents in many ways the future of individual giving for the nonprofit sector. That's a big statement, of course, and particularly in light of the common refrain from people seeing their first livestream broadcast. “So, people watch other people play video games? For hours?”

But consider this, Twitch, the largest livestream platform has 150 million monthly active users, and they are growing fast - at ~50% per year for the last six years. To get livestreaming is to watch it with an open mind, and a commitment to seeing relationships built. To seeing the interaction, and the shared experience around a common interest. It's about – the much hyped – community that emerges from time spent together. The technical, remote, impersonal format belies the considerable affinity shared between broadcasters and viewers.

It's generational for sure. There have been enough Pew Research studies that we've long since understood that people who grew up with a mobile phone in their hand socialize differently. Virtual is perfectly fine, and technology is a means to an end for Millennials and Gen Z consumers.

If you really want to get it, download the Twitch app, enter any of the names below in the site search, and take in a few streams. These broadcasters are each unique, streaming different content and activities. But they are similar in one important way – they are true entrepreneurs who've built an audience, and when they ask that audience to donate, they give.

Elspeth (gamer) ♦ SuperMCGamer (gamer) ♦ Tammy_BlackMedia (musician) ♦ Food (cooking)
The Livestream Experience

The best way to learn about livestreaming is to tune into a broadcast. To give you a head start, below is a quick walk-through of a typical broadcast experience.

1. Broadcaster. The person livestreaming superimposed onto the viewer’s screen.

2. Broadcaster Display Name. The broadcaster’s handle or name within Twitch, in this case “Elspeth.”

3. Content Panel. The content focus of the broadcast, in this case a video game.

4. Chat Stream. The chat window where viewers post their comments, which are aggregated in chronological order and streamed into one common “thread” of conversation. Each chat post includes the viewer’s display name, along with their comment. Comments frequently contain emotes – the small emoticons. Each emote conveys a very specific meaning, and there are emotes universally employed across Twitch, video-game-specific emotes, and personalized emotes particular to a broadcaster.

5. Followers and Subscribers. The number of viewers who chose to take a deeper interest in a broadcaster. Follow: Get notified when a broadcaster is live. Subscriber: Pay a recurring monthly fee for special access to a broadcaster and their emotes.
The Biggest Streamers
Livestreaming on Twitch, the largest livestream platform is big business especially for the top echelon of broadcasters. To get a sense of broadcaster audience size (based on the number of follower), below are the Top 5 individual streamers (all video gamers) on Twitch: Ninja (11.7M), Shroud (4.5M), TSM_Myth (4.4M), Summit1g (3.3M), Tfue (3.0M).

Credit: Twitch Metrics

1. LIVESTREAM ESSENTIALS
Livestreaming starts with the essential ingredient, a person who broadcasts themselves live online. Picture an individual sitting in a home office, where they point a camera at themselves, use readily available broadcasting software, and tap into a free livestreaming site like Twitch. Voilà, they are live on the Internet.

Onscreen activities. What are they doing onscreen? Virtually anything these days – cooking, playing music, telling jokes – but the industry started with people playing video games.

Live vs. On-demand. There is an important distinction here between video on-demand and live video streaming. Video on-demand has been popular for some time on sites like YouTube, where the video is recorded and subsequently viewed. By contrast, live video streaming or livestreaming is live – viewers are watching the broadcast as it takes place. This subtle point is critical because live broadcasts create interaction. Livestreaming essentially creates
a dialog between the broadcaster and the viewers, and that draws in viewers in a way that static rebroadcasting of recorded video can’t. Twitch incorporates a lot of features to facilitate and amplify this interaction in creative ways.

Livestreaming has a few more unique characteristics, as follows.

**Broadcast format.** The first time you watch a Twitch livestream you’ll probably be surprised by the informal, conversational nature of the broadcast. Unlike Hollywood-driven, polished TV shows and movies, livestreaming is about being together – virtually. Catching a good music livestream feels more like friends sitting around in the living room jamming and hanging out, then it does sitting in an arena watching a highly structured and programmed live concert.

**Edit-free zone.** There’s no editing in livestreams. It’s one continuous live broadcast, usually with one camera pointed at the broadcaster. The culture grew up with this sparseness, and its endemic today. It feels homegrown. That’s how the culture likes it.

**Gamer Culture.** Livestreaming was birthed in the gaming culture. As a result, the livestream experience is littered with shorthand commands, emotes, on-screen animated graphics, and an embedded lexicon of streaming-specific lingo.

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**Top Broadcaster Income**

The current top broadcaster on Twitch is Ninja aka Tyler Blevins. His annual income from livestreaming his video game play is $5.4 million including recurring monthly revenue from subscribers, his share of ad revenue, viewer tips, corporate sponsorships, and miscellaneous.

*Credit: MediaKix*

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**Display Names on Twitch**

Twitch is complicated for first-time non-gamer audiences. It feels foreign when users on the site reference one another by display names rather than real names. These user names vary from simple – morningmeditation – to obscure – Drewzleet or sodapoppin. We can only encourage you to pick a display name (clever, original, funny and unique names are better), and join in.
2. LIVESTREAM MARKET SIZE
The livestream broadcasting market is growing rapidly as demonstrated by industry leader Twitch.

50% increase in Twitch viewers. The growth in the average number of viewers on the platform each year since 2012.

