The Ultimate Guide to Fundraising

Everything you ever wanted to know about fundraising.

plus

Tips you need to have a successful fundraiser for clubs, teams, groups, non-profits, schools and churches.
An introduction to The Ultimate Guide to Fundraising

“Every once in a while, a fundraiser comes along that really inspires you.”
CHAPTER 1
An Introduction to The Ultimate Guide to Fundraising

It’s inevitable – you’ve probably been bombarded by fundraisers in your lifetime. Asked for money, asked to support a cause, asked to attend a gala when you’re not even sure what that is or if you’ve got a suitable outfit. It’s not just adults either – most kids in grammar school have already participated in several fundraisers and have been asked to contribute to even more.

Everybody needs money. And you’re willing to help, but we all know being asked can get a little old. Every once in a while though, a fundraiser comes along that really inspires you. The group is enthusiastic, they have a great sales pitch, the product, service, or event they’re offering is top notch, and you’re not just willing to help out and contribute, you’re excited about what they’re doing.

You’re here for a reason. Maybe you’ve already decided to have a fundraiser for your group and you’re in the planning process. Maybe your club or organization needs some extra funds and you have no idea where to start. Maybe you’re a fundraising pro looking for some new ideas.

You’ve come to the right place. Rada Mfg. Co. knows a thing or two about fundraising. In 2012 alone, we worked with over 19,000 fundraising groups like schools, churches, civic clubs, teams and youth groups to help them raise money by selling Rada Cutlery products. We want to see fundraisers of all kinds succeed, so we decided it’s time we stopped hoarding all these little gems of info and started sharing our know-how with the world.

We’ve combined our experience with research and national trends to give you the most comprehensive guide to fundraising out there. So you can have that awesome, inspiring fundraiser. So you can be more successful and get the funds your group needs to do amazing things.

Sound like a plan? We thought so.
What you’ll learn

• History, trends and benefits of fundraising
• Stages of fundraising
• How to select a fundraising leader
• What fundraising options are out there (advantages, disadvantages and tips for each)
• How to work with suppliers and distributors
• How product fundraising profits are calculated
• How to select the right fundraiser for your group
• How to motivate your sellers and supporters
• How to promote your fundraiser
• What Rada’s fundraising program is all about

We’re really excited about fundraising (we wrote a 93-page guide about it for crying out loud)! It’s fun and hugely beneficial when it’s done right. If it seems a little overwhelming at first, don’t sweat it. We’re here to make it easy.

We’ve got all the bases covered. All you have to do is sit back, enjoy The Ultimate Guide to Fundraising and soak it all in. You’ll be Master Fundraising Guru (or whatever fancy name you wanna give yourself) before you know it.
“The newest trends in fundraising are all about technology.”
CHAPTER 2
Overview of fundraising

You’ve probably already participated in a few fundraisers in your time. But just like you learned all through high school, you have to review the basics before you can learn anything new. At least, we think that’s what our teachers were going for.

So in Chapter 2, we’re going to fill you in on who’s fundraising, the recent fundraising trends, and what the benefits are (besides money).

Before you give in to the urge to surge (we like to rhyme) forward, remember: understanding the basics is a must if you want to be successful later on.

Get this information under your belt first. It’ll better prepare you for the mind-blowing tips and advice we have for you later in the guide.

What is fundraising and who’s doing it?

According to Merriam-Webster, fundraising is an activity done to collect money for a political party, charity, school, etc. The word was first used in 1940.

Almost every group, team, non-profit and business has to fundraise at some point. Many often host fundraisers annually or biannually. Churches, booster clubs, business groups, sports teams, political groups, civic organizations, charities, clubs, educational groups, fraternities, sororities, societies, missionaries, musical groups, colleges and non-profits have to raise funds in order to attend conferences, host events, build facilities, and provide their services to their community.
What are the trends?

The newest trends in fundraising are all about technology. Mobile giving (the use of smart phones or tablets to donate funds) is on the rise, especially with younger generations. “Text-to-give” campaigns and mobile giving apps have been especially successful. It’s important to optimize your website (if you have one) and online giving center for mobile devices. What could be worse than a donor that’s ready to give having a negative user experience on your mobile website? If they are unable to donate through mobile, they may not visit a computer later to donate and they likely won’t be donating to your organization again.

Crowdfunding, a fundraising method that involves requesting (usually online) a small amount of money from a large number of people to fund a project, has also become very popular. In 2013, nine percent of Americans gave through crowdfunding efforts. That number is expected the rise considerably in the future, especially among Generation Y. If your group is looking to reach a new audience and you haven’t been able to connect with the younger generation, following these trends will be crucial to your success.

Another important trend focuses on people’s attitudes toward fundraising. According to The Chronicle of Philanthropy, the economy is no longer causing people to donate less, but individuals are more angered by constant solicitations. Over 80 percent of participants in a survey reported feeling this way. For you, that means walking a fine line when requesting money. It’s always best to err on the side of caution and avoid being too aggressive or pushy.
What are the benefits (besides money)?

Fundraising can provide you with supplemental funds that enhance what your group does and provide new opportunities for your members. It can also benefit your community or an individual in your community that needs financial assistance. Besides the money, there are plenty of other reasons your group should fundraise.

**Team building** – Your group or organization will need to come together as a team and work toward a goal. Fundraising efforts could bring them closer together, help them get to know each other better, and break down barriers between different departments or cliques. They can use the skills they learn through fundraising in their daily work or group responsibilities as well. If you really want team bonding to take place, break the group into smaller teams and make the fundraiser a challenge. This will motivate your group members to work together efficiently and create a more intense team bond within their small group.

**Promotion** – Hosting a fundraiser means you’ll have to get the word out about it, therefore spreading the word about your group or organization. Fundraising creates heightened awareness of your group and your cause. In order to promote your fundraiser, you should be putting up posters around town, making announcements at local events, running advertisements in the local paper and on the radio and TV stations and posting about your fundraiser on your website and social media. Raising funds for an important cause in your community puts your organization in a positive light – it’s free, positive publicity.

**That “You done good, kid” feeling** – While money, team building and promotion are nice, those shouldn’t be the reasons you’re fundraising. There should be an overarching goal (which may need funding to get off the ground) that serves a bigger purpose. Maybe it’s education or assisting someone in the community. Maybe it’s providing a safe place for teens to hang out after school. Maybe it’s raising awareness of an
issue in your community that needs more support. Whatever it is, it should be something you can feel good about asking people to help fund. Throughout the process and when it’s complete, you’ll have that indescribable good feeling. You’ve helped someone out; you’ve done a good deed. Enjoy that feeling and let it guide you through the process.

Chapter 2

Wrap-up

So, what have we learned? We’ll give you a little recap before you move on.

• The term fundraising got its start sometime around 1940.

• Mobile giving is on the rise.

• Mobile-optimized websites and giving centers are crucial for an online fundraising presence.

• Crowdfunding is the belle of the ball.

• To reach younger generations, you have to offer mobile giving options and crowdfunding is often a hit with them.

• The economy isn’t slowing down giving any more, but over-solicitations are.

• There are many benefits to fundraising besides the funds, like team building, promotion and that “You done good, kid” feeling.

• Fundraise for the right reasons (aka doing a good deed). You’ll be happier and more successful that way.
“...without proper planning and goal-setting, your fundraiser won’t have the results you’re looking for.”
CHAPTER 3
Stages of the Fundraiser

So you’re set on having a fundraiser, eh? Before you jump in headfirst, check out the steps we’ve mapped out for you. If you take time to consider and work on each one, the fundraising process will go a lot smoother. We know it’s tempting to just pick a fundraiser and “start,” but without proper planning and goal-setting, your fundraiser won’t have the results you’re looking for.

You can’t go off to battle without a little training first, right? OK, so maybe this isn’t quite as serious as a battle... but we take fundraising pretty seriously, so we’re going to give you the need-to-knows.

STEP 1 Selection

Before you can move forward with anything else, you have to choose what type of fundraiser you’re going to take part in. In Chapter 5, we have oodles and oodles of fundraising options listed and categorized. We also give you the lowdown on each type of fundraiser, with advantages and disadvantages. Once you’ve looked through those, you might have the perfect fundraiser in mind – or you might be really overwhelmed. If that’s the case, we also have a selection decision flow chart in Chapter 8. Answer the questions in the chart to guide you to the perfect fundraising option.

Throughout the selection process, always be considering your group,
their talents and skills, and the group’s mission. The fundraiser you choose needs to align with those things in order to be successful. A group of leaders can make the selection decision, or you can bring a few options in front of the whole group and vote. Either way, make sure the selection isn’t made on a whim. Take time to think about what fundraiser will work best for your group and provide the most success. If your group has been doing the same fundraiser for several years without much success, it’s time for a change.

**STEP 2**  
**Goal-Setting and Planning**

The fundraiser is chosen! Things are about to get really exciting… but you still have to set goals first. We know, we know, goal-setting is annoying and takes time that you don’t have. But you just gotta do it.

Obviously, your main goal is to have a successful fundraiser – but what does success mean for your group? Without clearly defined goals, your group members will be less motivated and you won’t have any way to measure your results in the end.

Set long-term goals and short-term goals that seem more attainable. This will help make the process less overwhelming. Create a timeline for your goals as well. You could focus on selling (each group member needs to sell this much ____ by this date, ____.) or outreach (each group member needs to pitch to ____ people by this date, ____.) It might be helpful to write these goals down and map them out on a calendar or timeline to post on the wall at your group’s meeting place as a reminder.

Along with goals, create KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). This is a just a fancy way of saying, “Have a way to measure your progress.” For number-related goals, like the ones listed above, KPIs are easy. Members can
count the money they’re raised or the people they’ve contacted up to that specific date to show their progress.

Your group might have goals that aren’t so cut-and-dry. Let’s say you want to raise awareness of your group and their cause throughout the fundraising process. How do you go about measuring that?

That’s where KPIs come in. In order to see if you’ve made progress toward raising awareness, you could create the KPI of increased followers and engagement on social media. You could also compare your current fundraiser to one you may have done in the past to see if more people got involved. There’s also the option of sending out a survey to the community and asking them questions about your group or organization. These potential KPIs are ways to measure your progress toward the goal of raising awareness – something that didn’t seem measurable before.

For every goal, you should be coming up with KPIs to be checked frequently throughout the fundraising process. KPIs will help you stay on track to reach your goals.

Next comes planning. This is also a great time to choose a fundraising leader, which you can learn more about in Chapter 4.

