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## UNIQUE FUNDRAISING IDEAS FOR NONPROFITS



# TECHNOLOGY FUNDRAISING IDEAS



## AMAZON.COM'S AFFILIATE PROGRAM FOR NONPROFITS

Did you know that most major online retailers offer affiliate programs through which they provide commissions to businesses, websites, and nonprofits that help to drive both traffic and sales?

Amazon.com – the internet jungle where you can find anything and everything that your nonprofit could ever wish to promote – runs Amazon Associates, which is a program that provides a share of all sales generated from links to Amazon's website to the nonprofits who share those links on their pages. Sharing is caring, and Amazon turns that caring into cold hard cash.

For each purchase made through these links, your nonprofit earns up to 10% in advertising fees from Amazon.com's affiliate/fundraising program. 10% might sound like you're getting the short end of the stick, but millions of internet users buy from Amazon, so you're getting the beneficial end of a potentially long stick.



## 2

# “SEARCH” FOR FUNDRAISING

Several companies offer funding to nonprofits for each time a supporter performs an online search. Goodsearch is probably the best known and most widely utilized of these companies that provide funds to nonprofits that use their service to perform their regular internet searches. Simply download Goodsearch’s toolbar and your organization can raise money from everyone’s normal search activity.

Goodsearch makes money just like Google: from advertising. The difference is that Goodsearch splits their advertising profit with their nonprofit supporters. You know the friend who always offers you half of his chocolate chip cookie? That’s Goodsearch.

If you’re a major nonprofit or university and want to turn all of your internet queries into additional funds then consider a switch to Goodsearch. They’re powered by Yahoo, so you won’t see a dip in the quality of your search results, and all you have to do is use the internet as you normally do, except now you get to make money for your surfing.



## 3

# WELZOO - GO ONLINE. EARN A DONATION

Welzoo is one of the most interesting fundraising ideas we’ve come across thus far. All someone has to do is sign up, enter a nonprofit of their choosing, and set Welzoo as their homescreen. Then, every time they sign into their computer and open the internet, Welzoo will donate 3 cents per day to the nonprofit they chose! Welzoo simply shows them a random site based on their interests, and they have sent money to an organization they care about.

Imagine you’re a school. If you can get 300 parents to do this, you can get them to fundraise over \$3,000 per year, just by setting their homescreen to Welzoo. Almost everyone gets online at least once a day. Take advantage of that practice and get your supporters to set Welzoo as their homepage!



# 4

## CROWDFUNDING

They say it takes a village to raise a child - the same is true when it comes to fundraising.

Crowdfunding software is a new and innovative way for you to leverage your “village” to raise money for your next fundraising event or cause.

The way crowdfunding typically works is that you create a page to host your campaign on a crowdfunding company’s website, customize it with colors or images, and start sharing it amongst your network via social media, email, etc.

When individuals want to support your campaign they can give as much or little as they want directly to your crowdfunding page by credit or debit card. The crowdfunding platform will typically charge a small fee or percentage of total funds raised on top of the payment processing fee and issue donations directly to your account once the campaign is complete.

There are a variety of great crowdfunding platforms out there which can help you get started. So what are you waiting for? Get out there, create a campaign, and start raising money from your community!

# 5

## AFFORDABLE FUNDRAISING SOFTWARE FROM TECHSOUP

Nonprofit CRM services work like purchasing canned soup as opposed to cooking it yourself, where it’s hard work to grab your celery from over here, your chicken from over there, and then realize that you have to rush back to the grocery store to pick up noodles. Instead of pulling spreadsheets of data from here, there, and everywhere in order to conglomerate your needed donor information, CRM services provide all the fundraising tools your nonprofit needs in one comprehensive package.

Most nonprofit CRM services provide:

- Event and ticketing management
- Reporting tools
- Task and interaction management
- Email and direct mail campaign services

**techsoup**

# PRODUCT FUNDRAISING PROGRAMS

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### COFFEE FUNDRAISER

What's better than a fresh cup of coffee in the morning? A fresh cup of coffee that was brewed with beans that helped you raise money for your organization or cause.

