REAL TALK:
COVID-19 & 2020 Fundraising

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REAL TALK
Real Talk: Pivot now

Gov’t recommendations, restrictions
Optics with Responsibility to the public
Postponing = indefinite uncertainty
**Pivot Checklist**

- ✔ What is your gut telling you?
- ✔ Lawyer for help with contracts
- ✔ Cancellation policies
  - hotel, A/V, catering, photographer, videographer, keynote
- ✔ What can you repurpose digitally?
  - Don’t lose investment or momentum
- ✔ Communications
  - Board, volunteers, table captains, attendees, sponsors
  - Phone for VIPs - Web, email, social for all

"Force majeure"
Communicating Your Pivot

Balancing act:

Personal vs. en masse

Confidence vs. transparency

Brevity vs. detail

Decisions vs. feedback/input
Standard Virtual Events

- Goal page with thermometer
- Video/multimedia
- Match offered & highlighted
- Sponsors listed
- Gift level impacts
- Timeframe
Virtual Galas

Online campaign page with P2P “virtual table” hosted by table hosts

We’re seeing evidence in real time right now that it can work.
Advantages of the P2P Virtual Gala

- Concrete, visible and accountable tool for board and table captains’ efforts to organize their networks
- Virtual table structure and table goals mean staff can prioritize better
- Cut through the digital noise that will desensitize donors to asks
- Personal virtual table goals magnify the goal proximity effect
- Can help further cultivate your table captains - you’re fighting for something together!
Before you commit to a P2P virtual gala...

- Are your table captains on board with the idea? (ask them!)
- Are your supporters comfortable with technology and online tools?
- Are your donors actively following and engaging with your digital channels?
- Who has capacity to put together a 1-2 page virtual table captain toolkit and be the point person for virtual table captains?
- Are there other consistent volunteers or loyal donors you could recruit as virtual table captains?
Corporate Sponsor Strategy

- Reach out to them first
- Assume the best of your sponsors!
- Utilize recognition opportunities created by transition to virtual
- Create a custom employee engagement or volunteer opportunity
- Have your board and table captains do public shout-outs on social media to sponsors thanking them for sticking with you
Real Talk: What about my auction?

- Pivot away from the risk; focus on relational strategies
- If you can’t pivot, reduce to the highest ROI items.
- Repurpose procured items
- Call Talia.
Real Talk: Get creative

- Streaming variety show your content supplemented by performances - utilize your existing program

- Leverage event assets and tchotchkes as giving incentives

- 24 hour challenge - messaging urgency, who doesn’t love a publicity stunt?
Tools & Technology

Standard Virtual Event
- Classy
- OneCause
- GiveLively
- Click ‘N Pledge
- DonorBox
- Harness
- MobileCause
- Mightycause

Virtual Gala (P2P)
- Classy
- Funraise
- OneCause
- GiveLively
- qGiv
- Givebutter
- Greater Giving
- MobileCause

Online Auction
- SchoolAuction
- Funraise
- GiveSmart
- OneCause
- Auctria
- qGiv
- Greater Giving
- CharityAuctionsToday
But... (Real Talk)

Make space for people who aren’t comfortable with technology or have accessibility issues online. Don’t succumb to ageism.

Event donors in an older demographic need love too! Mail or a phone call with a personal ask might be needed for them.

Check in with them and if they are not participating in the virtual event, solicit or encourage giving through the mail or even simply online via your website.
...everything else
Real Talk: the big picture

Stocks are volatile, retirement savings down

Businesses of all sizes will ultimately be affected

Foundation assets will decrease

Some private and government funders will shift money towards COVID-19 research, readiness and recovery

Tough year in general.
Survey Says: ask your donors!

Segment by giving amounts and ask:

- When they want to hear from you
- How they want to hear from you
- What they want to hear about
- How they like to give
- Why they give
- Do they anticipate changing their giving?
Real Talk: Retention & Stewardship

Classics:

- Phone calls
- Handwritten notes
- Impact newsletters or postcards
- Donor profiles

New ideas!

- Use virtual tools to connect with donors 1:1 or en masse
- Livestream video updates from the field, digital tools for group briefings
- Thankview - personalized video app!
Real Talk: Online & mobile giving

- Growth from giving online and on mobile is accelerating
- Optimized email: Highest ROI of any digital tactic ($40 for every $1)
- Build your list & create a strategic automatic welcome series
- Text messages: highest open rates!
- You probably already have the tools you need
Real Talk: Level up with social media

- A social strategy is no longer optional - you will lose ground without one
- Choose the right platforms and don’t try to do it all
- Primarily for engagement and as part of a multichannel efforts
Monthly Giving

Why? Everything is subscription-based these days!

- 86% new retention vs 23% for one-time gifts
- 1.5x - 3x annual value & 4x - 6x lifetime value vs. one-time donors
- They do give to other campaigns - not just their monthly
- Boomers *and* Millennials love it!

Tips:

- Ask in the one-month window after they make a one-time gift
- Calibrate a relevant ask - $5/mo for a $50, $10/mo for a $100, etc
- Brand it!
- Don’t stop stewarding
Real Talk: Don’t forget phone & mail

- Quarantines and social distancing -> isolated lonely donors may welcome phone calls!
- Direct mail is not dead! Find the right segment.
- Just don’t lick the envelope
Real Talk: Contingency plan

Executive, Program, Finance, Development leaders - now is the time.

Don’t only cut fundraising and start a vicious cycle.

In budget season? Be conservative.

Avoid staff turnover at all costs!
Silver linings!

- You’re going to be awesome at online and mobile giving
- You’ve got a new evergreen regrets gift strategy from virtual tables
- You’ll pick up the phone more.
- You’ll put your auction on the path to a relationship focus and higher ROI
Stay in touch

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