53% increase in Twitch hours watched. The growth in the number of hours watched per month each year since 2012.

64% increase in Twitch broadcasters. The year-over-year growth in the number of unique monthly broadcasters in 2018.

The number of viewers watching each broadcast has settled in to an average of 37.7 viewers per stream in 2018.

TwitchTracker, September 2018
3. LIVESTREAM BENEFITS

The livestream experience connects people, and builds relationships with a unique video format.

**Higher engagement.** According to Facebook, 78% of their users already watch livestream video, they spend three times more time watching them, and comment 10 times more during live video.

**Greater authenticity.** As consumers seek greater transparency and authenticity from advertisers, including nonprofits, live video becomes more popular because it is spontaneous, and un-editable. Livestreams are perceived as more authentic and personable than a pre-planned social media post. A study by Livestream found live video to be more appealing to brand audiences, with 80% of respondents saying they’d rather watch a live broadcast than read a blog; 82% preferred live video to a social post.

**More intimate.** The live video format opens an instantaneous, two-way connection between the viewer and the streamer. Viewers interact and connect with the broadcaster, providing instantaneous feedback, questions, stories, humor, and support. This strengthens the bond between the streamer and viewer in a way that other media isn’t able to do.

**Better access.** Most audiences want deeper access and prefer to watch livestream video when it offers behind-the-scenes content.

**More immediate.** Interactive live online video is more likely to be seen by consumers as up-to-date, informed, involved, and connected with the world than even live TV broadcasts.

**Greater multichannel interaction.** Livestream viewers are more likely to multitask. For example, searching for a brand or product while watching the broadcast; and to email or text a friend to tell them about the broadcast. The result – deeper exposure, and more room to educate and convert.
Livestream fundraising grew up in a Millennial world

4. LIVESTREAM FUNDRAISING ESSENTIALS

With a grasp of livestreaming, we turn to philanthropy. Livestream fundraising is a new form of individual giving where livestream broadcasters solicit viewers for donations on behalf of a preferred charity. It has been compared to peer-to-peer giving, and in some cases to a telethon.

**Audience.** Livestream giving is popular with younger audiences including Millennials (ages 24-38) and Gen Z (Ages 6 to 23) consumers. Fundraisers and donors average about 27 years old.

**Sites.** Livestream fundraising takes place on the popular livestream platforms - Twitch, Mixer, YouTube Live, and others. Fundraising activity and volume is roughly proportional to overall platform popularity with Twitch accounting for the majority of livestream activity today. Expect fierce competition among these sites to produce more options for nonprofits over time.

**Content.** Livestream fundraising is most popular with video game broadcasters, mirroring the broadcast audience origins of the platforms. For now, gamers also have the largest audiences on Twitch thereby offering the largest donor audiences as well.

**But, livestream content is expanding beyond gaming.** Broadcasters are joining from a wide range of entertainment categories including music, talk, dating, arts, crafts, and IRL - “in real life” or everyday living topics. Twitch actively promotes this content expansion in a strategic bid to grow their base of users and revenue, and to aggressively compete with its videostreaming peers. These new entertainment categories open new opportunities for charity and streamer synergies. For example, food banks and food show streamers, churches and gospel music streamers, and youth development orgs and maker/crafting streamers.

The official Twitch channel called Food livestreams cooking shows 24/7 featuring a broad range of personalities. It has 152K followers, and a lively chat stream.
Similar to Today’s Giving Models

In its simplest form, livestream fundraising is like DIY P2P giving, or run, walk and bike peer-to-peer events. In more sophisticated livestream broadcasts, the experience skews to that of a telethon model.

Fundraising best practices and tactics carry over including a focus on story-telling, impact statements, a case for giving, giving challenges, donor recognition, saying thanks, scoreboards, teams and team leaders, incentives and matching gifts, and emotive imagery. But, be sure to adapt these tactics to align with the livestream culture.

Fundraising best practices and tactics carry over … but be aware that using them in livestream fundraising requires adaptation and interpretation.

Save the Children Stream Team
Working with the gaming community since 2011

- Early partnership with pro gamer Athene and Gaming for Good
- Evolved to include multiple anchor events, many gamers, and streaming platforms Twitch, YouTube, and Facebook
- Year-round DIY livestream fundraising plus the marquis event Gaming Tuesday (Giving Tuesday for Gamers)
- Livestream program accrued a funding impact of more than $25 million including institutional grants/matching donations.
Tammy_BlackMedia

I’m a professional musician – singing and playing guitar. I livestream on Twitch and play live concert gigs which allows me to make a reasonable salary today. I’m striving for a bigger music career, and to that end I see livestreaming as an essential component of making it as an entertainer – for what it pays today, and for the fan base-building over time.

Tammy_BlackMedia: Livestream Fundraiser

Why do you broadcast on Twitch?
My manager comes from a technology, gaming and music background and we thought the timing was right to build a musical career specifically on Twitch.

What do you broadcast? How often do you broadcast?
Live music performances playing guitar and singing solo and with other streamers on Twitch. Of course I chat with viewers between songs and thank new followers, subscribers and tippers. I stream 3 to 4 times per week, and usually for about 3 to 6 hours per stream.