Alongside your goal timeline, make a fundraising timeline, including all the steps you’ll need to take before, during and after the fundraiser and when those need to be completed to help keep you on track. Create a budget to cover start-up expenses if you have any.

If your group is large enough and your fundraiser calls for it, break into teams or groups to be in charge of certain areas within the fundraiser. You may have a few members that are great promoters, some that want to handle the budget and finances, and some that would like to run the event. If you have enough members, let them use their strengths in small groups.
Even after goal-setting and planning, there’s one more step before you can actually start your fundraiser. And it’s a very important step, so don’t try to skip it! Without promotion, your fundraiser will struggle to pick up traction. That doesn’t mean you have to use every promotion tool that exists. Pick the ones that will work for your audience in your community. Promote to the people that will be most likely to buy your product or attend your event.

Some options include advertising with a local newspaper, radio station, or TV station, sending press releases to local media outlets, creating posters, handing out flyers, putting a notice in a city newsletter, sharing content on your social media platforms, sending out mail or email marketing to past customers, promoting your fundraiser on your website, hosting a mini-event to generate excitement for the fundraiser, and announcing the fundraiser at local events. Using a few of these methods of promotion will greatly increase the success of your fundraiser. Plan to use them two to three weeks before a traditional sales fundraiser and four to five weeks before an event fundraiser. This will give your community some time to generate word-of-mouth about your fundraiser.

You can learn even more about promoting your fundraiser and get some helpful tips in Chapter 10.
Let the games begin! If you’ve taken care of steps 1-3, then it’s time to let your group loose to fundraise their little hearts out or host your big event. We know, it’s scary to let them out of the nest, but if you’ve planned well and talked about your goals, your group members should be on the same page and ready to execute a successful fundraiser.

Your leader should be checking up on group members periodically to make sure they’re staying on their timeline and reaching their goals by monitoring KPIs. Regular group meetings are a great time to check in, but the group leader should also do this outside of meetings. That way, if anyone has questions or concerns, they can be answered right away, and if anyone is getting way off course, they can be redirected before too much time has passed.

Remember that promotion can take place throughout the fundraising process as well. Don’t just throw those tactics to the wayside once the fundraiser is underway. Promotion should still be taking place; it just takes a secondary role to fundraising.

At this time, your fundraiser isn’t over, but the community outreach component has come to an end. Gather your troops and see what they’ve come up with. For most traditional fundraisers, your group members will have order forms that people have filled out to purchase...
products. Your group now has to work with your supplier to order these products for your customers. Some fundraising programs offer several ordering options. At Rada Cutlery, groups can submit orders by phone, mail, fax, and web. Find out what options your fundraising program offers and pick the one that’s most convenient for you.

Submitting your orders is a big step in the fundraising process. It’s important to get it right and it’s a big milestone for your fundraiser. Once orders are submitted, you’re almost done!

**Distribution**

You’ve received your product orders and now it’s time to distribute them to your customers. Plan a time when group members can meet to pick up products and deliver them. If products are too large or your group cannot handle distribution on its own, let customers know when and where they can pick up their products. If transactions didn’t take place at the time of ordering, make sure group members take care of this during the distribution process.

**Summary of Profits, Notes for Next Time**

You did it! Your fundraiser is complete, but the process doesn’t end just yet. This is the really fun part: checking out your profits and rewarding your group! Add up your profits and share this number with the rest of the group. Have a meeting to go over how things went and
whether or not your goals were met. Focus on the positive, but be sure to cover what could have gone better and how your group can improve for next time. Have someone take notes on these things so you have them present when you begin your next fundraiser.

Take this time to collect any contact information group members may have gotten from their customers. Emails and addresses can be used to promote future fundraisers to past customers.

This info is also important for sharing your gratitude. Send thank-you notes to these customers and anyone else that helped out with your fundraiser, like store owners that let you set up on their property. Make sure the whole group is involved in the thank-you note writing. It will get done quicker and be more meaningful.

Have a party for your group and reward your top fundraisers with awards or gifts. It may take a little of your fundraising profits to do this, but it’s totally worth it. If your group members feel appreciated for their hard work, they’ll be willing to do it again. These awards can also be incentives at the beginning of the fundraising process.

**Chapter 3**

**Wrap-up**

**Seven easy steps.** That’s not so bad, right? Here’s a review of the stages of fundraising, with a little nugget of info for each.

**Selection**

- *What talents does your group have? What are they passionate about? Pick a fundraiser that suits your group for the most success and fun.*
Goal-Setting and Planning
• Set clear long-term and short-term goals as well as KPIs to make sure your group is staying on task.
• Use a timeline in your planning process.
• Break into teams for large fundraising endeavors.

Promotion
• Promote with advertisements, press releases, posters, flyers, city newsletters, social media, direct mail/email marketing, mini-events and announcements.

Execution
• Check on those KPIs regularly.
• Keep promoting throughout the fundraiser.

Ordering
• Find out what options your fundraising program offers for ordering products and pick the one that’s most convenient for you.

Distribution
• Distribute products to your customers as soon as possible as a courtesy to them.
• Make sure all funds are collected at this time.

Summary of Profits, Notes for Next Time
• Share profit outcome with the whole group.
• Debrief and discuss what could have gone better, improvements for next time.
• Collect customer contact info from members to use for direct mail/email marketing for next time.
• Send thank-you notes to customers and everyone involved.
• Celebrate your success with a party and award your top fundraisers.

Wrap-up
“Successful fundraising, like many things, is connected to clear communication.”
How to choose the best leader

Successful fundraising, like many things, is connected to clear communication. Your group will be reaching out to mostly strangers to request money or try to sell them something. You need a leader that can provide great examples of how best to approach people and talk with them about your fundraiser. Your leader needs to be able to communicate effectively through promotional materials, like posters and advertisements, as well. They need to be able to handle any negative situations and juggle multiple responsibilities.
And those are just a few of the traits to look for. Here’s a comprehensive list:

• Communicator
• Strong listener
• Researcher
• Delegator
• Calm
• Encourager
• Organizer
• Flexible
• Keeps whole group in the know
• Seeks opinions of group
• Monitors members’ work but doesn’t micromanage
• Persuader
• Decision-maker
• Motivator
• Multi-tasker
• People person

You’re probably not going to find someone with all of these traits. Focus on the strong communication aspect and they’ll likely be pretty good at these other skills too.

Potential leaders for your group

When we think of leaders for a project, we often lean toward the oldest, most-experienced members of the group. While experience and knowledge of the group and their overall goals is a must, your group leader or a senior member does not have to be your fundraising leader. Passing the fundraising leader position on to someone else spreads out the work and gives another experienced member a chance to shine.

Of course, if the only person that can handle this role is your leader, by all means sign them up. Just consider a few other members of your group first; we think it’s wise to let someone else take the fundraising leader position.

The fundraising leader needs to have a strong relationship with the group leader because they will be communicating constantly. It’s beneficial if they are close in age and experience-level, but that can have a range of a year or two. This way, there is mutual respect and understanding of the group. Potential leaders could be club officers, project leaders or simply members.
without titles that consistently produce good work and volunteer for the group when needed. As long as they possess some of the skills listed above and have a good relationship with your group leader, they should be an excellent fundraising leader.

Duties a fundraising leader may have

A fundraising leader will have multiple and varied responsibilities. Like any leader, their job will be to keep all the parts of the ship moving.

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<th>Their main duties will be:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Selecting a fundraiser</td>
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<td>• Leading the design of the goal and planning timelines</td>
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<td>• Developing KPIs for those goals</td>
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<td>• Assigning teams for different tasks</td>
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<td>• Hiring outside help for promotion or organizing own promotion</td>
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<td>• Speaking on behalf of the group about your fundraiser in public</td>
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<td>• Ordering necessary materials to begin fundraising (catalogs, products, supplies for event)</td>
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<td>• Securing a venue for an event and leading decoration</td>
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<td>• Entering orders for products from catalog sales</td>
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<td>• Setting up a product distribution process</td>
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<td>• Keeping track of profits</td>
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<td>• Organizing meetings throughout the fundraising process</td>
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<td>• Checking up on timelines, goals, and KPIs</td>
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<td>• Keeping the group informed on progress</td>
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<td>• Writing notes about the fundraiser for next time</td>
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<td>• Organizing a celebration for the completion of the fundraiser</td>
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<td>• Purchasing awards for top fundraisers</td>
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<td>• Leading thank-you note writing</td>
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<td>• Keeping track of customer contact info database for next time</td>
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<td>• Dealing with any issues that may arise</td>
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Many of these duties will be done alongside the group leader with co-decision making, unless your group deems the fundraising leader solely responsible for any decisions related to your fundraising project.

This is a very important role, so take plenty of time to consider your options. If possible, have your executive or senior members meet to nominate group members. They may have insights that you don’t have and see potential in someone you hadn’t considered.

**Benefits of a fundraising leader**

You may think you can get away with not designating a leader, or having a group of leaders for your fundraiser. We hate to break it to you, but even if you have team leaders, you still need one overall fundraising leader to fall back on for decision-making. If you don’t have one person in charge, your group is going to spend a lot of time spinning its wheels and debating options instead of moving forward and making progress. If something goes wrong, who are you going to turn to? Who is going to speak up on behalf of the group? Who is in charge of communication with your fundraising program or business? Sure, a different person could take on each of these tasks, but then your message is disjointed and way more communication needs to take place in order for everyone to stay in the loop. You need a leader for these responsibilities and to represent your group and their cause consistently. Your fundraiser will be a lot more successful with a leader who can hold people accountable for their goals and KPIs.
Picking a fundraiser leader isn’t something to be done on a whim. Take your time and don’t forget these valuable tidbits:

**How to choose the best leader**
- Think outside the box! It doesn’t have to be your current group leader, just make sure they are a solid communicator and have a good relationship with your leader.

**Potential leaders for your group**
- Club officers
- Project leaders
- Members that produce good work
- Members that volunteer

**Duties a fundraising leader may have**
- Decision-making
- Communication with the whole group and people outside the group
- Organizing
- Keeping track of profits

**Benefits of a fundraising leader**
- Cohesive message and consistent decision-making
- One public representative of the group and your fundraiser
- One person to handle issues
- Holds people accountable for goals and KPIs
“With thousands of fundraising opportunities out there, it can be difficult to know which option is best for you and your group.”
CHAPTER 5
Fundraising options

With thousands of fundraising opportunities out there, it can be difficult to know which option is best for you and your group. The selection process can be tedious and overwhelming, and it often seems easier to just do what everyone else is doing.