Coffee fundraisers are an awesome product-based way to drive donations. The way it works is that you'll work with a coffee roaster to source bags of coffee beans, which you can sell to your donor constituency, with a portion of the proceeds going to your charity.

Vendor-specific rules and policies will vary but here are some considerations to keep in mind:

- You don't know how much you're going to sell so avoid vendors that require minimum orders
- Check around to see who offers the best profit margins on the individual coffee bags sold
- Figure out if you'll be able to add your organization's color or logo to the coffee bag
- Determine how much support you'll need from the coffee roaster and compare the different options
- Find a secure and dry location to store the coffee beans once they arrive
- Determine how long each vendor will take to ship the coffee once you've made your order



# 7

## WRAPPING PAPER FUNDRAISER

What are you looking forward to this holiday season? Was holding a wrapping paper fundraiser on that list? I hope so because it's a great opportunity to raise money for your organization, church, school, etc.

The way it works is that members of your organization sell wrapping paper to their friends, parents, grandparents, neighbors... you get the idea. For each roll of wrapping paper they sell, a portion of the profits goes directly to your organization.

The nice thing about wrapping paper is that it's easy to transport, never goes bad, and everyone uses it!

This fundraiser is especially effective during the holiday season - your friends and family are going to buy wrapping paper anyway so why not have them help a great cause in the process!



# 8

## OTHER PRODUCT FUNDRAISING IDEAS

The ideas we mentioned above are just a few of the great product-based fundraisers your organization could do. For more inspiration, here are some additional ideas that could lead to delicious results:

- Lollipop Fundraisers
- Candy Fundraising
- Beer Jerky Funders
- Cookie Dough Fundraisers
- Gourmet Treat Fundraising

# COMPANY FUNDRAISING PROGRAMS



## YANKEE CANDLE FUNDRAISING

Why sell overpriced products that consumers can get at stores for less when you can sell high quality, value-priced candles that smell like November rain, French vanilla, and fundraising champions? Fundraising champions use first-rate soap, I hope.

Yankee Candle offers over 150 items, ranging from \$6.00 to \$28.00, to sell as part of a fundraiser. The candles are priced comparable to their prices at retail stores, and you earn 40% of the profit. With no material costs and no order minimums, Yankee Candle fundraisers are an affordable, creative way to raise money. And you'll never experience a better smelling sales booth.

YANKEE  
CANDLE®

America's best *loved* candle™

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## KRISPY KREME FUNDRAISING

You can fundraise by selling heart-shaped doughnuts that look like ladybugs. And sprinkles! Fundraising doesn't get much sweeter than sugar and sprinkles.

Krispy Kreme offers 50%-60% profit margins, campaigns that run from one day to two weeks, free sales materials, affordable pricing, and you're selling doughnuts. The work is practically done for you.

Aside from doughnuts, you can fundraise by offering certificates, cards, and coffee. That's more options to bring in more dollars brought to you by your friendly neighborhood doughnut man.



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## PANERA BREAD FUNDRAISING

From paninis to pastries to soups, Panera Bread has the food people love in the casual setting that families crave. Thanks to their Fundraising Night program, school related organizations can earn money by encouraging families to eat an awesome dinner at Panera on a designated night.

School related organizations must apply to fund raise with Panera. Upon approval, schools are given flyers to hand out to friends and family. People bring the flyers, either paper flyers or email flyers on their portable devices, to Panera on the night of the fundraising dinner and present them upon ordering. Panera donates a certain portion of the night's proceeds according to the amount of flyers that are received during the allocated time for the fundraising dinner.

For nonprofits that are not education related, Panera partners with the Scrip fundraising program. Through Scrip, Panera offers nonprofits \$10 Panera gift cards at a 9% discount, and the nonprofits may then resell the gift cards at full price. That's more casual dinners for all the happy families you know, and more money for your nonprofit to pursue its mission





# 12

## KOHL'S FUNDRAISING

Who doesn't love shopping? And shopping with the knowledge that you helped out your community by contributing to a fundraiser makes the experience all the better! Kohl's Cares is a program geared toward helping raise funds for youth-serving nonprofits.

