

The logo for Funraise, featuring the word "funraise" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "u" has a small white smiley face above it. The background of the entire page is a dark blue color with a pattern of white geometric shapes (circles, squares, triangles) of various sizes and orientations, some overlapping.

The Minimalist Guide to Year-End Fundraising

You thought Giving Tuesday was a big deal... and then the three biggest giving days of the year show up on the horizon. With Giving Tuesday 2019 in December instead of November, you've got even less time to focus on your year-end campaign. We know, the fun is nonstop, but that's why you do what you do, right?!

As veteran fundraisers, you already know that December 31st is the biggest giving day of the year. While other businesses are slowing down and closing up shop for the holidays, nonprofits are working hard to maximize donations with year-end appeals.

But with all the hustle and bustle of the holidays, who even has the energy to partake in more fundraising activities? Hello, overwhelm, is it me you're looking for? What if you could do the least, but make the most of year-end giving? Well, nonprofit friend, Funraise has a solution for you.

Say hello to The Minimalist Guide to Year-End Fundraising.

This year-end, take the pressure off and make fundraising a breeze with this simple guide. Our goal is to help our fundraising friends end the year with the biggest bang while exerting the least amount of energy. Some call it lazy; we call it resourceful. After all, you've had a pretty spectacular year and have raised ALL the funds. You're tired. And it's the holidays.

Let's get started!

To get you on the road to fundraising minimalism, we're taking the why-what-who-when-how approach to create a 3-part email campaign for your year-end fundraising appeals.

Why: Your main objective

First, you must determine your why, aka, why you want to raise the funds this year-end (see: purpose). This could be as easy as using your mission statement, but we recommend getting even more specific and linking your year-end appeal to a specific program/service that has an emotional tie. We want you to pull at those holiday heartstrings.

TAKE ACTION

Identify the main purpose of your year-end campaign and the impact it will have. This exercise will help you maintain a targeted message throughout your campaign.

Take a moment to think about your main purpose.

Now write out your 3 impact statements.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

This year-end, **{Nonprofit}** is giving back to the community and ensuring low-income families can enjoy hot meals during the holidays via our Merrychrismukkah Meals Program. This program will 1) ensure no family goes hungry this holiday season via donated goods from our constituents, 2) raise awareness of the food scarcity issues in rural areas, and 3) boost confidence and hope in low-income children who often feel shame during the holidays.

What: A 3-part email marketing campaign

Funraise's minimalist, no-frills approach to year-end fundraising consists of developing an impactful 3-part email campaign. Three emails. That's it. Distributed to your chosen segments (more about that in "Who").

While it may be tempting to launch a gnarly campaign with all the bells and whistles, you just got done doing that (hello, Giving Tuesday), and your donors and supporters just gave. While we would never shun a [thoughtful peer-to-peer campaign](#), our goal is to help you raise the funds during this super busy time of year, not your stress levels.

That's why we've made it easy for you by creating a simple messaging structure for you to follow.

TAKE ACTION

Those purpose and impact statements you just drafted? Here's where they come into play. Follow the template below to help you draft your 3-part email series.

Email 1: President's Message + Year-End Launch

- Thank you for support from the president/CEO/ED
- Announce year-end appeal with your purpose and impact statements
- Call to donate

Email 2: Program Spotlight/Story + Holiday Greeting

- Program spotlight and/or a personal story from the recipient of services
- Brief holiday (or just warm-n-fuzzy) message
- Call to donate

Email 3: Last Appeal + Tax Write-off Shout Out

- Reminder of purpose and impact statements
- Mention tax write-off benefits
- Well wishes for the New Year
- Call to donate

Who: Your donors, of course!

But not just any donors. To get the biggest bang for your buck this holiday season, segmentation is going to be your own personal legendary bringer-of-presents. This is where your donor CRM comes in. Time to break down those donors to find out who's already donated this year, who's got loads of dough ([Funraise's Wealth Engine integration](#) can help with this), and who hasn't donated yet, but needs to.

PRO-TIP: If you decide to send appeals to people who've recently donated (like Giving Tuesday donors), you'll want to reframe your messaging so you're not lumping them in with the same folks who haven't given at all during the year. The same goes for high-net-worth individuals—consider setting a higher suggested giving amount on a [special Donation Form](#) for those folks so you're not missing out on valuable funds!

TAKE ACTION

Review the donor analytics in your CRM to determine the top three donor segments you want to reach. And make sure your lists are tidy and up-to-date. Even if you decide to send your appeals to your entire donor database, freshly-cleaned lists will help you increase deliverability, reach, and impact. (It's a fact!)

List your top 3 segments to target for your year-end appeal.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

When: A December to remember

You've heard of power hour, but this is a power month! A month of fundraising goodness and hopefully a month that ends with donations out the wazoo. Here's a timeline for distributing your year-end appeals at peak giving impulse moments.