What fundraisers have you done recently?
I’ve done three fundraisers - the first was for Team Rubicon around Hurricane Harvey and people in Houston where I have family; and the second with GameChanger because I had a friend challenged by a lengthy hospital stay. I had a chance to go with the GameChanger team for a hospital visit, and see how the videogame gear provided to kids in the hospital made a difference. My third fundraiser was with the 1000 Dreams Fund as part of Women’s History Month where I streamed with 10 other women broadcasters and raised money to help The Fund realize their goal of providing 1,000 girls with scholarship funding.

KEY TERMS
Following are a few key terms used in this report.

**Broadcaster:** The person livestreaming i.e. the person on-screen during a broadcast. Also called streamer, livestreamer, or creator.

**Viewer:** The person watching the broadcast.

**Livestream Platform:** The site that hosts and presents broadcasters to viewers. The most popular are Twitch, Mixer, YouTube Live and Facebook Live.
How do you promote your livestream fundraisers?
I work it into the usual promotion for my livestreaming including:

- **Social media**: I organize a timeline for a few weeks in the run-up to the day of the fundraising stream, during which I post to social media reminding my followers about the fundraiser.

- **Livestream**: I definitely mention it during my broadcasts for a few weeks in advance of the actual broadcast day. I like to plan out exactly which broadcast I will do the fundraising, and develop a broadcast plan for how to promote donations to viewers within the stream.

How exactly do you incorporate fundraising into your broadcast?

- **Like a normal livestream flow**: Overall, the fundraising video stream is structured like a normal broadcast – a mix of doing songs, and chatting with the chat stream audience.

- **Talk about the cause**: Every few minutes I naturally mix in references to the nonprofit and their cause. The organization, their mission, and their impact naturally becomes part of the discussion with viewers. I ask the audience questions, and thank them for being part of the discussion and for their donations.

- **Naturally incorporate giving**: From time to time, I add in a discussion about giving but I always position it as an option not a hard request.

- **Research and assets**: For some fundraising streams, I researched the organization online and synthesized the important information myself. I used Charity Navigator, Google search, and the organization’s website. For the 1000 Dreams broadcast, the organization and Twitch did the research and provided the assets, and the broadcasters entertained and mentioned the giving options.

Feeling Good About the Ask
“It’s important to me to believe in and feel good about the charity. I like to learn as much as possible about the organization and their work. I see my job as knowing and sharing the organization’s story. All of that makes it easier and better when I’m talking to viewers about giving to the organization.”

-Tammy_BlackMedia
5. ADVANTAGES OF LIVESTREAM FUNDRAISING

Livestream fundraising is valuable for nonprofits in its own right and when compared to traditional peer-to-peer giving programs because it delivers a better value with lower costs, and it’s popular with young donors. It is an excellent alternative to physical P2P events, or as a new add-in to existing events. Here are the unique benefits of livestream fundraising.

**Low cost.** Fundraising with video streamers requires only a small investment to get started, and scaling to a large national livestream fundraising event series requires significantly less infrastructure, people resources, and cost than physical P2P events. The virtual nature of this new P2P giving model eliminates the need for the trappings of physical events; e.g. balloon arches, event permits, tent camps, route safety and support crews, etc. The livestream format rewards great content over slick production, so invest time in finding the right broadcasters.

**Rapid response.** Livestream fundraising events can be deployed quickly owing to reduced setup and logistics. This makes, for example livestream disaster response fundraising viable and actually quite effective. Live video streaming from the emergency response site in real-time is inherently impactful, compelling for donors, and highly effective for solicitation. Broadcasts naturally adapt to the emergency and viewers get a behind-the-scenes view into their response.

**Shorter duration.** Unlike the 6-week to 6-month pre-event fundraising window for physical events, livestream fundraising occurs mostly during the livestream. This requires significantly less effort by the streaming fundraiser and the organization, and results in a faster time-to-revenue for livestream giving. Many broadcasters start promoting their fundraising stream just 2 weeks beforehand, and complete the fundraiser in a single 8-hour stream.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low cost • Rapid response • Shorter duration • More urgency • Strong ROI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Scalable • Popular with young audiences • Aligns with technology trends</td>
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</tbody>
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Livestream Fundraising

More urgency. Livestream fundraising broadcasts are made inherently urgent using simple tactics – “Let’s raise $1,000 by the end of this broadcast.” Live broadcasting leverages the dialog between streamers and viewers to amplify the urgency. Software and best practices further stoke immediacy with mid-stream giving goals, and broadcasting within a fixed stream window. Viewers embrace the hard stop, and urgency is effectively injected into the broadcast.

Strong ROI. The reduced costs and concentrated, rapid-turnaround fundraising revenue combine to deliver stronger net revenue margins and ROI than traditional P2P events.

Popular with young donors. Millennial and Gen Z consumers are driving rapid growth in livestreaming, and philanthropy is integral to the culture, even as it continues to evolve within the larger broadcaster ecosystem.

The Future of Television

Most TV and streaming video professionals agree that interactive streaming is a glimpse into the future of TV. NFL Football and the NBA G League (NBA’s minor league) stream their games live on Twitch fully interactive. Viewers watch other content together - classic TV shows, original sitcoms produced for Twitch, and Washington Post and BuzzFeed broadcasts.