Just say no: If everyone around you is selling the same product, you won’t be able to generate much buzz about your fundraiser, and community members will be less likely to purchase as much of your product or attend your event. Choosing a fundraiser that your group can get excited about is crucial to your money-raising success.

We want to make it easy on you. That’s why we’ve broken down the multitude of fundraisers out there and packaged them into neat little groups. Because we’re nice like that.

Scan through, see what sections look like they might be a good fit for your group, and check out the options available. Got an outgoing group of kids? Maybe hosting an event will be your thing. Are you a creative bunch? Can you knit or paint? Making your own products is always an option too. Think about what makes your group special. What skills do they have that can contribute to a fundraiser?

Life lesson learned: We’re all special snowflakes. You don’t have to do what everyone else is doing, and you certainly don’t have to do a traditional fundraiser. Whether you choose to sell products, host an event, do chores, or have an auction, your fundraising efforts will be a success if your group can get excited and be themselves in the fundraising process.
| Page 29 | **1** Catalog and Order Form Fundraising | Catalog and order form fundraising is one of the most common forms of school group fundraising. |
| Page 31 | **2** Direct Sale Fundraising | Direct sale fundraisers are similar to catalog fundraisers, but products are purchased or made in bulk before sales begin. |
| Page 33 | **3** Online Fundraising | Online fundraising is a whole ‘nother animal. We could make an ultimate guide simply for this piece of the fundraising pie. |
| Page 36 | **4** Raffle Fundraising | Raffles can be a fun and simple way to raise funds for your group. |
| Page 39 | **5** Auction Fundraising | Hosting an auction is a great way to raise funds because it can easily generate excitement and bidding wars for prizes, meaning your group can make a larger profit. |
| Page 41 | **6** Percent of Sales Fundraising | Percent of sales fundraising allows groups to work with other organizations to host an event or sell products and receive a portion of the profit. |
| Page 43 | **7** Chore/Service Fundraising | Chore/service fundraising is one of the easiest and quickest ways to raise funds for your group. |
| Page 45 | **8** Event Fundraising | Hosting an event allows you to have a fundraiser that’s completely unique to your group and your cause. |
| Page 49 | **9** Donation/Collection Fundraising | Donation/collection fundraising is perfect for groups that are just getting started or have very little money for start-up costs. |
| Page 51 | **10** Custom Product Fundraising | Custom product fundraising is different from regular product fundraising in that these products can be personalized and play to people’s sentimental sides. |
Catalog and order form fundraising is one of the most common forms of school group fundraising. Requesting catalogs from a fundraising business is the first step; next comes handing them out to your fundraiser participants and explaining the products and selling process to them.

The process is simple and takes the production responsibility off the shoulders of the group members. However, working with a business means less control over what products look like, the quality and the packaging.

Doing a catalog/order form fundraiser can also be difficult for groups with shy members, since reaching out to others is the main form of selling. Face-to-face and door-to-door selling is the most effective way to make sales. Making a personal connection with people helps them understand your cause and see your sincerity and initiative.

Catalog and order form fundraisers also give you a better idea of what your profit will be. You know upfront what portion of the sales your group will receive, and you can use that information to break down how much each member needs to sell to reach a certain monetary goal. This makes planning and goal-setting easy.

**Advantages**

- Structured fundraiser
- Easy to show products to potential customers through catalog
- No product production process
- Allows for face-to-face/door-to-door fundraising efforts
- Easy profit projection
- Wide geographic selling area (mailing catalogs)

**Options**

- Candy
- Candy bars
- Popcorn
- Cookies
- Cheeseballs
- Pizza
- Pies
- Cookie dough
- Cutlery
- Jewelry
- Candles
- Wrapping paper
- Magazines
- Knickknacks
- Scentsy
- Cookbooks
- Calendars
- Blankets
CHAPTER 5

Disadvantages

• Less control over products and packaging
• Less personalized for your group and community
• Difficult for less outgoing group members
• Group must handle distribution

Tips

Be sure to choose a business that aligns with the mission of your fundraising group. You want to work with a company with similar values that you know you can trust.

Pick products your community will find entertaining and/or useful. If your community is working on a healthy living initiative, it might not be a good idea to sell candy bars. Think about the personality of your community and use that as your guide.

Encourage group members to reach out to family and friends that live far away. Catalogs and order forms can always be sent in the mail, along with purchases.
Direct sale fundraising

Direct sale fundraisers are similar to catalog fundraisers, but products are purchased or made (bake sales) in bulk before sales begin. Once a fundraising group has received or made their products, they can divide them up and begin the selling process. Groups that participate in direct sale fundraisers can set goals at the beginning of the fundraising process and know exactly how much product each group member needs to sell to meet their goals.

Direct sales allow for face-to-face transactions with customers. Customers can handle the products before they purchase them and also have the benefit of leaving the transaction with their products in hand.

These fundraisers can be difficult if group members aren’t willing to reach out to potential customers. You’ll have more success if you set up your sale table in high-traffic areas within the community, like grocery stores, convenience stores, auctions and sporting event concession areas. These places are also beneficial because people are already purchasing something and are likely to have spare change on them to make a purchase from your fundraiser. Make sure your leader checks with store owners before setting up your fundraising table.

Direct sales can be a bit risky if your group members are not committed to selling their portion of the product. Since the product has already been purchased by your group, you could be out money if your fundraiser is not successful. If group members are committed and you properly promote your fundraiser, your group should have no trouble.

Advantages

- Structured fundraiser
- Customers can see and handle products before their purchase
- Little (bake sale) to no product production process

Options

- Discount cards
- Scratch tickets
- Flowers
- Community coupons
- Potatoes
- Onions
- Fruit
- Candy
- Lunch boxes
- Bake sale
- Yard sale

(A yard sale offers a unique opportunity to have direct sales without purchasing products first. However, prices must be set lower for used products.)
Advantages (continued)

- Allows for face-to-face/door-to-door fundraising efforts
- Easy goal-setting and profit projection
- Opportunity to host a demonstration using products

Disadvantages

- Risk of not making a profit when purchasing products in bulk first
- Less control over products and packaging
- Less personalized for your group and community
- Requires strong “sales pitch” attitude; difficult for less outgoing group members
- Remote selling area
- Storage of product before selling

Tips

Choose a fundraiser your group can get excited about. If people in your group wouldn’t use the product you’re selling, it’s going to be hard to convince community members to purchase it.

Work with a fundraising business that fits with the mission of your fundraising group. You want to work with a company with similar goals that you can trust.

Direct sale fundraisers need promotion. Create posters, announce what you’re selling at events, create newspaper, radio and TV commercials, send out a press release to your local paper, include info in a newsletter, send
out direct mail pieces, and leave flyers on doors and car windshields. Host a
demonstration using the products to raise awareness of your fundraiser. Once
people know what you’re selling and for what cause, they may come to you
asking to purchase some of your product.

Online fundraising

**Online fundraising is a whole ‘nother animal.** We could make an ultimate
guide simply for this piece of the fundraising pie. But since you need to
quickly weigh your options to find the best fundraiser for your cause, we’ll
give you the critical information and our best advice to boot.

*First things first, an online fundraiser isn’t for you if you have no online presence.* Just as a traditional fundraiser requires established community awareness and
support to be successful, an online fundraiser requires that your group has
an established online community. This means your group has a website and a
social media presence on several platforms, and your members are active on
these platforms. Your website, social media, and individual group members’
social media should be branded to reflect the goals and personality of your
group. It’s going to be very difficult for your fundraiser to get traction if no one
on the Internet knows who you are or what you stand for.

If you do have an online community of followers that care about your group
and its cause, an online fundraiser is an amazing opportunity. It allows you
to reach out to people beyond your immediate, physical community to
individuals all over the world. It affords you the opportunity to spread your
message to people you never would have been able to get in touch with
through a traditional fundraiser.

Plus, the fundraising process is extremely simple. People can sign up and
donate with the click of a button. This fundraiser doesn’t take any time from
their day and it’s something they can easily share on social media, giving
them positive social reinforcement for their contribution and giving others the chance to see that you’re fundraising.

**Online fundraising can mean selling products online, promoting an event online, or asking for donations online.** Some people feel comfortable contributing to an online fundraiser, but you may run into snags if members of your online community don’t trust Internet fundraising or think it might be a scam.

**Online fundraisers are great for groups that don’t have tons of time to host an event or have the means to purchase products to sell for profit.** Online fundraisers can work wonders for non-profit businesses or organizations that are just starting up. However, without proper preparation and online community building (which does take a lot of time), online fundraisers won’t be successful. If you don’t have an established online community in which you’re engaged with your followers, it’s best to choose a traditional fundraiser that will allow your group members to make connections with community members as they fundraise. Fundraising success is all about creating connections with others.

### Advantages

- **Quick and easy set-up**
- **Flexible and personalized**
- **Not geographically limited**
- **No product production process**
- **Potential to go viral and reach new connections**
- **Promotion can be done for free through social media**
- **Easy for potential customers to contribute**
Disadvantages

- No profit guarantees
- Requires active and engaged online community
- Some people may not trust online fundraisers
- No person-to-person connection and sales pitch
- Possible negative social push-back from online community

Tips

With online fundraising, it’s all about social, social, social. Promote your fundraiser like crazy on social media and your website. Does that mean it’s all you post about? No, that would get annoying. But you should be posting about it frequently. For sites with scrolling newsfeeds, like Twitter and Google+, you should schedule posts to publish throughout the day through a social scheduling site like Hootsuite.

Use this free advertising as much as you can, but don’t forget about traditional promotion like posters and advertisements. The people who live in your physical community can still be the best ones to jumpstart your online fundraiser.

Pick a fundraising website that matches your group’s goals. If you’re not sure which site is best for your group, look at some current fundraisers on the site. Are they similar to your group’s fundraiser? If so, you’ll fit in with that online community.

Choose keywords that people in your online community would be likely to search. Do some keyword and search engine optimization research before you write the copy for your fundraiser. The key is making your fundraiser easily accessible online.
Get contributions by giving them. The best way to build up your online community is by simply being friendly. Make contributions to other online fundraisers you care about. Share social media posts about other groups’ fundraisers. If you help them out, they’ll be more likely to help you out too. It’s just like living in a real community; you get out of it what you put in.

Raffle fundraising

Raffles can be a fun and simple way to raise funds for your group, but you have to be able to get your hands on raffle prizes for a decent price, be able to make them yourselves, or have them donated in order to make a profit. If you have quality prizes that will result in good ticket sales, you’ll definitely make some money for your group – other than the prizes and the cost to print the tickets, there are no fees to host a raffle.