Kohl's Cares fundraising cards are an easy way for nonprofits to raise money for their organization. Kohl's sells nonprofits the gift cards at a discounted price, then allows the nonprofit to sell the cards at face value. The gift cards can also be used to pay off charge accounts, so if your supporters are regulars, the cards are very practical. And for your big spenders, cards are sold to the nonprofits at a discount of 5% for purchases over \$1,000 and 3% for total purchases the range from \$500 to \$999. Even better, Kohl's Cares cards have zero service fees and never expire! As a nonprofit, why wouldn't you take advantage of this fantastic fundraising channel?



# 13

## MOE'S FUNDRAISING

Moe's isn't just for Monday's anymore. This national burrito chain takes raising money for local causes seriously. Moe's will host fundraiser nights for local nonprofits and donate up to 20% of the pre-tax sale receipts for food and beverages.

If you're interested in hosting a fundraising night, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Fundraising events must be approved at least 3 weeks before the anticipated event date
- The typical time window for a fundraising event is 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- After the event is over, the organization will typically receive the funds in the mail via check within 4-6 weeks after the event
- Whether or not your nonprofit is eligible to host a Moe's fundraising night is up to the local discretion of each Moe's location.



# 14

## CHIPOTLE FUNDRAISING

It seems like Chipotle has it all. Burritos, tacos, salads, bowls, chips... Fundraising?! Chipotle hosts some of the some of the most impressive fundraisers we've seen in the restaurant business.

Chipotle co-hosts in-restaurant fundraisers where 50% of sales during the event go straight to the nonprofit co-hosting that day. Chipotle will create flyers for the nonprofit to hand/send out to supporters and potential supporters, and if people bring in those flyers on the day the fundraiser is taking place, half of their sales go straight to the organization.



# HEALTHY FUNDRAISING IDEAS

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## WALK A THON

Being physically fit while raising money for your nonprofit? Doesn't get better than that. Walk a Thon fundraisers have always been popular, and there's a reason for that...they work!

A Walk a Thon is an event typically hosted by a community, school, or large nonprofit where participants raise funds for their cause by collecting money/pledges for walking a predetermined distance. This kind of event works in one of three ways. A person pledging gives a participant X amount of dollars per mile they walk, they give X amount as an initial donation and then an additional amount for every mile they walk, or X amount no matter how much a participant walks.

This type of event allows lots of participants to get together for a cause that matters to them, and they get to be active as a group!



**Kidney  
Walk**

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## NO-BAKE BAKE SALE

Bake Sales can be fun and profitable, but let's be honest here, they're old school and overdone. This is where the no-bake bake sale comes in. A no-bake bake sale is basically a bake sale, but with the added twist of healthy treats. So many schools and companies are doing their best to promote healthy living, so why not take advantage of this growing trend?

Instead of having your nonprofit members bake cakes for donations, have them follow a theme of health and wellness, and provide some tasty treats that won't clog donors' arteries. Despite the name of this idea, no-bake doesn't have to mean that there can't be baking involved. There is such thing as a healthy(ish) cookie, despite popular belief!

# NO-BAKE BAKE SALE

# TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISERS

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### BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

What I lack in basketball skills I more than make up for in going overboard with my on-court appearance: A thick white headband to absorb my fierce sweat. A sleeveless shirt to highlight my frail-but-not-too-frail arms. Long shorts to let everyone know that this man here is trying really hard to show that he's got some serious swag. These are the things you wear when you stink at basketball, but you don't want to get picked last for pickup.

Avoid having people go through the emotionally stressful process of getting picked for a game of pickup by requiring people to organize teams well in advance of your nonprofit's charity basketball tournament. Tournaments can be 5-on-5, 3-on-3, or 1-on-1. Charge a registration fee and sell snacks and drinks to the participants and families who attend.

Nonprofits can do tournaments with other sports, too, such as soccer, dodge ball, and flag football. Aside from fundraising, sports tournaments are a great way to promote your organization and to encourage healthy living in the community.



# 18

## DANCE MARATHON

Can you do the shopping cart? The worm? Perhaps you're a master of the electric slide. Hopefully you've got a variety of dance moves, because dance marathons can last for a long time.