Scalable. Livestream fundraising delivers progressive scalability from one-off, single-day DIY livestream broadcast events to national, year-round programs incorporating thousands of broadcast fundraisers, corporate sponsorship and matching gift partners, merchandise, and more. The leading livestream fundraising nonprofits are fielding programs worth millions annually, and these programs are growing rapidly. While livestream fundraising is relatively new, there is a solid blueprint for large-scale livestream giving programs.
6. MARKET: LIVESTREAM FUNDRAISING
There are no industry-wide statistics available, but software leader Tiltify provides a representative view of the market size and benchmarks. Note: Tiltify operates on multiple livestream platforms.

Credit: Tiltify. Livestream fundraising software for nonprofits and broadcasters.
Market: Livestream Fundraising (cont.)
Second, from Twitch – the largest livestream site today – here is a look at fundraising revenue and campaigns. This includes donations received on Twitch’s platform from any source.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charity Benefitting</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Annual Revenue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals</td>
<td>Extra Life</td>
<td>$11.3M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Research UK, International LGBT &amp; Intersex Association, Mental Health Foundation, Special Effect, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, Wallace &amp; Gromit’s Children Foundation</td>
<td>Yogscast</td>
<td>$5.2M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctors without Borders, Houston Food Bank, Prevent Cancer Foundation</td>
<td>Games Done Quick</td>
<td>$4.2M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital</td>
<td>Play LIVE</td>
<td>$3.4M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Relief</td>
<td>Direct Relief Gaming</td>
<td>$1.0M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Credit: Twitch. Livestream platform
7. BUILD A LIVESTREAM FUNDRAISING PROGRAM

You’re Ready to Launch your first livestream fundraising initiative. We recommend that you progress through the following models or stages to start small, gain the necessary experience and eventually scale to a large stand-alone livestream fundraising program.

**DIY Fundraising.** The simplest way to start with livestream fundraising is to make it easy for existing broadcasters connected to your brand to fundraise.

Your organization plays a largely passive role, providing basic fundraising digital assets for broadcasters, and lightly promoting the opportunity to your supporters.

The benefits of starting with DIY fundraising? It identifies livestreamers who support your brand, produces a light, low-cost initial step in livestream giving, and allows your team to build essential livestreaming experience.

**Single Streamer.** The next model is a small but useful partnership between your organization and one broadcaster. Recruit a compatible, compassionate livestreamer for a mini fundraising event ranging from 2 to 12 hours (average 8 hours).

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**Direct Relief Gaming**  
*An early adopter of livestream fundraising*

- Partnering with gamers since 2011
- Raised $4.3 million via livestream fundraising
- Work with broadcasters, game companies
- Year-round DIY fundraising and two anchor events – Spring and Fall
- Anchor events target specific gamer communities (ex. Mario Bros. players)
- Typical anchor event includes 20 streamers broadcasting over three days

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**An early professional gamer.**  
Athene and his Gaming for Good livestream fundraising team and platform began in 2007 as the first popular gaming-oriented YouTube star. He’s amassed 450 million views on YouTube, and raised millions of dollars for Save the Children and other child humanitarian relief organizations.
The big shift here is the nonprofit’s proactive design and management of the fundraising mini-event in partnership with the streamer. The broadcast is jointly and collaboratively developed by broadcaster and nonprofit, and the stream is framed around a programmed schedule, incorporates giving goals, intermediate giving milestone activities, nonprofit mission and impact messaging, tuned by and for the broadcaster, and pre-stream promotion by the streamer and nonprofit across social platforms. Assume the nonprofit brings the livestream fundraising software to manage fundraising data and revenue, along with fundraising broadcast digital assets. When recruiting your broadcaster reach out to several candidates to give you flexibility in finding a good match.

Multiple streamers. Graduate to a multi-streamer broadcast to expand audience reach, increase revenue and build a stronger ROI. Like the Single Streamer model the nonprofit is prepared with a schedule, timeline, giving goals, digital assets, etc. Shoot for four to 10 streamers and opt for a one- to two-day event (consider audience time zone coverage, and late night broadcast blackout when viewing volume falls off significantly).

Additional streamers open up possibilities with scheduling, challenge or dual game play (or mix-and-match musical performances for entertainment streamers), fundraising challenges, group antics, and more. Look to rotate through the broadcasters to fill the full fundraising stream window. Be creative with the streamers. Get to know each streamer and personalize the broadcast for them and their audience.

Virtual telethon. Expand the Multiple Streamer model to a telethon format. Add a broadcast MC, introduce live mission and service personalities to tell your story, interweave music and entertainment streamers, recruit celebrities for on-camera appearance – participating as entertainers or video game play, and generally tell your story with more sophistication.
Two- or three-day broadcasts are feasible to capitalize on the more extensive planning and cost required for the virtual telethon format.

Consider weaving in a mission-themed celebration day, weekend or week; e.g. National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, or International Suicide Prevention Day. This delivers more awareness, support and helps drive stronger results.

The virtual telethon format has the potential to evolve into a large-scale peer-to-peer livestream fundraising series delivering millions in giving revenue.

In the end, the virtual telethon model has the potential to sprout many variations and additions to strategically grow the program. With the continued growth and evolution of the livestream sites, nonprofit fundraising enjoys a big advantage being embedded in the culture. There is tremendous opportunity for innovation and revenue growth.

Nonprofit fundraising enjoys a big advantage being embedded in the livestream culture. There is tremendous opportunity for innovation and growth.