Before you get started, do some research on your state’s raffle laws. Each state has different legal guidelines regarding raffles, so make sure you can legally move forward with your raffle idea before you put too much brainstorming work in. With big prizes, like cars or boats, you may be legally required to sell a certain number of tickets to give the prize away. Speak with a local attorney before hosting a raffle with cars or boats.

When setting the price for your tickets, think about how many you would need to sell in order to make a profit. What is a realistic amount your group could sell? Then, divide your profit goal by that number. If the ticket price still seems too high, you may need to rethink having a raffle fundraiser, or accept that your group will need to sell more tickets. It’s O.K. for the ticket price to reflect the prizes being raffled – bigger prizes equal pricier tickets – but consider what most people in your community would be willing to pay for a raffle ticket and don’t go too far above that number.
Advantages

• Quick and easy set-up
• Can make large profit by raffling donations from local businesses
• Little to no product production process
• High-end products bring in ticket sales
• Person-to-person interactions will help sales

Disadvantages

• Geographically limited
• Needs to be traditionally promoted throughout community
• Requires outgoing group members to request donations and sell tickets
• Ticket price could make or break fundraiser
• Need access to large area to raffle items like cars and boats
• Legal issues could stand in the way

Tips

Have group members seek donations from local businesses before buying or making raffle prizes. Raffling donations is a much safer option for your group that will mean guaranteed profit. This doesn’t mean non-donated prizes won’t work, but it’s a much better place to start, and you’d be surprised what local businesses are willing to give. Add an extra incentive by explaining to business owners that you’ll share what they’ve done for your group on social media and make sure they are mentioned several times at the raffle and in promotional materials. You’ll basically be advertising their product for them.
Allow your group enough time to sell tickets for your raffle. For smaller prizes, a month will work, but for bigger items, make sure your group has two to three months to spread the word and sell tickets.

Make sure group members and your promotional materials (posters, advertisements, social media) make it clear where ticket sales are going. People will be much more likely to put money toward a ticket if they know and care about your cause. Also make sure group members have photos or accurate, detailed descriptions of the items being raffled. Potential customers will want all the information about the prizes before spending money on a ticket.

Have well-designed tickets. Ask a group member who has some artistic or graphic design ability to make them, or have them done professionally. They should include a space for customers to fill out for the drawing (name, address, phone number and email) as well as information about your group (name, address, phone number, website, date of raffle and prizes available). This portion of the ticket can be a stub given back to the customer.

Sell tickets anywhere and everywhere. Have group members carry them around in their pockets in case they run into someone that might want one. Set up sale tables at local sporting events, stores, and school-sponsored events. If your group is allowed to set up shop in these places, you should be taking advantage of every opportunity.
Hosting an auction is a great way to raise funds because it can easily generate excitement and bidding wars for prizes, meaning your group can make a larger profit. This means the group that hosts an auction needs to be outgoing and ready to put on a show. For less outgoing groups, a silent auction is still a great way to raise money without the fuss of finding an auctioneer.

Much like raffle fundraising, groups will need to have items for the auction purchased, made or donated before much planning can begin. Once your group has enough prizes, they can move forward with selling or handing out tickets to the auction, or simply promoting it through posters, advertisements, and by announcing when and where the auction will be before school or town events. Your group will need to decide if they want to charge for tickets to the auction or just invite people for free.

It will be easy to generate excitement over big and expensive prizes, but for smaller things, like gift cards, cooking items or sporting goods, make packages that add up to be a bigger prize. These package deals will draw more excitement and leave you with fewer items to auction off, simplifying the process. Don’t have any prizes that are worth under $40.

For a live auction, don’t have more than 10 to 12 items in the show. Audience members will get bored after that point and without the crowd excitement it will be hard to sell the last few items. A live auction also isn’t necessary for products that might not cause a bidding war, so stick to a silent auction if you think most people would pay only a set price for a prize.

Auctions that involve people are a great way to boost crowd excitement. Some common examples are “slave” auctions and date auctions. These are great ideas for school groups in which the people being auctioned and the audience members will know each other and “fight” for these individuals. Most people who want to be in the auction will “donate“ themselves to the cause, so there is no cost to host an event like this.

Options

• Pies
• Sports equipment
• Kitchen supplies
• Trips
• Big screen TVs
• Stereos
• DVDs
• Gift certificates
• Quilts
• Knitted shawls, hats, sweaters, scarves
• Sporting event tickets
• Grills
• Appliances
• Art
• “Slave” auction (People who will do chores/work for someone for a day for free)
• Date auction (People who will go on a date or simply spend time with someone)
Auctions also offer the opportunity to make items to be sold, meaning the start-up costs are minimal. Baked goods, quilting, knitting and art are all things that groups can make on their own and auction for profit.

**Advantages**

- Quick and easy set-up
- Can make large profit by auctioning donations or homemade goods
- Little to no product production process
- The right auctioneer/host can mean more excitement and boosted profits
- Bidding wars will boost sales

**Disadvantages**

- Geographically limited
- Needs to be traditionally promoted throughout community
- Requires outgoing group members to organize and host the event
- Need access to large area to host auction (possibly a stage)

**Tips**

**Play to the strengths of your group.** If you have a group that can generate a lot of excitement in the community and you have prizes that could cause bidding wars, host a live auction. If your group is quieter but great at organizing events, host a silent auction.

**Think about the timeliness of your event.** A date auction is going to generate more buzz around Valentine’s Day than any other time of the year. Auctioning off athletes to work for people at the end of their season means you can
promote them as strong and in shape, capable of any task. Auction items like quilts and knitted clothes right before winter. A big screen TV will sound pretty nice right before the Super Bowl.

Remember that your auctioneer and script for the event could make or break the auction. Make sure your auctioneer can be heard and understood. Make sure their personality matches the tone of the event and your group’s personality. If you are fundraising for a serious cause, having the auctioneer tell jokes might not be appropriate. If the event has a light-hearted theme, make sure they’re willing to have fun with the audience. It won’t be hard to determine these qualities if you’re picking an auctioneer from your group or from the community, but if you’re hiring from an outside source, make sure you do your homework first.

Percent of sales fundraising

Percent of sales fundraising allows groups to work with other organizations to host an event or sell products and receive a portion of the profit. These fundraisers are an excellent way to cross-promote different organizations and groups within a community. Percent of sales fundraisers allow groups to host events and sell products they would otherwise not be able to host or make themselves, allowing for a larger profit. Many groups may ask for “sponsorship” from a larger group or business in the community.

Percent of sales fundraisers are great for groups that don’t have much funding to host a large event themselves or can’t find donors for products. Groups must make sure they are not receiving a lower percentage of the proceeds than they should, and that the fundraiser will still be worth their time and effort. Groups should also know what they should realistically expect to
receive as a percentage of sales of certain products. These percentages have a wide range depending on the products being sold. You can check out Chapter 7, “Fundraising Profit Calculations,” to learn more about what your group can expect to make on a percent of sales fundraiser.

### Advantages

- Opportunity to work with established business or group in community
- Cross-promotion can bring in more customers
- Guaranteed profit
- Events can become established, annual

### Disadvantages

- Geographically limited
- Profit may not meet group’s expectations as compared to effort
- Requires outgoing group members to organize and host the event
- Need access to area to host event

### Tips

Many groups partner with their local school in order to have a facility for an event and to find more volunteer workers to make products and help host the event. The school will be a great place to hang posters and make announcements about an upcoming percent of sales fundraiser.

Think about partnering with other organizations in your town that have workers that would be willing to volunteer for your cause and have a large
facility, such as the police department, the fire department, city hall, the library, and the local community center.

Make sure to communicate up front what percent of sales will be going to each group involved with the fundraiser, and make fair and accurate calculations. As long as communication about expected profits is clear, it should be smooth sailing for both groups.

### Chore/service fundraising

Chore/service fundraising is one of the easiest and quickest ways to raise funds for your group. While you won’t make tons of money, you will make money and performing service throughout the community will always reflect well on your group members. Plus, there are zero start-up fees.

Chore/service fundraising takes initiative by group members to get going. There won’t always be signs up around town asking for help mowing lawns or raking leaves. Sometimes group members will need to reach out to community members and propose work for a small fee to go toward a group cause. Many people can find something they need help with around the house if they know their money is going toward a good, local cause.

Chore/service fundraising can also be event-based, like a car wash. If your group plans to host something like this, make sure it is promoted first around the community with signs, posters and social media. These events often work best when there is no fee assigned to the work, but customers are asked if they would like to make a donation. Many times groups will receive more money when asking for a free will donation that if they charged a fixed amount.

**Options**

- Car wash
- Dog wash
- Rake leaves
- Mow lawns
- Shovel snow
- Weed gardens
- One-hour work cards (Sell homemade work cards around the community that can be used by purchasers at any time)
- Perform house repairs
- Work concession stands
- Walk dogs
## Advantages

- No start-up fees
- Need always exists in the community
- Not much planning is required
- Face-to-face interactions take place

## Disadvantages

- Geographically limited
- Profit may be low
- Requires outgoing group members to ask to provide services
- Time-consuming

## Tips

**Remember, not every group is equipped to handle some of these tasks.** If your group members won’t be able to do a quality job, don’t offer to do the work. Pick a chore/service fundraiser that you know your group can do successfully that will generate more customers.

**It’s always better to charge very little to nothing at all than to ask for too much.** People will be more likely to give if they feel the price is doable or that they are donating to your cause. If you do a little work for free, don’t worry about it. It’s not time wasted, it’s time you put into your community.
Event fundraising

This is where the fun really begins. Hosting an event allows you to have a fundraiser that’s completely unique to your group and your cause. Your group can build a lot of hype surrounding your event, adding to attendance or participation and profit.

Options

- Donkey basketball
  (Basketball game in which players must ride donkeys. It's hilarious and difficult, which draws a large crowd.)

- Snow golf
  (Host a golf tournament in the snow as a fun challenge.)

- Snow softball
  (Host a softball tournament in the snow as a fun challenge.)

- Sports tournaments
- Dance marathon
- Walk-a-thon
- Jump-rop-a-thon
- 5K
- 10K
- Marathon
- Triathlon
- Bike ride/race

- Potty Protection Insurance
  (This fundraiser is often used to raise funds for the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life. Community members can pay to have a tacky purple toilet placed at a business or home. The “lucky” recipients can pay $15 to have it removed or pay $10 to have it placed in someone else’s yard. They can also purchase “Potty Protection Insurance,” $25, meaning the toilet can’t be sent back to them.)

- Carnivals
- Bean bag toss
- “Olympic Games” competition
  (Use a local obstacle course or make up your own games.)