Email Marketing Timeline

- Send December 9th—President's Message + Year-End Launch
- Send week of December 18th—Program Spotlight/Story + Holiday Greeting
- Send December 30th—Last Appeal + Tax Write-off Shout Out

How: Automation, automation, automation

To make year-end fundraising a breeze, we're gonna let you in on a little not-so-secret—email marketing automation. Scheduling all your emails at one time will be your saving grace. That's because all you'll need is a day or two to set everything up, then you can go about your business and check in at strategic times to engage with donors and review the status of your campaign.

TAKE ACTION

This is when all the previous steps come into action.

1. Build your emails using the messaging and topic structures in the "Why" and "What" sections.
2. Segment your donors based on the audiences you selected in the "Who" section.
3. Schedule your year-end appeals using our timeline in the "When" section.

Boom! Year-end appeal in the bag.

If your donor [CRM integrates to your email marketing platform](#) (like Funraise does), you can seamlessly pull in your segmented lists and send your emails without a hitch.

YOU'VE
GOT THIS!

A holly jolly year-end

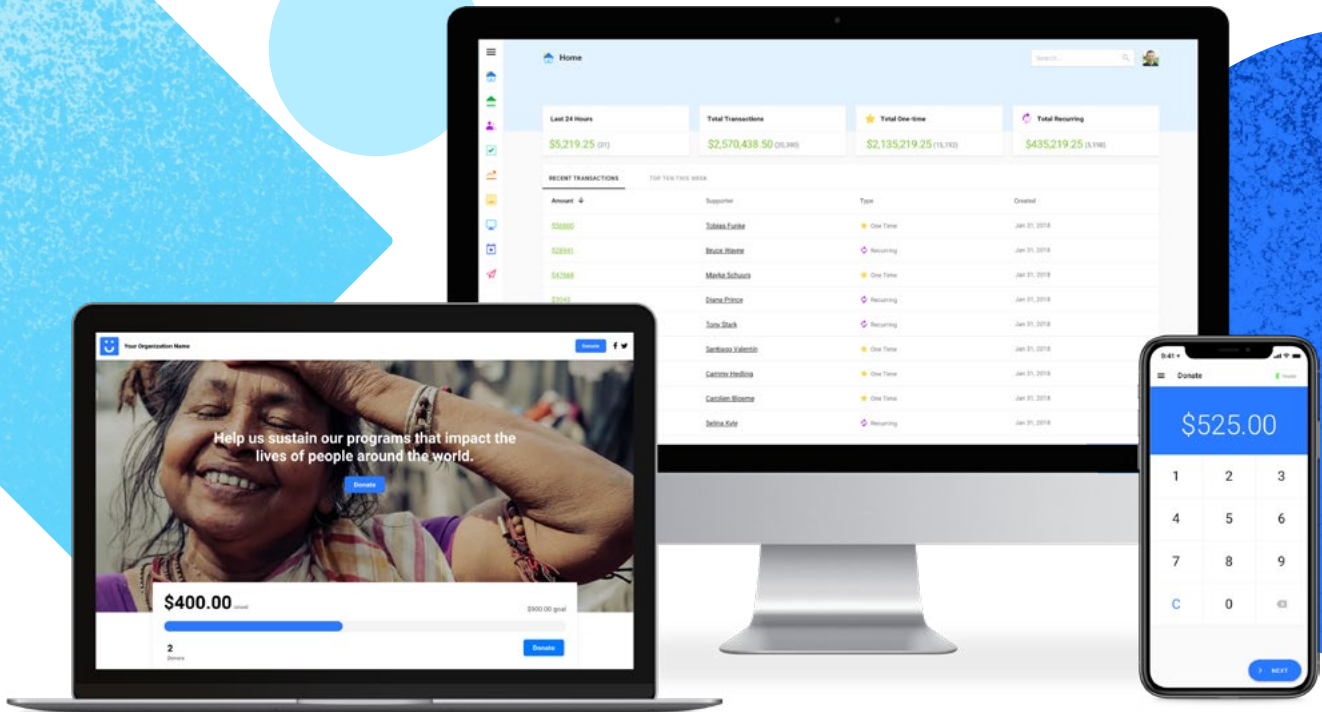
We know what you're thinking, fundraising friend—it can't possibly be that simple to develop a year-end fundraising campaign. We're here to tell you, oh, yes it is! Not everything needs to be difficult. Sometimes taking a no-frills minimalist approach is just what the doctor ordered. Take all that extra time you saved to sit back, relax, and revel in the loved ones around you as the donations roll in.

P.S. We understand that a minimalist approach to fundraising isn't for everyone. If you're looking for more of a maximalist approach, or want to explore more fundraising strategies, [contact our friends at CauseMic for a year-end strategy session](#). They're a rad digital marketing agency for nonprofits and can help you go from zero to nonprofit hero. Tell 'em Funraise sent you!

funraise

Build your movement.

POWER UP AT FUNRAISE.ORG



RAISE



Donation Forms



Events & Ticketing



Peer-to-Peer Fundraising



Funraise App



Recurring Giving

ENGAGE



Text Engagement



Automated Emails



Donation Tasks

ANALYZE



Donor CRM



Donation Management



Wealth Screening



Donation Analytics



Donation Pledges