Participants typically dance for free and acquire sponsors. The longer people dance, the more money they raise.

Invite the community to come watch and encourage donations from them. You can also charge \$5 for people to request songs.



# 19

## TRIVIA NIGHT

In the days before swords were invented, people battled with knowledge. Knowledge might not be all the power, but it is a great way to impress your friends. Or let down your friends, because you could lose at trivia night. But, hey, you learn new facts when you give wrong answers, so that's a win.

Trivia nights can take various forms, including:

- Pub Trivia – Host a trivia night at a local pub. Ask for donations throughout the night, and see if the bar will donate a portion of the proceeds. You can also charge a small fee to participate in the fun.
- Game Show Night – Ask a school or other community locale to host a game show night. People can play classic games, such as Jeopardy, Who Wants to be a Millionaire?, and Family Feud. Charge for admission and request donations throughout the night.

Giving away prizes to the winners can help to increase attendance. Pick a good date, select a quality venue, and promote the fundraiser to all of your friends and family.



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## SPORTING EVENT FUNDRAISING

Hot dogs, peanuts, burgers, and candy, the four main food groups of sporting events.

You can be a promoter of all of those treats, plus gain support for your organization, all by working concession stands at a few of your local team's football, baseball, or basketball games! Companies like ARAMARK will work with your organization so that you can get acquainted with snacks at sporting events while your nonprofit gets acquainted with cash flow.

Many sports teams work with companies like ARAMARK to assist nonprofits with nontraditional fundraising at sporting events. Your organization gets a percentage of what you sell during the game, which can be a pretty substantial amount of money for just a few hours of work! This type of fundraising encourages teamwork and allows for your nonprofit to gain funds in an actionpacked atmosphere.



# TRASH TO TREASURE

## FUNDRAISING IDEAS

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### BOXTOPS

There are several ways to support your nonprofit through making use of something you might just throw away, and one of the most popular is by sending in your box tops. General Mills offers a fantastic fundraising program, which simply requires you to register your group (typically a school) with them, and then encourage supporters to send in their box tops to you or drop them off in a designated drop box. Then, you tally the number of box tops and send them into General Mills.

Each box top is worth 10 cents, which may not seem like much per box, but because the effort is so minimal on your participants', it's more than worth it. Box tops can be found on cereal boxes, baked good boxes, frozen food packaging, paper products, tableware, food storage, etc.





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## LABELS AND CAPS

Another easily implemented fundraising program is Labels for Education. Families take labels from soup cans and sauce caps from participating Labels for Education products, send them to their group's/school's coordinator who has registered with the program, and the coordinator sends them in! It's that painless. Participating brands include Campbell's, V8 Splash, BIC, Swanson, and several more.



# 23

## RECYCLING

Never know what to do with old cell phones? Not sure if you can recycle empty printer cartridges? Worry no more. There are several programs in place that will exchange these old and used products for cash. Funding Factory is an organization that will take both of these products and reimburse your organization after you ship these products to them.

By recycling old cell phones that will never be used again or collecting your empty printer cartridges, you are able to gain some extra fundraising cash, simply by being good to the environment.



# DONATION PROGRAM IDEAS

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## CORPORATE MATCHING GIFTS

Matching gifts are free money that companies donate to nonprofits to supplement employee donations. From iconic corporations, such as Coca-Cola and Bank of America, to inspired startups, such as LinkedIn and SalesForce, companies of all sorts offer matching gift programs. You likely have many donors who are eligible to submit matching gift requests to their employers, but they might not be aware that such programs exist.

Matching gifts can double, triple, and even quadruple regular donations. With all the additional funds, you could purchase so many things that your nonprofit actually needs.