- “Light up the Night” glowstick event
  (This could be a dance, a night walk on a trail, or even a 5K. Adding glowsticks and fluorescent and neon clothes makes everything more fun.)

- Hot air balloon ride
  (Work with a hot air balloon company to receive partial profits from their sales in your community. They’ll get the added bonus of your free promotion.)

- “You’ve Been Flocked”
  (This fundraiser involves your group setting up around 25 pink lawn flamingos in a community member’s yard along with a note declaring that they’ve been flocked. The note also specifies that the birds will be removed the following night free of charge, but they can request where the flock “lands” next if they provide a small donation. This soon becomes a game for community members, with the flock moving from yard to yard, raising awareness of your fundraiser and cause.)

- Zombie prom
  (Host a non-traditional prom where students can get gross and jump back in time to those awesome elementary Halloween parties.)

- Dog swim
  (Work with your local pool to host a dog swim after the last day the pool is scheduled to be open for the summer or at the end of the last day. Community members can pay a small fee to bring their dogs to swim and your group will receive the profits.)

- Dorm storm
  (If your group is part of a college or you live in a college town, have your group members run from dorm to dorm, knocking on doors and asking for any loose change to go toward your cause. Many college students will be willing to hand over their loose change or even donate canned foods or recyclables for a can drive. They’ll be happy you took the stuff off their hands.)
Event fundraising isn’t right for everyone though. Depending on the event, it can cost a lot of money to get started, and there’s no guaranteed profit. Event fundraising success depends on your group’s commitment to promoting the event and organizing a quality event that community members will want to attend or participate in. The event’s theme needs to be something the community can get behind. Some prank event fundraisers, like “Potty Protection Insurance” and “You’ve Been Flocked,” might go over really well in certain communities and be seen as offensive in others. We’ll let you make the call.

Groups that host event fundraisers tend to have outgoing members, but not everyone that works on hosting an event needs to be outgoing. Many group members can help with the behind-the-scenes organization of the event, so these fundraisers can work for almost any group.

Remember, all of these event fundraiser ideas can be modified to a better theme for your group or community. Think about the timing of your event as well and play off holidays or seasonal traditions in your community.

### Advantages

- Fun fundraiser (Doesn’t feel like fundraising for your group or community)
- Lots of anticipation by community
- Face-to-face interactions take place
### Disadvantages

- Large start-up costs
- Lots of set-up
- Geographically limited
- No guaranteed profit
- Extensive planning is needed
- Time-consuming
- Area to host event is often needed
- Clean-up is often required
- Needs a lot of promotion far in advance

### Tips

**Events require extensive planning, so don’t rely on regular group meetings to get everything ready for the event.** Break your group into special teams that can be responsible for one or two aspects of the event organization, like communication, budget, venue acquisition, decoration, promotion, ticket sales, and hosting. Have a leader for each of these teams and have them schedule meetings outside of the regular times. They can report back to the head of the fundraising group at regular meetings with status updates.

**Set up a timeline as soon as you start planning the event.** This can change over time, but having soft deadlines will help your teams start moving forward and avoid procrastination. If you never set a hard date for the event, your group will just keep pushing it back.
Create a start-up budget and stick to it. Events allow for a lot of creative ideas, but if you try to do it all, you’ll never make more than the money you spent putting the event together. You have to spend money on an event to make it a success, but make sure you map out what you can realistically spend and what you expect to make during the event, and don’t go beyond those means.

Event fundraisers, especially sport tournament-related events, can generate money not only from entry fees, but from merchandise like shirts and hats. Think about what other merchandise can be sold at your event along with ticket sales.

Don’t forget to have a good time! Once an event has started, you just have to sit back and enjoy it. Your group won’t be able to control everything, and the point is to have fun with your community. Once the planning is over and the event is in full swing, don’t stress. Enjoy the event and worry about the clean-up and profits later. It will be more of a success if no one is micro-managing the whole time.
Donation/collection fundraising is perfect for groups that are just getting started or have very little money for start-up costs. However, this type of fundraising can be difficult if community members are approached at the wrong time or in the wrong way. Simply asking for money or donations without providing anything in return can be very intimidating, so this isn’t the right fundraiser for every group.

Donation boxes for clothes, shoes, non-perishable foods and other items can be set up around communities or schools and promotional materials and announcements at events can help spread the word about these donation drop-off sites. Create incentive by hosting contests at work or school to see who can bring in the most of a certain item for a prize. Groups can also work with local stores to have cashiers present the possibility of donating a dollar to your group when customers pay their bill for their goods or groceries.

Donations can also be requested door-to-door, by phone, through the mail or the Internet. Social media is a great platform to alert your community to your fundraiser. This is also a good place to get a feel for the community’s tolerance of door-to-door donations. Ask the community online if they would be willing to give. If you receive pushback, door-to-door fundraising isn’t right for your community.

Train group members to be polite and unassuming when going door-to-door for donations or to collect items like loose change, recyclables or canned foods. Avoid interrupting people during dinner or late at night. Some people will not be willing to give and may be upset at the request. As long as group members clearly explain their cause and are not pushy if they are turned down, there should be no complaints.
Advantages

• No start-up costs
• No extensive planning or set-up
• Face-to-face interactions can take place
• Not geographically limited
• Guaranteed profit
• Little promotion is needed

Disadvantages

• Intimidating
• Could receive pushback and negativity from community
• Requires outgoing group members
• Requires training of group members

Tips

Set clear goals before the start of your donation/collection fundraiser. With definite goals in mind, group members won’t be able to simply give up when they’re struggling. They’ll know they have to provide a certain amount of items or money in order for the group to be successful, so they’ll keep asking around and maybe even go outside their comfort zone in who they’ll approach.

When sending group members out to request donations or collect items, pair a more experienced or older member with a younger member. The older member can guide the younger member and the younger member will learn from their partner and feel more comfortable.
Warn your group that they may experience negativity from some people and that’s alright. That’s often part of the fundraising process and they just have to brush it off and move on.

At the conclusion of your fundraiser, send personal thank-you notes to everyone who donated or was involved. This is a nice gesture that could motivate those individuals to donate again to your next fundraiser. Remind your group members to take down names and addresses when they receive a donation. If donors seem hesitant to give out this information, it’s fine to explain that it will be used to send them a thank you card. This information could also be used to send them a personal flyer about your next fundraiser, but share that possibility with them if that’s something your group has planned.

### Custom product fundraising

Custom product fundraising is different from regular product fundraising in that these products can be personalized and play to people’s sentimental sides. Personalized items will set your fundraiser apart from others. Selling these products also allows you to promote local teams or other causes in your area. These products are special and may not be sold ever again; community members will be willing to pay a little more for custom products.

Custom products can be ordered in advance if they will simply feature a local team or city logo design. Your group can also work with a screen printing company to sell plain

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Options</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Custom cookbooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Have community members submit recipes.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custom calendars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Use photos from local events/sports teams.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custom blankets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Feature family photos, team/city logos, custom designs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(T-shirts, jackets, sweatpants, hats, scarves, gloves, socks)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commemorative mugs, cups, plates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commemorative ornaments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homemade soaps, lotions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mason Jar mixes</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Sell cake, brownie, bar or cookie mixes, hot chocolate mixes or teas in a decorated jar with ribbon and a recipe card.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braided cloth bracelets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candy grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(People can pay to have a Christmas or Valentine’s Day card delivered with a personal message and candy.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valentine’s Day cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(People can order cookies with a personalized message to be delivered.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing Valentine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(People can request for their loved ones to be serenaded by your group with personal songs and messages.)</td>
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blankets, clothing and dishware through catalogs along with some kind of personalization to be added later like names or team logos.

Your group can also host a fundraiser that allows people to send customized holiday-themed gifts to people at their school or workplace. Products to make the gifts will have to be purchased first, and your group needs a member who is willing to customize the gifts and deliver them.

Custom product fundraising requires a lot of creativity by the group, but is a great idea for communities that have been overwhelmed with more traditional fundraisers.

### Advantages

- Unique to community
- Face-to-face interactions can take place
- Can be themed around holidays
- Customers are willing to pay more for personalized products

### Disadvantages

- Some start-up costs
- Planning is necessary
- Geographically limited
- Requires outgoing group members to sell/promote products
- Requires creativity
- Promotion of fundraiser is needed
Tips

Whether you’re working with a screen printing company or customizing products on your own, make sure your group is clear with customers about how things will look and what types of personalization you can and can’t do.

Choose themes that your community will get excited about. Would an athlete calendar be something the community would be interested in? What about blankets or clothes with a photo of a historic landmark in your town?

Think about the talents and skills of your group. Are there members that are good at baking, designing or sewing? If you choose to make custom products on your own instead of working with a company, you can spend even less money on start-up costs. Dig deep to find those hidden talents. Group members who like to sing may be able to provide singing Valentines to community members, even if your group has nothing to do with music.

Prices can be a little higher than non-personalized products, but don’t set prices so high that it turns people off. Base your prices on the labor your group puts in.

Make sure to promote your fundraiser throughout the community. Fundraisers like this really do offer something for everyone, but if no one knows about it, you’re not likely to get many requests from customers.
It’s been a doozy, but you made it through Chapter 5. Hopefully your brain is packed full of fundraiser ideas and you’re raring to get started.

If you’re feeling a bit overwhelmed, never fear! We have plenty of advice left to help make any fundraiser you choose simple and successful.

Let’s recap the main points we learned in Chapter 5. As you work through the rest of the guide, refer back to this wrap-up to remind you what we talked about.

**Catalog and order form fundraising**

*The good*

Structured fundraiser, easy to show products to potential customers through catalog, no production process, allows for face-to-face/door-to-door fundraising efforts, easy profit projection, and wide geographic selling area

*The bad*

Less control over products and packaging, less personalized for your group and community, difficult for less outgoing group members, group must handle distribution

**Direct sale fundraising**

*The good*

Structured, customers can see and handle products before their purchase, little to no production process, allows for face-to-face/
door-to-door fundraising efforts, easy goal-setting and profit projection, opportunity to host a demonstration using products.

**The bad**
Risk of not making a profit, less control over products and packaging, less personalized for your group and community, requires strong “sales pitch” attitude, remote selling area, storage of product before selling.

**Online fundraising**

**The good**
Quick and easy set-up, flexible and personalized, not geographically limited, no production process, potential to go viral and reach new connections, promotion can be done for free through social media, easy for potential customers to contribute.

**The bad**
No profit guarantees, requires active and engaged online community, some people may not trust online fundraisers, no person-to-person connection and sales pitch, possible negative social push-back from online community.