Virtual Telethon Extensions
Expand and extend the program

- Integrate offline events like a gamer conference
- Add DIY fundraisers year-round
- Personalize for local markets and audience mix
- Add anchor dates during the year; ex. Spring, Fall
- Extend streamer focus from gamers to entertainers, IRL and other broadcasters
Gamer Conferences
A handful of charities have integrated with the livestream community via game conferences. Game and streamer conferences or “Cons” like TwitchCon, GuardianCon or Games Done Quick (GDQ) feature one or several charities as the primary beneficiary for event-wide fundraising promotion.

For example, the 2019 Awesome Games Done Quick event benefits the Prevent Cancer Foundation, and past GDQ events featured Doctors without Borders, CARE, and the Organization for Autism Research. GuardianCon raised funds exclusively for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in 2018.

Charities prepared with the right resources and experience can solicit event organizers to partner on these events. In most cases, this requires long-term planning, establishing relationships with event organizers, potentially much larger budget commitments from nonprofits, prior experience with livestream fundraising, and familiarity with the conference format.

Conference audiences vary in size from 2,500 to 250,000 on-site visitors, and they can attract thousands of virtual game participants and fundraisers.

Each conference has its own focus, audience and goals. There are events targeting broad consumer appeal like the ComicCons, events owned and managed by video game companies like BlizzCon, those sponsored by livestream platforms like TwitchCon; while others focus more on offline games (KublaCon), and those catering only peripherally to livestreaming.

There are no hard and fast rules for fundraising within the events, but the revenue potential is large, with for example, the 2018 GuardianCon generating $2.8 million for St. Jude over just five days.

Revenue from industry game cons include onsite livestream fundraising, virtual broadcast fundraisers, participating gamer donations, corporate major or matching gifts from industry partners, and others.
Combine Livestream and Traditional Fundraising Events

Livestream fundraising events offer ample opportunity to grow a sizeable standalone revenue program. That said, livestream and traditional events work well together. Integrating livestreaming into physical Walk, Bike, and Run events delivers real benefits, revenue and strategic growth opportunities. Below we look at three ways to add livestream giving to an existing event.

**Participant Streamers.** Imagine exporting the passion, excitement, and comradery of the live event experience to the family, friends and colleagues of participants. Picture hundreds of onsite event participants livestreaming their event experience while interacting with their remote supporter network. As participants overlay their personal point-of-view and stories onto the event, day-of giving increases. Donors witness first-hand the power of face-to-face events, and get inspired to give or give again. Keep in mind that livestreaming can disrupt the live event, and not everyone feels comfortable livestreaming. Recruit livestreamers from your event audience in the first year, and collaborate with them on how best to integrate their livestreams during the event.

**Telethon Stream.** Tap broadcast professionals to live-stream at local events or from a purpose-built single national event telethon-style. Bring the event to an expanded virtual audience who interact (think chat stream), give, and get drawn into the movement. The on-site event participants lend a dynamic, lively and supportive tone to the broadcast. Don’t simply broadcast the event – be sure to formally program a timeline of livestream audience interaction, and adapt the event format as necessary.

We recommend against presenting to a live audience and a livestream audience simul-
Livestream Fundraising

Two teams. Emcee the live audience with one team, and present the event separately to a livestream audience with a second broadcaster.

Livestream breakouts. Selectively livestream portions of the live event to online supporters embedding audience interaction during these segments.

Virtual Streamers. Livestream broadcasters recruited separately and making up a new “add-on” cohort for your event. Extend your audience footprint, supporting anytime DIY livestream fundraisers throughout the year, and focusing on dedicated broadcasters in the 30 days around one or more formal event days that act as a culminating backstop and day of celebration and giving.

These livestream event anchor days help to mobilize and concentrate livestream fundraising, create inclusion and a sense of community, and more firmly manifest your brand and story with broadcasters and viewers.

taneously for the full event. Interaction with livestream audiences is crucial but it can be awkward and distracting for the onsite live audience. For a first event, consider one of the following to reduce risks and create a great experience:
Benefits: Combining Livestream and Traditional Events

Broader more effective reach. Onsite event participants who livestream deliver the experience more deeply to their network. The telethon-style livestream injects the event experience into organization’s broader supporter base, helping to steward these remote donors who tune in, and in some cases reach new audiences who know the brand but have been unresponsive via other media channels.

The third category, virtual streamers spawn hundreds or thousands of mini events that boost overall and day-of event participation and giving. Broadcasters can “host” or “raid” the day-of telethon broadcast as well.

Higher Revenue. The extended audience reach naturally raises total gross revenue, and the lower cost of livestreaming produces a net revenue boost.

Lower Costs. Livestream fundraising delivers lower event fixed costs, and limits overall budget increases to reach large audiences.

Extend Reach and Revenue
Take advantage of the investment in existing events and layer in livestream fundraising. Some organizations treat the livestream fundraising as another local or chapter event. It utilizes the event branding but like other local events it is personalized for the target audience (e.g. gamers), and carries its own budget and revenue goal.

Esports Leagues
The professional gaming leagues mirror professional sports leagues in their format, organization and increasingly in the revenue generated. The leagues field teams of video gaming professionals who compete during a full season of head-to-head competitions and tournaments. The global eSports market was valued at $493 million in 2017.
Differentiate events. Livestream fundraising is innovative and it brings a unique and compelling option to help your traditional events stand out in a crowded event marketing landscape.

