2021 flew by, didn’t it? We’re not sure how it’s already crunch time here in the nonprofit sector, and yet, here we are. Again.

As busy 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, nonprofits are working hard to maximize donations with year-end appeals. But with all the hustle and bustle this time of year, who even has the energy to partake in more fundraising activities?

Busy fundraisers, like you—that’s who. And The Year-End Giving Guide for Busy Fundraisers is here to take the pressure off and make fundraising a breeze. This simple guide exists only to help our fundraising friends end the year with the biggest bang while exerting the least amount of energy.

Let’s get started!
To get your fundraising from "un" to "done", 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.

**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 cold days via our Heck Yeah! Meals Program. This program will 1) ensure no family goes hungry this winter 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 rely on meal services.
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 + Cheery Greeting
  • Program spotlight and/or a personal story from the recipient of services
  • Brief holiday/warm-n-fuzzy message (depending on your audience)
  • 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 2022 or enthusiastic send-off to 2021
  • Call to donate
Who: Your donors, of course!

But not just any supporters. To get the biggest bang for your buck this giving season, segmentation is going to be your best friend. Break down supporters to find out who's already donated this year, who's committed to recurring monthly donations, which supporters ran peer-to-peer fundraisers, and who still needs to donate in 2021.

**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 7th—President’s Message + Year-End Launch
- Send week of December 13th—Program Spotlight/Story + Cheery 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.

**PRO-TIP:** Connect your fundraising platform with your donor CRM and your email marketing platform to segment and send your emails without a hitch.
The Essential 9-Step-Checklist to End-of-Year Matching Gifts

Wanna double the impact of each donation you receive? You can—by following Double the Donation’s nine easy steps.

1. Incorporate matching gifts into your end-of-year appeals.

84% of donors are more likely to make a gift if they know their employer will match it. Encourage supporters to look into matching gifts before submitting their donations.

2. Increase donation revenue with matching gifts.

In addition to increasing the likelihood of giving in the first place, fundraising studies show that 1 in 3 donors indicate they’d even make a larger donation if a match is being applied.

3. Explore eligible yet unmatched gifts throughout the year.

The year-end giving season is also an excellent opportunity to secure matches for eligible donations made earlier that year. Many employers agree to match their employees’ donations for several months after the initial donation is submitted—often until December 31st of the calendar year.

4. Look for match-eligible recurring donors.

Another group of potentially match-eligible donors to target with your year-end matching gift strategies is your regular recurring givers.

Yep! Many companies allow their employees to batch match requests for regular donations made through a recurring schedule.

5. Provide resources to inform donors about matching gifts.

Consider offering donors access to a searchable database of employer information, with data on thousands of companies and their giving programs. All the donor has to do is type their employer’s name and be met with all sorts of company-specific information, including next steps.

6. Encourage donors to regularly check their eligibility.

Donors may have switched employers throughout the year, while thousands of companies are continuing to add and adjust their new corporate matching programs. That’s why we recommend encouraging your donors to regularly double-check—especially those who had previously been determined match-ineligible or of unknown eligibility.
7. Automate the donor outreach process.

If you’re looking to increase matching gift revenue while saving time and effort for your team, automation is the answer. By investing in a matching gift automation tool like 360MatchPro by Double the Donation, you’ll ensure eligible donors receive targeted communications that drive more matches to completion.

8. Communicate appreciation to matching gift donors.

Don’t forget to thank those donors who ultimately secure a matching gift for your organization. Although the follow-up gift isn’t coming directly from their own pockets, be sure to acknowledge that the corporate funding would not have been possible without their help.

9. Remember: Consistency is your friend! Don’t give up on matching gifts.

Matching gifts often encompass a learning curve; so, listen: even if you don’t see significant matching gift results in the first few weeks or months after rolling out these new strategies, don’t give up on this extremely valuable yet underutilized funding source.

TAKE ACTION

Find out more about matching gift strategies and tools from Double the Donation at doublethedonation.com.
A funding awesome 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 approach is just what the doctor ordered.

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 friendly Funraise Partners for a year-end strategy session. Tell ’em Funraise sent you!
Raise more for your mission

FUNDRAISE FOR FREE AT FUNRAISE.ORG

**FUNDRAISE**
- Donation Forms
- Donation Pages
- Recurring Giving
- Fundraising Websites
- Fundraising Page Templates
- Peer-to-Peer Fundraising
- Events & Ticketing
- Text Engagement

**ANALYZE**
- Donations
- Donors
- Subscriptions
- Wealth Screenings
- Reports & Dashboards

**AUTOMATE**
- Emails
- Tasks
- Company Matching

**MOBILE APPS**
- Funraise App
- Donor Portal App