**Raffle fundraising**

**The good**
Quick and easy set-up, can make large profit by raffling donations from local businesses, little to no product production process, high-end products bring in ticket sales, person-to-person interactions will help sales.

**The bad**
Geographically limited, needs to be traditionally promoted throughout community, requires outgoing group members to request donations and sell tickets, ticket price could make or break.
Auction fundraising

The good
Quick and easy set-up, can make large profit by auctioning donations or homemade goods, little to no product production process, the right auctioneer/host can mean more excitement and boosted profits, bidding wars will boost sales

The bad
Geographically limited, needs to be traditionally promoted throughout community, requires outgoing group members to organize and host the event, need access to large area to host auction (possibly a stage)

Percent of sales fundraising

The good
Opportunity to work with established business or group in community, cross-promotion can bring in more customers, guaranteed profit, events can become established, annual

The bad
Geographically limited, profit may not meet group’s expectations as compared to effort, requires outgoing group members to organize and host the event, need access to area to host event

Chore/service fundraising

The good
No start-up fees, need always exists in the community, not much planning is required, face-to-face interactions take place
Wrap-up

The bad
Geographically limited, profit may be low, requires outgoing group members to ask to provide services, time-consuming

Event fundraising
The good
Fun fundraiser, lots of anticipation by community, face-to-face interactions take place
The bad
Large start-up costs, lots of set-up, geographically limited, no guaranteed profit, extensive planning is needed, time-consuming, area to host event is needed, clean-up is often required, needs a lot of promotion far in advance

Donation/collection fundraising
The good
No start-up costs, no extensive planning or set-up, face-to-face interactions can take place, not geographically limited, guaranteed profit, little promotion is needed
The bad
Intimidating, could cause pushback and negativity from community, requires outgoing group members, requires training of group members

Custom product fundraising
The good
Unique to community, face-to-face interactions can take place, can be themed around holidays, customers are willing to pay more for personalized products
The bad
Some start-up costs, planning is necessary, geographically limited, requires outgoing group members to sell/promote products, requires creativity, promotion of fundraiser is needed

And there you have it. The part of your brain associated with fundraising (we’re not quite sure what part that is) just got a whole lot stronger today (we are sure of that). Take a breather, figure out what questions you still have, and breeze through the rest of the guide to find your answers. They’re all here, we promise!
Chapter 6

Suppliers and Distributors

“There are a handful of companies that still work directly with fundraising groups.”
CHAPTER 6

Suppliers and Distributors

Something else to consider when choosing a fundraiser is whether you should work with a supplier or distributor (a middleman to assist your efforts). One option is the Association of Fund-Raising Distributors and Suppliers (AFRDS). This is an international association of companies that provides products and services to non-profit organizations to assist in product fundraising programs. Members of AFRDS include:

Distributors Companies that sell and deliver products to non-profits to be resold in a fundraiser.

Suppliers Companies that make these products and sell them to distributors.

Affiliates Companies that provide services to fundraising groups like graphic design, consulting, printing and publishing.

Advantages of working with suppliers and distributors

Suppliers and distributors complicate the fundraising process, but depending on the size of the fundraiser, can make things easier for you. If you are choosing to work with a distributor or supplier, looking for affiliation with AFRDS is similar to checking the Better Business Bureau for a contractor. AFRDS holds its members to high standards of practice.
Disadvantages of working with suppliers and distributors

Both the suppliers and distributors need to make a profit in the fundraising process, so working with them means the goods they sell can seem to be on the expensive side and sometimes contribute to the general public’s perception of not getting much for their dollar when supporting a fundraiser. Suppliers and distributors add layers to the supply chain, sometimes causing less effective communication and confusion.

Advantages of working directly with fundraising companies

There are a handful of companies that still work directly with fundraising groups. Enter: Rada Mfg. Co. We make and distribute the products that fundraising groups sell, so there is no middleman. This means fewer layers and less confusion, better value for the fundraising customers as well as typically a more reliable supply chain.

Disadvantages of working directly with fundraising companies

Working directly with companies can de-clutter the process and create more value, but it doesn’t guarantee success. It depends on the company’s ability to keep promises for product delivery relating to your timelines and the quality of the products themselves. Research the company you’re considering working with to find out if a supplier and distributor will be needed for your fundraiser and whether that’s the route you’d like to take.
Now that you know a little more about the fundraising supply chain, you’ll have to decide what process will work for your group. Remember, there are some companies that will work with you directly, like Rada Mfg. Co.

- AFRDS is to product fundraising suppliers and distributors as the Better Business Bureau is to contractors.

- Suppliers and distributors can help you get your products on time, especially with large fundraisers that require more hands on deck.

- Suppliers and distributors can also complicate the fundraising supply chain and make products more expensive. Your customers might be turned off by this.

- Some companies still work directly with fundraising groups, which can simplify the supply chain and lower product prices.
“Knowing how your profits are calculated will help you estimate how much your group can make and set goals.”
CHAPTER 7
Fundraising Profit Calculations

Product fundraising can be frustrating if you don’t understand how the profit your group will receive is calculated. Fundraising companies make profits from sales as well, but what portion of the sales will you get as the fundraiser? This is something you should talk to the company about before you make any decisions. Knowing how your profits are calculated will help you estimate how much your group can make and set goals. It will also give you a realistic outlook on the success of the fundraiser, which can help you decide if it’s the right one for you.

How product fundraising profits are calculated

Most fundraising companies use this system to determine fundraising profits:

\[
\text{Product price} - \text{wholesale price} = \text{fundraising profit}
\]

To determine the percentage your group is getting, use this equation:

\[
\frac{\text{Profit}}{\text{product price}} = \text{Profit percentage}
\]

A company may guarantee you a certain profit percentage, but that doesn’t mean each product will provide that percentage of profit. Depending on the prices of each product, some may provide slightly over that percentage and some may provide slightly under that percentage. Your sales will usually average the percentage the company advertised. It’s important to understand that not every product will provide that exact percentage.

In picking your fundraiser, you’ll want to examine any other costs that could be associated with your overall profit, like shipping, catalogs and sample prices. These things can add up quickly and take away from your end profit.
How Rada’s fundraising profits are calculated

At Rada Mfg. Co., we provide a 40 percent profit to fundraising groups. Here’s an example of how our fundraising profits are calculated using our product catalog. In this example, the product’s catalog price is $5.00.

\[
\text{Catalog price of } $5.00 - \text{wholesale price of } $3.00 = \text{fundraising profit of } $2.00
\]

\[
\text{Profit of } $2.00 / \text{catalog price of } $5.00 = \text{profit of 40 percent}
\]

There are other profit benefits to working with us too. The Rada Order Takers ask each of your supporters to pay $0.50 toward shipping. Often this adds up to be slightly more than the actual shipping and adds to the fundraising profit. Also, Rada fundraisers are allowed 10 free catalogs a year and if the fundraiser places a retail order of $1,000 or more the catalog charges are waived. (This is the type of stuff you want to look for when choosing your next fundraiser.)

Your church, club, team, school or youth group will work directly with the factory to make 40 percent profit.

Call Rada Customer Service for answers to your fundraising questions, 1-800-311-9691.
It’s always good to have a talk with your fundraising company about where their products come from, how they’re made, what the wholesale price is, and what their mark-up is. When you know this information, you can see if the percentage you’re getting matches what the company advertises. You can also project your profits and set better goals.

So don’t be in the dark about how your company calculates its fundraising profits. Here’s a little review:

- Most fundraising companies use this system:
  \[
  \text{Product price} - \text{wholesale price} = \text{fundraising profit}
  \]

- To determine the percentage your group is getting:
  \[
  \frac{\text{Profit}}{\text{product price}} = \text{Profit percentage}
  \]

- Most products vary in the profit percentage they provide, but your sales will likely average the percentage the company advertises.

- Research how shipping, catalog and sample prices will affect your profit.

- Rada provides a 40 percent profit to fundraising groups.
CHAPTER 8

Fundraiser Selection Considerations

“How to narrow down your best fundraising option.”
CHAPTER 8
Fundraiser Selection Considerations
How to narrow down your best fundraising option

Do you have funds for start-up costs?

Yes

Are you looking for a traditional, profit-guaranteed fundraiser or a unique, creative fundraiser?

Traditional

Internet/Social Media

Set up an online fundraiser

Are you Internet and social media savvy or better at interacting with people face-to-face?

Face-to-Face

Have a catalog and order form fundraiser or a direct sale fundraiser

Can you get big ticket event items from local businesses?

Yes

Have an auction or raffle

No

Host your own event

Outgoing

Un出售

Can you get sponsored by a local business?

Yes

Have a percent of sales fundraiser

No

Have a catalog and order form fundraiser, chore/service fundraiser or donation/collection fundraiser

Shy

Are your group members outgoing or are they shy and like to work within the group?

Sell custom products to community members

No

www.radacutlery.com
This chapter could also be called “How to get people pumped.”
Chapter 9

Seller/Supporter Motivation

This chapter could also be called “How to get people pumped.” Basically that’s what it’s all about. Sure, you can have a fundraiser and you can get the word out there, but if you can’t motivate people to action then you won’t get the results you want. And we’re not just talking about motivating the community to buy your products or come to your event; we’re talking about motivating your sellers too. They need to be excited and ready to take on the challenge of fundraising. They need to be ready to engage the community and seek their support.

If this is starting to sound like a pep talk from your high school basketball coach, don’t get freaked out. You don’t have to scream at your fundraisers in a gym and get red in the face to motivate them. Unless, of course, that’s what you’re all about. But know there are plenty of other ways to do it if that’s not your shtick. We’ll show you how.

Seller motivation

We’d love to tell you it’s all about inner motivation (that good feeling you get when you help out your group) – but we don’t want to lead you astray. While that is a great part of fundraising, depending on who you’re working with (especially if you’re working with children) outside motivation (prizes, awards) might be the way to go. Plus, you should want to reward your fundraisers with something for their hard work other than that good feeling.

Track and report sales for each seller throughout the fundraising process. Those goals and KPIs you made way back in the planning phase will help with this. Let your sellers know upfront what stats are going to be measured. This shouldn’t be something that pressures or worries them, but something that motivates them and gets them in the competitive spirit.
Make sure to educate and orient your sellers with the products they’ll be working with. The better they know the products and their quality, the more enthusiastic they’ll be about selling them. They’ll be able to “show off” the products. It’s hard to get excited about products you don’t know much about. Also, make sure they’re familiar with the forms that will be used, any timelines your group has made, and give them suggestions of who to contact as they start out. Getting your group of sellers fully prepared will boost their confidence, and then hopefully their excitement, as they begin the fundraiser.