Empower Supporters. Livestream fundraisers report that streaming is fun, challenging and empowering as they learn a new skill, master the technology, and build confidence broadcasting to tens or hundreds of peers.

Create new participant options. Participants can choose from traditional or livestream fundraising allowing each supporter to tune their participation to their personality, lifestyle, time window, and audience.

Access new, young donors. Livestreaming naturally attracts participant audiences not accessed via traditional P2P events; ex. Reach younger participants, remote locales, and supporters who require a non-physical way to participate.


- N. American program using online and offline giving tactics
- Year-round gaming focused DIY fundraisers
- Game Day: Anchor event in the fall to rally community to dedicate a day of play #ForTheKids
- About 60% of funds raised the week of Game Day
- Extra Life has raised over $40 million since 2008, and partners with over 50,000 gamers
8. FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

Though livestream fundraising is relatively new, there are some established best practices to help you succeed with your first program.

**Plan ahead.** Streamers appreciate the opportunity to plan a fundraiser into their broadcast schedule. Annual, recurring mission-themed celebration days are ideal as broadcasters can alert their audiences in advance, plan new challenges and other revenue-generating tactics, recruit peer streamers to participate, and prepare a proper fundraising timeline for the broadcast.

**Recognize broadcasters.** Recognize broadcasters for their contribution to your fundraising success. Leaderboards within streams, virtual thank you walls on your website, Twitter acknowledgements, and copious linkbacks to a streamer’s channel/page are all appreciated by broadcasters. They welcome the personal recognition, and appreciate the awareness and traffic for their livestream ‘business’.

**Provide essential digital assets.** Build a fundraising digital assets kit for livestream fundraisers. See the sidebar for more details on building your first digital asset kit. Post the kit on your website, and share it widely with broadcasters who fundraise. Include links to the kit on social posts and in content marketing.

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*Digital Assets Kit*

*Build a fundraising digital assets kit for livestream fundraisers.*

**Interstitial Slide.** A simple one-page digital slide that explains to a broadcaster’s viewers what you do, and the impact you make.

**1-Minute Explainer Video.** A digital video that captures your mission, services and ties the fundraising ask to clear and direct impact. Strong visuals, emotive storytelling, and an authentic, “real” tone are all important.

**Fundraising Page/Tool.** Give them access to your livestream fundraising tools such as Tiltify or Donor Drive.

**Sample Timeline.** Share a sample broadcast timeline with timeline milestones, sample challenge goals, etc.

**FAQ.** Provide concise responses to typical questions about your organization.
Integrate with a national day. Create a new annual celebration day or align your livestream event with an existing day, week or month like National Children’s Cancer Month.

Accept micro-donations. Be prepared to accept $1, $2, and $5 donations. The median donation for livestream fundraising is $10 but smaller denomination gifts are common. Ensure your payment processing solution cost-effectively processes small gifts.

Engage with viewers. Viewer interaction with the broadcaster is critical. Livestreaming’s biggest differentiator from video-on-demand and other formats is the dialog between streamer and viewers. Viewers who participate in conversations with a broadcaster build a relationship – they enjoy the experience more, increase viewing time, generate more positive word-of-mouth, and give more.

Milestones and timelines. Create a total stream fundraising goal, and a timeline with fundraising tasks, and intermediate goals.

Solo Broadcasters

Some broadcasters prefer to stream alone, while others happily pair up occasionally or broadcast as a permanent team. Streamers will have a preference for personal and professional reasons. Sort this out ahead of time, and respect the streamer’s preference. It’s easy to adapt the broadcast schedule to accommodate streamer preferences.

Challenges and unlocking streamer activities. Broadcasters inevitably develop personalized streams based on their interests, personality and talents. Encourage them to carry over this personalization to their fundraising, and as part of their fundraising goals.

The best practice: viewers unlock broadcaster activities at each successive fundraising intermediate goal or for large gifts.

Examples of broadcaster activities include dying their hair a new color, singing a requested song, acting out a scene from a movie, adopting the voice of a favorite movie character, shaving their hair, record a 60-second video of the streamer doing something silly, and others.

The goal is to provide incentive to reach the gift giving goals to unlock the stunt or activity. This creates a sense of community among viewers around a shared goal -it is powerful in the Twitch community.
**Dynamic interaction graphics.** Third-party tools help streamers create a logo/branding overlay for their livestream. This includes pop-up alerts for each new gift, intermediate goal achievement animation, and other UI features. These technical add-ons liven up the broadcast and keep viewers engaged.

**Merchandise for broadcaster incentives.** It’s become common practice to incent broadcasters to reach stretch fundraising goals using merchandise. Donor incentives. Some broadcasters offer incentives for viewers to donate — use sponsor merchandise as giveaways to donors who meet minimum donation levels.

**In-stream donation forms.** Instead of sending donors to your website, use the forms provided in a purpose-built livestream fundraising products (See Section 10). This streamlines giving, and allows nonprofits to accept gifts, for example, using just a Twitch handle (without name or email).

**Leaderboards.** Use digital leaderboards to display real-time broadcaster fundraising results to create an additional level of competition for multi-broadcaster events.

**Teams.** Ask broadcast fundraisers to recruit a team of peers to help fundraise. This expands the total viewing audience, and boosts fundraising revenue results.