Many nonprofits utilize a matching gift service, such as the awesome matching gift service that wrote this resource. Not to brag, but we compile the forms, guidelines, and other matching gift information that you need to make marketing corporate giving programs easier. [View the top matching gift companies.](#)



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## PROSPECT RESEARCH

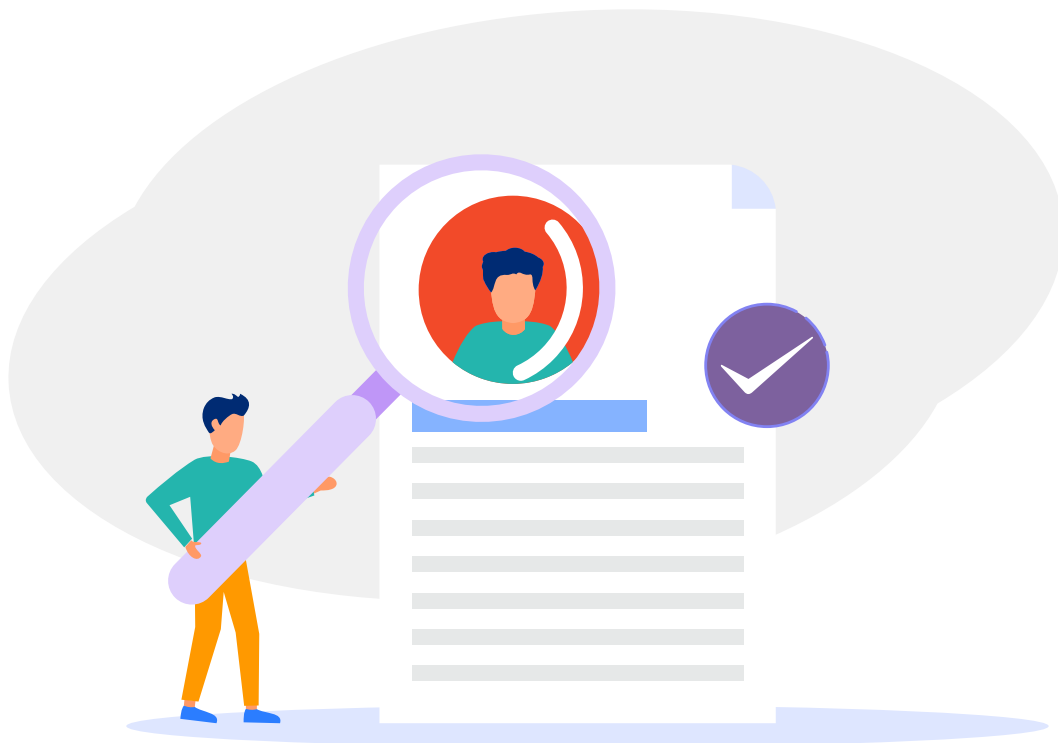
The NSA knows where you live. They have your phone number. They could tell you how many cups of coffee you drink each morning. Okay, maybe the NSA doesn't know everything, but don't follow their lead. Don't be creepy and suspicious about how you learn about people.

However, do learn about your prospects and donors. Fundraising pitches become more personal and more effective when you know why people choose to give to specific causes.

Prospect research uncovers information that helps to identify major gift prospects, such as:

- Previous donations to your nonprofit and similar organizations
- Nonprofit participation as a foundation trustee or director
- Political giving
- Real estate ownership
- Many other philanthropic and wealth indicators

While prospect research won't tell you why a particular donor always wears green pants on Fridays, it will help you to understand who your best prospects are and how to craft better ask strategies to land major gifts and planned donations.



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## VOLUNTEER GRANTS

Work, I say! Work until your bones ache! Remember, our nonprofit is paying you in positive feelings about your contributions to society.

Um, be nice to your volunteers. Not only do they provide free labor, but many work for companies that offer grants for individual and teams of volunteers.

Consider Starbucks, which offers grants to nonprofits according to how long individuals have volunteered:

- 25-49 volunteer hours = \$250 grant
- 50-74 volunteer hours = \$500 grant
- 75-100 volunteer hours = \$750 grant
- 100+ volunteer hours = \$1,000 grant

Teams of volunteers can earn money, too. Most companies have maximums for how much money employees can earn in grants each year, and the number of people who must volunteer to constitute a team varies.

Appreciate your volunteers, because, with a healthy reminder, they could provide a big fundraising boost. View the top volunteer grant companies.



# COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING EVENTS

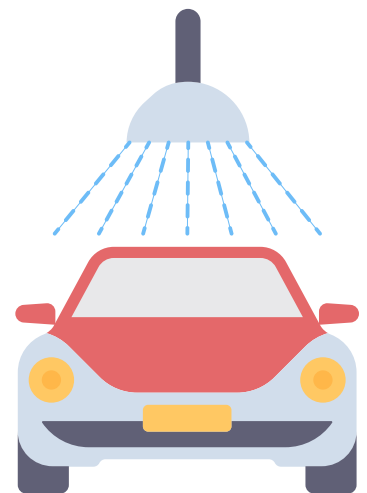
27

## CAR WASH

Hollywood might lead you to believe that the most successful car washes are provided by ridiculously attractive women, and Hollywood might be right, but a car wash for a good cause will attract people, too.

Arm your emotionally attractive staff with sponges, hoses, towels, and goggles, and tell them to make those cars shine like a bald man's finely waxed scalp. Charge a nominal donation fee in exchange for the wash (\$5-\$10), and provide food and drinks for people to purchase while they're waiting. Try offering a special deal for two cars (\$15 dollars for two cars instead of paying \$10 for each car) to encourage entire families to participate.

If you'd rather leave the hard work to the professionals, then seek local car washes that will assist your fundraising efforts.



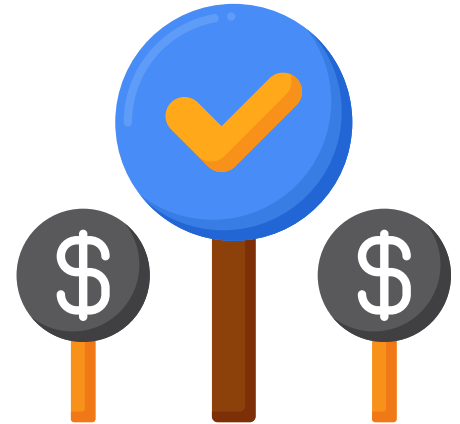
# 28

## SILENT AUCTION

People will remember the night when there was such tension over who would win the bidding for the 1998 Tennessee Volunteers replica national championship trophy, graciously donated by the local sporting goods store. The room was so silent that you could hear a pin drop, while you were wondering how so many other people could care about an old, fake football trophy. It's not fake! It's glory, and the money a nonprofit can raise from auctioning off such desired items can lead to substantial monetary gains that no other fundraising event may be able to replicate.

Reach out to community members and local businesses and ask for items or experiences that you could auction to the public. People love auctions, which can be paired with dinners, live music, and other festivities to provide a great night of entertainment.

Silent auctions can be hosted at a variety of local venues, and can attract new donors. They're also great ways for businesses to promote their products, so getting businesses to donate an item or two shouldn't feel like pulling teeth.



# 29

## HOUSE PARTY

Wait until the parents' car turns the corner and then sneak your friends in the back door and let the mayhem... Ahem. Fundraising parties are for the parents. Kids, too, but it's the parents who can make donations.

You can charge a fee for dinner, but if people donate the food and cooking labor or the necessary funds to pay for the dinner then you can monetize through prizes. Offer rewards to people who sponsor the dinner or make donations the night of the event. Prizes could include free tickets to your next event or any giveaways that your nonprofit can think of. Remember to make a formal fundraising pitch at some point during the evening, as raising money is why you organized the event in the first place.



# 30

## BATTLE OF THE BANDS

Like music? Like sweet sweet cash that's donated to your nonprofit? Then pull together some local bands, book a venue, and advertise with flyers, social media, and radio ads to create a community battle of the bands in order to fundraise for your cause. You can charge a cover for the audience to come watch or a fee for the bands to come play (since you're offering them some great exposure for a respectable cause).

Promoting local bands plus gaining funds for your nonprofit? It's a win-win.



These are just some of the infinite ways to increase the creativity of your fundraising. Your nonprofit should always focus on the core corporate giving programs, but a dedication to unique fundraising can boost your nonprofit like a spaceship equipped with rockets powerful enough to blast it from the Earth to the outer regions of the Milky Way galaxy. We exaggerate for fun, of course, and to emphasize that fundraising should be fun, and when it is you'll be a richer, happier, more productive organization.