Have a celebration at the completion. This is a time for the group to relax together after all their hard work. Hand out awards or prizes for the top sellers or the people that put in extra work to host an event. Talk about what could be improved, but focus on the positive aspects of the fundraiser to help motivate your group members for next time.

Supporter motivation

Remember

Show, don’t tell. Find a way to illustrate how people’s money could make a difference for your group. Would you be building something with it? Is it going toward an important cause? Are you attending an educational conference with it? Make the people it would be affecting visible or show what the final product would look like. With a visual of how they’re making a difference, people will be much more excited about donating.

Consider getting rewards for your top supporters too. It’s a nice way to give back to the people that gave back.
Promotion is the key in getting supporters for your fundraiser. But to really get people excited, it can’t just be the traditional promotional methods. Communicating the reason for your fundraiser is essential. That can be done with posters and flyers, but it’s much easier to get that message across face-to-face. Host a mini-event to generate excitement in the community. If your fundraiser is online, host a video chat or hangout so you can actually talk to people and answer any questions they have about where their money is going.

Playing the song “Eye of the Tiger” for your group is great and all, but we hope you have a few more tools to get everyone excited for your fundraiser.

• Get rewards for your top sellers. Let them know at the start what stats will be tracked and how they could be rewarded for their hard work.

• Make sure your sellers are fully informed about the products they’re working with. Knowledge will give them confidence so they can have a better fundraising experience.

• Have a celebration for the whole group at the end of the fundraiser. This is where you can brag about your top sellers.

• Show, don’t tell, your supporters how their money will make a difference.

• Create awards for your top supporters. Let ‘em know you appreciate them.
“If it’s something you don’t know much about, assign a promotion leadership position to someone in your group that is excited about it.”
CHAPTER 10
Promoting Your Fundraiser

Ah, promotion. You know it’s important, but unless you graduated with a degree in marketing, you’re probably not all that interested in spending much time on it.

But you need to. If it’s something you don’t know much about, assign a promotion leadership position to someone in your group that is excited about it. Look for someone creative, organized and outgoing. Depending on the size of your group and your fundraiser, you may want a whole team working solely on promotion.

In the long run, promoting your fundraiser is going to get you more supporters or more attendees at your event. It’s going to get people excited and it’s going to spread your group’s overall message and goal. It could also result in more people in the community joining your group. Once people understand your cause and see how passionate you are about it, they’ll want to be a part of that.

The benefits are endless and will likely continue after your fundraiser is over. Plus, some of this stuff is really fun! So don’t try to take on every option we list; there is such a thing as having TOO many messages flying around out there.

Focus on your audience

Some forms of promotion will reach the whole community, like posters and flyers, but others are going to target certain groups of people. Think about who would attend your event or buy your products. What kind of people are they? Sometimes it helps to develop a persona for your fundraiser. Lists the traits of the person you envision participating in your fundraiser and give them a name. It sounds silly, but it will help you in the decision-making process as you continue your promotion.
Let’s say you named your persona Deb, and she’s an older mother, new grandmother and she’s active in the community. She’ll likely respond to more traditional promotion in the local news outlets. Unless being Internet-savvy is one of her traits, you probably don’t need to spend much time on email marketing, website building or social media to reach Deb. Think about your audience as you pick which promotion methods to pursue.

Promotion timeline

Plan to implement your promotion methods two to three weeks before a traditional sales fundraiser and four to five weeks before an event fundraiser. This will give your community some time to get some word-of-mouth going about your fundraiser.

Be sure to schedule multiple promotion methods leading up to the fundraiser or event. Don’t have one big wave of promotion and then retreat into the shadows until the fundraiser begins. There should also be some promotion happening throughout the fundraiser too.

Have your promotion leader create a timeline for each promotion method you choose to use. This can also include goals for the promotion team, like increasing Facebook “likes” to a certain number by a certain date. This will help keep the promotion leader and team on task and focused.

Promotion methods

Press release  Send a release to your local newspaper, radio and TV station. They could end up covering your fundraiser as part of the news or ask you for an interview beforehand.

Advertising  You could also pay for some ad space in your local newspaper or on the local radio or TV station.
**Posters/flyers**  Hang these around town and leave on car windshields and door steps.

**Social media** *(Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr)*  Remember that older generations are more likely to use Facebook. Twitter and Instagram are more important for reaching younger people. Post about what you’re working on, successes and struggles, and make sure to include visuals. If you use Twitter, you can live-tweet throughout the actual fundraiser or event. Post to each platform you use at least once a day, preferably more. Be transparent and respond to your followers.

**Email promotion**  Send an email to past customers or attendees to let them know you’re fundraising again.

**Direct mail piece**  Send a postcard to past customers to let them know the basics of your fundraiser and how they can get involved again.

**City newsletter**  Write an article about what your group is working on for your city newsletter.

**Promotion on own website**  Post about your fundraiser on your website or blog, include photos of your group working on the fundraiser, and update the top banner of your website to feature a photo of your group fundraising or info about the fundraiser. This will keep your website fresh and help raise awareness of your fundraiser.
Keep your message consistent

As you’re working on several different promotional materials at once, it’s easy for things to get disjointed. Of course, your basic information will always be the same, but if your materials don’t look cohesive, they won’t be seen as one consistent message. If you’re creating posters and flyers, keep the type font and design colors consistent. Incorporate these things into your advertising, social media, website, email marketing and direct mail pieces as well.

Your message should also align with the feel of your fundraiser too. If you’re hosting a serious fundraiser, your promotional materials should match that feeling. If you are working on a fun, upbeat event, the voice in your promotional materials should be easy-going, and mini-events or flash mobs may be the best way to reach your audience and generate excitement.

**Mini-event** Host an event in a busy, public place to generate excitement for your fundraiser. Hand out desserts with labels that explains your fundraiser on them. Have a sidewalk chalk drawing competition and create murals that show your group’s message and the basics of your fundraiser.

**Flash mob** Coordinate a group dance (that looks spontaneous) in a public place to grab people’s attention. At the end, have a group member announce why you’re dancing and how others can help by participating in your fundraiser.

**Announce fundraiser at local events** Ask announcers at local sporting events if you can have the mic at halftime for a few minutes. Announce your fundraiser at your local school’s events and explain how it benefits the community.
Build community

Promotion is all about building community. Not in the construction, brick-and-mortar way. Building community basically means making friends and building trust. How do you do that? Well, if your promotion seems in-your-face, pushy, and a little like a sneaky car salesman pitch, then you’re not likely to build a lot of trust.

Also, your promotion shouldn’t always be about you and your group. This seems contradictory, but hear us out. Just like you learned in kindergarten, you need to be nice if you expect others to reciprocate the favor. Mention other groups in your announcements. Take time to recognize their fundraisers and needs. Participate in their fundraisers. That’s how you make friends and create a positive image in your community.

It’s not that we think you don’t know this stuff already, but it’s easy to get caught up in the promotion process and come off as pushy and desperate. Share your group’s message because it’s something you believe in and truly think other people in your community should know and care about. You don’t want to come off as money hungry. Yes, money helps you reach your goals, but your group should be giving back to the community with the work they do with those funds. Make sure the community knows that, and they’ll be willing to help.
If you’ve soaked in all that promotion info like a little sponge, you’re well on your way to a successful fundraiser. If you’re on information overload, no worries – here’s the gist:

• **Focus on your audience** – Pick promotion methods that will reach your audience where they’re at.

• **Make a promotion timeline and goals** – Plan to implement your promotion methods two to three weeks before a traditional sales fundraiser and four to five weeks before an event fundraiser.

• **Pick a few of these methods of promotion (but don’t try to do them all!)** – Press releases, advertising, posters/flyers, social media, email promotion, direct mail pieces, city newsletter articles, promotion on own website, mini-events, flash mobs, announce fundraiser at local events.

• **Keep your message consistent** – Use the same fonts/colors/feel for each promotional material you create. Make sure these things reflect the mood of your fundraiser.

• **Build community** – Don’t be pushy with your promotion, give back to other fundraisers and don’t always talk about yourself and what you’re doing. That’s how you make friends, build trust and get community support.
“We happen to think we’re a pretty great fundraiser, but you can check out the details and decide for yourself.”
CHAPTER 11
How Rada Can Help

Well, we’ve taught you just about all there is to know about fundraising, young grasshopper. You have your tools in hand, and it’s time to nudge you out of the nest. OK, that’s probably too many animal analogies, but you get the picture.

Before you take flight, consider Rada Cutlery as a fundraising option. We happen to think we’re a pretty great fundraiser, but you can check out the details below and decide for yourself.

History

Rada Mfg. Co. is located in Waverly, Iowa and has been manufacturing cutlery since 1948. In 2012 alone, over 19,000 fundraising groups (churches, schools, civic clubs, teams and youth groups) sold Rada Cutlery.

Rada Cutlery products are 100 percent American made – from raw materials through construction. Our employees live our mission of “providing our customers the best value of kitchen knives for their dollar.” And because non-profit groups like yours are working directly with the manufacture (no middlemen taking a cut), their supporters get an amazing deal while supporting the group’s cause.

Products we offer

We offer a lot more than cutlery, too. Our products include:

- Cutlery
- Utensils
- Gift sets
- Stoneware
- Cookbooks
- Quick Mixes (dips, sauces, pound cakes, soups)
Benefits of selling Rada

40 percent profit  Fundraisers that work with us make an average of 40 percent profit from their sales. You and your customers are able to get such great value with Rada because you work directly with the manufacturer; there are no middlemen or sales reps to up the prices.

Customer service  We’ve helped hundreds of thousands of groups since we started and our whole system is geared toward helping volunteers raise money. We offer five convenient ordering options, including phone, mail, fax, web and simple sorted orders (for orders over $1,000). Our catalogs, order takers, order forms and EASY guide continue to evolve based on customer feedback. Our success depends on your success; we keep you in mind every step of the way.

Fast delivery  99 percent of all orders ship out in two working days. How do we do it? Our amazing employees, of course, and the added benefit that as the manufacturer we build and maintain inventory so it’s available right when you place your order. Our whole operation is under one roof – manufacturing, customer service/order entry and packaging/shipping – which makes communication fast and easy.

USA-made  Our company creates jobs in the U.S. and also helps other U.S. businesses succeed as all of our raw materials are purchased from other American companies. This is a huge selling point for you and your group. Your community can feel good about purchasing Rada products and will want to contribute to your fundraiser.
Environmentally conscious
We value our planet. We use recycled aluminum to make our aluminum knife and utensil handles and we recycle all of the scrap metal that’s accumulated during the manufacturing process.