**Connect to your website.** Integrate fundraising livestreams into your website to attract adjacent audiences like offline gamers, and family and friends – who wouldn’t normally tune in to the livestream.

**Compact fundraising window.** Plan on a four- to 12-hour stream for fundraising. Unlike traditional P2P events, the bulk of funds come in while the stream is live, and the event is structured to complete within a single stream.

**Matching gifts.** Use matching gifts from offline donors, viewers, corporate partners, and major donors to drive donor participation among viewers.

**Corporate gifts.** Add corporate and sponsor gifts to elevate livestream fundraising results. Integrate corporate partners into the livestream experience within the digital fundraising assets, as live guests during the stream, or as branded merchandise.

**Include celebrities.** Invite celebrities for audience reach and to enrich the stream content. Common tactics include celebrities gaming with broadcasters, celebrities sharing behind-the-scenes content, and celebrity interviews and auctions.

**Share your work.** Budget-permitting, bring broadcasters to your office to experience the impact of your work first-hand. It helps them communicate your mission to viewers.
9. RECRUIT FUNDRAISERS
You’ll employ more sophisticated tactics as you grow your base. For now, here are tips to get started recruiting your first broadcasters.

No shortcuts. Unlike YouTube and Instagram, the Twitch livestream ecosystem doesn’t yet have any consultants, influencer databases, or native tools on the platform to pair nonprofit brands with compatible broadcasters. Community managers on Twitch can help, but realistically plan to do your own research.

Look within. Recruit your first broadcasters from within your existing supporter community. Recruit a handful to ensure you get a couple that are right for your brand.

Recruit online. Solicit your email list, post to your website and to Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Provide a brief vision for your fundraising event (date, theme, assets you provide), and a motivational pitch on your mission. Ask for the supporter’s Twitch channel, follower count, and details for their connection to the organization, why they want to fundraise, and prior livestream fundraising experience.

Search on Twitch. Search on keywords matching your organization – look for broadcasters linked to your cause, or to a close peer.

Broadcasters
Livestreaming is a unique ecosystem of entrepreneurs and entertainers Get to know them before you start recruiting.

Audience is sacred. A broadcaster’s followers and subscribers are acquired through hard work, and retained with a steady diet of compelling broadcasts. Broadcasters are naturally protective of these important assets.

Broadcasting pays the rent. Broadcasting is a job, and for better streamers it is their principle source of income. Fundraising livestreams temporarily redirect streamer income to the charity. Broadcasters fundraise nonetheless because they want to give back. Be sensitive to the income sacrifice broadcasters make when they agree to fundraise.

It’s not always about polish. Individual livestream broadcasts are often informal and thrive on interaction, education, entertainment and relationship building. The culture has it's own norms, communication rules, and lexicon. Interpret and judge the value of a broadcast within this context.
Search on Twitter. Use Twitter search and keywords to identify streamers interested in your cause. Evaluate their Tweet stream.

Support inbound inquiries to your website. To support all of this you’ll want a website section outlining your support for video gaming and livestreaming along with the assets for DIY fundraisers, and contact information at your organization for questions or requests to participate.

Interested supporters may check out your organization, and see first-hand your connection to the community. Remember, each broadcaster is an entrepreneur trying to build an audience, and in some cases a big business. They want to understand who they are partnering with as well.

Evaluate Broadcasters
Carry out a short due diligence effort on each broadcaster under consideration for your fundraising program.

- How strong is the streamer’s brand?
- How big is the streamer’s audience?
- Have they been involved in any controversy?
- How serious are they about livestreaming?
- Are they connected to your brand and mission?
- Get examples of prior livestream fundraising.
- Ask for references from other broadcasters.
- Ask them to pitch ideas for creative fundraising.

Remember, each broadcaster is an entrepreneur building an audience, and in some cases a big business. They want to understand who they are partnering with.
10. LIVESTREAM FUNDRAISING SOFTWARE

Livestream fundraising software provides the tools and reporting to execute a successful campaign – for broadcasters and nonprofits.

When producing your first livestream fundraising event, you’ll need cloud software purpose-built for this fundraising category. It’s true you can ask broadcasters to direct viewers to your website to give, but a successful livestream fundraising effort requires a dedicated solution to maximize effectiveness and revenue.

The solutions serve broadcasters - including broadcaster tools to overlay fundraising promotion, tracking and giving features into the live broadcast stream display.

For nonprofits – the software helps with campaign setup, broadcaster recruitment, stream enhancement and incentives, event promotion, team management, and performance reporting.

DIY Broadcast Fundraisers

Some broadcasters opt to fundraise on their own - independent of the organization. As with traditional P2P events, be prepared to receive donated funds from livestreamers in a single lump sum, and frequently without donor details. While this makes on-going donor stewardship impossible, it is an opportunity to recruit the broadcaster for your next livestream fundraising event.

DIY Broadcast Fundraisers

Credit: YouTube Giving

Photo credit: DonorDrive
If your supporters can dream it, they can **stream it**

Introducing **live fundraising™ by DonorDrive®**

Nonprofit supporters are streaming and have already raised $75 million through Twitch alone. So, what’s your streaming strategy? With Live Fundraising™, your supporters can easily connect their stream to their DonorDrive peer-to-peer fundraising page and turn their gaming, hiking, or any passion, into raising money for your nonprofit.

LEARN MORE

DonorDrive®
peer-to-peer fundraising
Software
There are two livestream fundraising solutions available today for nonprofits.

Tiltify (tiltify.com). A standalone livestream fundraising solution that was first to market in 2014, created by charity experts who were in the streaming community. Tiltify stands out with the longest list of organizations and streamers fundraising with their solution over the last four years. A feature-rich broadcast experience embedded with livestream best practices is paired with the essential tools for nonprofit event management and reporting. The solution and the company are deeply integrated into the livestream ecosystem and can be used across Twitch, YouTube, Facebook Live, Mixer, MLG, and Twitter Video.

Live Fundraising™ by DonorDrive (donordrive.com). A new livestream solution from a leading P2P fundraising software company. The solution is deeply integrated into the nonprofit’s existing site, easy for broadcasters to set up, and livestream viewers get a real-time, interactive and mission-branded experience. Donors can give without leaving the stream with the Express Donate™ feature. DonorDrive also provides branded overlays and other streaming assets, and offers an integration with Streamlabs. All money raised goes directly into the charity’s account and data is seamlessly integrated into the nonprofit’s existing reports and integrations.

Data and Integration
The livestream fundraising solutions available today address the core nonprofit needs.

Livestream fundraising events typically co-exist with other (P2P) fundraising software, and deserve to be integrated with the existing technology stack. The current market solutions meet the needs of most nonprofits.

Donor and Donation Data. All broadcaster, team, donor profile and donation transaction data generated by a livestream fundraising event is available to the nonprofit in the application via native integration or export.

Payment Processing and Transfer. Each solution processes donations on behalf of the nonprofit depositing funds directly to the organization’s account. Payment processors vary but most common processors are offered: authorize.net, Stripe, and PayPal.

CRM Integration. Each livestream solution offers built-in data integration with Salesforce and Blackbaud CRMs. Integration with other CRMs are feasible via API but would incur additional cost.

Integration with other P2P Solutions. For standalone solutions like Tiltify, they offer API-level integration for an additional fee. For the other solutions, livestream giving is part of the existing P2P fundraising solution.
The Livestream Giving Experience

Here we provide a glimpse into the livestream fundraising experience.

Fundraising Livestream

The livestream viewer’s perspective of a video game broadcaster raising funds for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Here, we see several of Tiltify’s embedded giving features:

1. **Donate Button.** Pop-over native giving form.
2. **Campaign Name.** The nonprofit benefitting from this fundraiser.
3. **Progress Meter.** Total giving to date and goal.
4. **Campaign Menu.** The schedule, donation recognition wall, and campaign details.

Donation Recognition Wall

Click on “Donations” from the Campaign Menu. Displays a real-time list of donors, donation amount, and comments from donors.

About the Stream

Click on “About” from the Campaign Menu. Displays more details about the nonprofit’s mission, history, and impact. Also, the broadcasters note describing their connection to the cause.

Photos credit: Tiltify
SPOTLIGHT: Meet Three Livestream Fundraising Visionaries

**Ettore Rossetti.** Sr. Director, Social Strategy & Digital Innovation.

Ettore has been with Save the Children for 14 years, and practicing the trade of digital marketing for more than two decades. He is a catalyst for innovation and grew Save the Children’s social media presence to more than 5.6 million followers, and started the organization’s livestream fundraising initiative. In 2015, he was awarded American Marketing Association’s Nonprofit Marketer of the Year for his work in innovation.

**Michael Kinney.** Managing Director, Digital Fundraising.

Mike has spent the past five years studying P2P trends and developing tactics to aid two of the fastest-growing fundraising programs, Dance Marathon and Extra Life. Mike’s passion led him to CMN Hospitals in 2013 where he works to advance the nonprofit’s presence among the gaming industry and its communities. Under his guidance, Extra Life, CMN Hospital’s gaming-focused P2P program has grown from $1 million to $11.3 million in annual fundraising. He also spearheads the organization’s digital fundraising strategies that leverage new and emerging technologies.

**Matthew Moffit.** Production Specialist.

Matthew “SuperMCGamer” has a sole focus in life to bring philanthropic values to the video gaming industry. For nearly a decade he has run the charity event Zeldathon, and in his current role at Direct Relief he is the fundraising lead for gaming. Since starting Zeldathon, the group has raised over $2 million for various causes.
DonorDrive helps nonprofits to raise money through fundraising technology, marketing and interactive design services. With DonorDrive, organizations like Team World Vision, Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the Arthritis Foundation have raised more than $1 Billion.

To learn more, visit us today at DonorDrive.com
Thanks.

Special thanks for your valuable input on this report.

**Alyssa Sweetman.** Twitch.

**Eric Barnett.** Microsoft Mixer.

**Michael Wasserman.** Tiltify.

**Ettore Rossetti.** Save the Children.

**Tammy “Tammy_BlackMedia” Byerly.** Broadcaster.

**Matthew “SuperMCGamer” Moffit.** Broadcaster, Direct Relief.

**Michael Kinney.** Children’s Miracle Hospital Network.

**Kasey Cuppoletti.** DonorDrive.

**Antonio Hicks.** Streamlabs.

**Twitch Tracker.**

**Twitch Metrics.**

**MediaKix.**
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