High quality
The steel we use for our knife blades is a high carbon stainless steel, the same grade of steel used in surgical and dental instruments. Our products have earned a reputation of excellence (see our customer comments below if ya need proof).

Useful products
Rada products are never hard to sell, because they’re useful products that everyone already needs. Everyone can use quality kitchen products, and our Quick Mixes and cookbooks make great gifts. They’ll be especially easy to sell to parents, teachers, grandparents and neighbors.

Fundraising options

Catalog sales – Fundraising groups can order new product catalogs each year starting August 1. Our catalogs are designed to make it easy for your supporters to browse and make their selections. Catalogs have 32 pages of products with prices in $.25 increments for easy adding.

Your group is allowed 10 free catalogs per year. The catalog charges are waived if you sell $1,000 or more.

One Order Taker is sent for each catalog and provides space for 10 supporter orders.
**Event sales** – Some groups choose to order items and sell from stock at an event. This allows customers to see what they’re buying and eliminates the need to deliver items later.

Selling from inventory is done in many different ways. Some groups sell items after meetings or church. Other groups set up at various events and gatherings with lots of people such as bazaars, craft shows, festivals and celebrations.

Unsold items can be returned within 90 days of purchase (cannot return food products).

**Internet sales** – Your group can also sign up for a free Internet account for distant supporters to place orders.

To sign up, call customer service (1-800-311-9691) to be emailed or faxed a form to start the account. Then we’ll give you the login information.

Your group shares the login information with friends and family outside your area usually via email and Facebook. Orders placed online are shipped directly to the customers.

Your supporters will place their orders at [www.HelpOurFundraiser.com](http://www.HelpOurFundraiser.com). They’ll pay the same prices that are in the catalog. This option is great for groups with relatives, friends or contacts all over the country.

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**Promotional materials**

*We want to help you have the most successful Rada fundraiser possible, so we have a few tricks up our sleeve to give you that extra boost.*

*For catalog sales and event sales, promotional materials and product samples can be very useful.* They draw attention to your fundraiser and provide information about your products while also giving potential customers a chance to handle the products.
We offer several options for promotional materials your group can order along with catalogs.

• **Sampling pack**  
  (Regular Paring knife, Tomato Slicer, Cucumber Onion Dill Dip, Cream Cheese 101 Recipes book, Rada Quick-Grip-Clip, fundraising catalog, Fundraising EASY Guide, order form, order taker, Quick Mix Recipes booklet)

• **Poster**

• **Banner**

• **Table runner**

• **Price card**

• **Display boxes**

• **Tabletop raised display box**

• **Demonstrator case**

• **Rada t-shirts**

• **Car magnet**

• **Rada images CD**

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**Our customers rock**

We value our customers and we like to think they think we’re pretty cool too. Check out what some of our customers had to say about working with us.

“We have done your fundraiser annually and love it! Thank you for your quality products!”

– Natalie D, Tygarts Valley Band Auxiliary, West Virginia

“We are getting ready to start our Rada fundraiser. WOOO HOOO! It is always a success.”

– Shirley, Relay For Life, Crossett, Arkansas

“Over 30 years our Business and Professional Women’s Club in Plainville, CT sold these knives. They went like hot cakes. I still have all of mine and they are still in perfect condition. My sorority is always looking for a fund raiser.”

– Joan, Alpha Gamma Xi, North Fort Myers, Florida
“The parents will not do any other fundraiser. :)

– Mary, Soldiers Memorial Middle School Dance Team, New Tazewell, Tennessee

“We really enjoyed selling the Rada Cutlery for our fundraising last year. We have had many of our family and friends asking when we will be selling it again. Thank you for providing a quality product we are happy to use for our fundraising again.”

– Kelly, Kelly’s Heroes Relay For Life, Skowhegan, Maine

“As a non-profit organization we always look for efficient ways to raise money that won’t take so much time away from our purpose of singing and entertaining. Some of us have Rada products and love them. The 40 percent profit is a BONUS.”

– Zoe, Christmas City Chorus, Marion, Indiana

“We and our customers love your products. It’s time for us to have another sale. We appreciate all the products you offer and the assistance you provide us.”

– U. Campbell, ODJFS – EAA, Columbus, Ohio

“I have received several Rada Cutlery products as gifts and they are among my most treasured kitchen utensils – when I saw this notice I was thrilled – I think that it is a great fundraising opportunity and would like to receive more information.”

– Debbie, Pilot Elementary Cheerleaders, Thomasville, North Carolina

“We have used Rada for a fundraiser before and it turned out so well, we have had requests to do it again. Thank you for having such an awesome product.”

– Teresa, BSA Troop 41, Wellsville, Ohio

Order your catalog

If you’d like to request a Rada Cutlery catalog to get started with your fundraiser, visit https://www.radacutlery.com/ssl/request-catalog or call 1-800-311-9691.

You can learn more about Rada’s fundraising process at http://www.radacutlery.com/fundraising.
Chapter 11

Wrap-up

Hopefully you’ve gotten a little taste of what Rada has to offer as a fundraiser and think it’s as awesome as we do (we’re a little biased). Here’s breakdown of everything you need to know.

• **Rada Mfg. Co. is located in Waverly, Iowa and has been manufacturing cutlery since 1948. Last year alone, over 19,000 fundraising groups sold Rada Cutlery.**

• **We offer cutlery, utensils, gift sets, stoneware, cookbooks and Quick Mixes (dips, sauces, pound cakes, soups).**

• **Benefits of selling our products: 40 percent profit, customer service, fast delivery, USA-made, environmentally conscious, high quality, useful products.**

• **Fundraising options: catalog sales, event sales and Internet sales.**

• **We offer promotional materials like posters, banners, display boxes and sample packs to help you have a successful fundraiser.**

• **Our customers are pretty awesome and have some good things to say about us (check out their quotes above).**

• **You can request your catalog by calling 1-800-311-9691 or visiting https://www.radacutlery.com/ssl/request-catalog. Learn more at http://www.radacutlery.com/fundraising.**
Final Words of Wisdom

Chapter 12

“If you use the knowledge and tools we talked about in this guide, you’re guaranteed to have a more successful fundraiser than if you were to jump in unprepared.”
You’ve finally made it. We know it’s been a long haul, but we hope you learned a lot, picked up some tools for the road ahead, and had a little fun with us along the way.

If you use the knowledge and tools we talked about in this guide, you’re guaranteed to have a more successful fundraiser than if you were to jump in unprepared. So give yourself a pat on the back. You’ve taken the first step to having an awesome fundraiser. You’ve done good.

While we’re sad to see you go, we’re excited for you to get started. Just in case you forget anything along the way, we left you some notes to look back on when you need to brush up on your Ultimate Guide to Fundraising skills. So don’t worry about remembering everything, or being a Master Fundraising Guru just yet. That will all come in good time.

For now, we’ll always be here for you to look back on. We’re always here to help.

The Ultimate Guide to Fundraising (in a nutshell)

Chapter 1: An Introduction to The Ultimate Guide to Fundraising
  • Fundraising is a huge part of our lives, and it’s hard! Rada’s got your back.

Chapter 2: Overview of Fundraising
  • Mobile optimized websites and giving centers are crucial for an online fundraising presence, and crowdfunding is a great way to reach younger generations.

Chapter 3: Stages of the Fundraiser
  • The seven stages are selection, goal-setting and planning, promotion, execution, ordering, distribution, summary of profits. Don’t try to skip one!
Chapter 4: Selecting a Fundraising Leader

• It’s always good to look at current leaders for this position, but think outside the box. If a group member is good at decision-making, communicating with the whole group and people outside the group, organizing and can keep track of profits, they can do the job.

Chapter 5: Fundraising Options

• You’ve got oodles of options. They break down into these categories: catalog and order form fundraising, direct sales, online, raffles, auctions, percent of sales, chores/services, events, donations/collections and custom products.

Chapter 6: Suppliers and Distributors

• Suppliers, distributors and organizations like AFRDS can help you get your products on time, especially with large fundraisers that require more hands on deck.

• They can also complicate the fundraising supply chain and make products more expensive.

• Some companies, like Rada, still work directly with fundraising groups.

Chapter 7: Fundraising Profit Calculations

• Most fundraising companies use this system:

  \[
  \text{Product price} - \text{wholesale price} = \text{fundraising profit}.
  \]

• To determine the percentage your group is getting:

  \[
  \frac{\text{Profit}}{\text{product price}} = \text{Profit percentage}.
  \]

• Research how shipping, catalog and sample prices will affect your profit.
Chapter 8: Fundraiser Selection Considerations

• Check out this flow chart to help you determine which fundraising option is best for your group.

Chapter 9: Seller/Supporter Motivation

• Get rewards for your top sellers and have a celebration for them at the end.

• Show, don’t tell, your supporters how their money will make a difference and create awards for your top supporters. Show ‘em some love!

Chapter 10: Promoting Your Fundraiser

• Focus on your audience, keep your message consistent and build community throughout the fundraising process.

• Make a promotion timeline and goals – Plan to implement your promotion methods two to three weeks before a traditional sales fundraiser and four to five weeks before an event fundraiser.

• Pick a few of these methods of promotion (but don’t try to do them all!) – Press releases, advertising, posters/flyers, social media, email promotion, direct mail pieces, city newsletter articles, promotion on own website, mini-events, flash mobs, announce fundraiser at local events.

Chapter 11: How Rada Can Help

• Our fundraising program offers catalog sales, event sales and Internet sales of cutlery, utensils, gift sets, stoneware, cookbooks and Quick Mixes (dips, sauces, pound cakes, soups).

• Benefits of selling our products: 40 percent profit, customer service, fast delivery, USA-made, environmentally conscious, high quality, useful products.

• You can request your catalog by calling 1-800-311-9691 or visiting https://www.radacutlery.com/ssl/request-catalog. Learn more at http://www.radacutlery.com/fundraising.
Chapter 12: Final Words of Wisdom

Thank you for reading *The Ultimate Guide to Fundraising*. It’s been a pleasure sharing our knowledge and our story with you.

**Good luck with all your fundraising efforts. We know you’re gonna rock it.**
Rada Cutlery has been working with fundraising groups since 1948. Each year, we help over 18,000 clubs, organizations, schools, churches, teams, and civic groups make a 40 percent fundraising profit.

To learn more about our fundraising program, visit http://www.radacutlery.com/fundraising.