

# AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY CANCER ACTION NETWORK

# VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING TOOLKIT



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# Transitioning to a Virtual Event

Shifting to a virtual event, rather than cancelling entirely, allows ACS CAN to continue bringing in critically needed revenue to fund our mission.

A virtual event can also create new opportunities to engage participants who previously would not have been able to attend due to financial or geographical limitations.

Though the uncertainty of moving to a virtual event can be scary, the transition allows us all to try out new ways of engaging our communities.

If you're unsure of what your supporters would respond to, ask them directly. When planning to transition to a virtual event, send an email to your community asking for their feedback on participating in a virtual capacity. Ask what types of activities they would like to see at the event. This will tell you what your supporters want to experience during your virtual event.

## What Do I Need?

Virtual Platform



Audience



Fundraising Page



# Types of Virtual Events

## Game Nights

Virtual game nights are a great way to bring family and friends together to support ACS CAN. Game nights are an engaging and free activity that can be turned into a fundraiser.

**SEND AN INVITATION.** Even though you're not meeting in person, setting a time, date and sending out an invite will help you plan. Determining the guest list will help you decide what type of online games to play.

**PICK YOUR PLATFORM.** Make sure to pick a platform to host your game night that will be easy for your supporters to join. Whether its Houseparty, Microsoft Teams, Zoom or Facebook Live, you want to make sure everyone has the correct access.

**PICK YOUR GAME.** Find out what games your supporters want to play and choose one that was a popular pick. Some examples include, bingo, trivia, online board games and heads up.



**HAVE FUN.** Plan fun activities when the game is on a break and make it interactive. Remember to talk about ACS CAN before the game night ends.



# Happy Hours, Cooking and Drink Making Classes

With many of us cooking and eating at home, asking supporters to join you for a virtual dinner party, happy hour or class can be a creative and timely way to engage donors



**CHARGE A TICKET.** Ask supporters to join for a donation, depending on the event charge about the cost of a cocktail, dinner or drink. To make the experience even more special for your attendees, you could have a mixologist lead a virtual cocktail-making lesson, or a chef lead a cooking class.

**MAKE SURE SUPPORTERS HAVE WHAT THEY NEED.** If you are hosting a cooking or cocktail making class make sure your supporters have a list of ingredients they will need to follow along. If you are hosting a happy hour, consider sending a recipe of a drink everyone can make before they join.

# Comedy Shows

Virtual comedy shows are a great way to bring your supporters together for a laugh.



**PICK A PLATFORM.** Make sure to pick a technology platform that works for your comedians as well as audience. You want to make sure the audience can come off mute to laugh, this will make the show run as if its an in person event. Test out the platform before the show.

**CHARGE A TICKET PRICE.** Charge a ticket price to join the event. Once a ticket is purchased, send the link to the virtual comedy show to the donor.

**HIGHLIGHT THE COMEDIANS.** Promote your comedians before the event. Get Bios and pictures and add them to all materials. Comedians usually have a following and they can promote the event on their channels.

# Workout Classes

At home work out classes have become increasingly popular

**PICK A CLASS.** Pick a workout class that fits the audience you are inviting. You don't want to pick a class that will be hard for your supporters. Remember you can always survey potential supporters to see what class they would take virtually.

**FIND AN INSTRUCTOR.** Find a fitness instructor that is willing to teach a class virtually and donate their time. This is a good opportunity for the instructor to show their skills and potentially get new clients.



**CLASS TIME.** Make sure you choose a virtual platform that your instructor and audience can use. Encourage all participants to mute lines unless noted otherwise. Test out the platform before the virtual class to check sound and camera.



# Book Clubs

A recurring virtual book club is a fun way to engage close friends and family. It provides a fun activity to look forward to.

**START SMALL.** Invite your close friends or family who you know like to read. Pick a book that is easily accessible to rent or buy.

**PICK A DATE.** Find a day and time that works for everyone. After dinner is a common time to host a book club. If you want this to be a monthly event make sure to set up the virtual meeting as a recurring event.



**HAVE FUN.** Send out a recipe before hand for everyone to make, this can be a dinner, dessert or drink. Have questions about the book written down to fill any silences throughout the call. Pick someone each month to come up with the book and recipe for the next month.

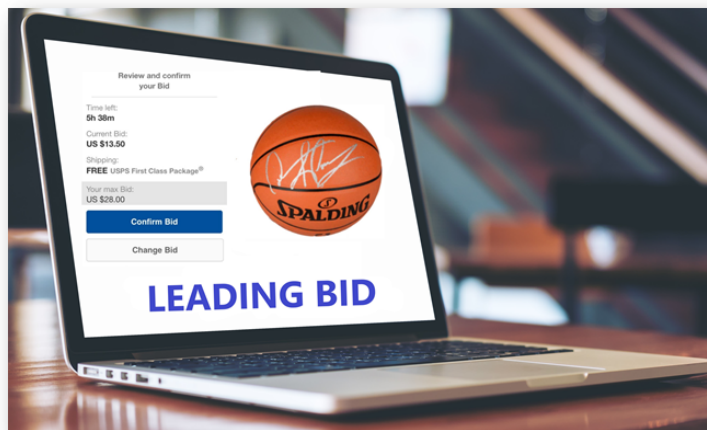


# Silent Auction

Online silent auctions are a great way to engage a wide range of people. Sharing the auction on social media channels has the potential to expand engagement for ACS CAN.

**GATHER A TEAM.** Start by getting other volunteers involved with the planning of the auction. Assign people to promotion, getting items and overall planning.

**COLLECT ITEMS.** Start by creating a solicitation letter. This can be sent to companies to get items for the auction. Remember is anyone donates an item they can become an in-kind donor to ACS CAN.



**PROMOTE THE AUCTION.** ACS CAN has a silent auction platform to use. Once you have all the items, work with your staff partner to get the items on the website. Now you can start the promotion. Post the preview link on social media, send in emails and post anywhere you see fit.

**AUCTION TIME.** Launch the auction on the date and time you advertised. Watch the bidding take place!

# 5 Steps to Being a Successful Fundraiser

## 1

### Do these three things after you start a fundraising page

**MAKE A DONATION TO YOUR OWN PAGE.** Other people are more likely to donate to your page when they see that someone has already contributed. Donating some of your own money also demonstrates to potential donors that you are serious about helping ACS CAN.

**PERSONALIZE YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE.** Add your own headline to the page that explains what your fundraiser is. Add a picture to give it a personal feel. Share your story, this is where you want to tell the donors what you are doing and why you are involved and fundraising on behalf of ACS CAN.

**INDIVIDUALLY EMAIL 5-10 CLOSEST PEOPLE.** Ask them for donations first. Getting your "inner circle" to donate to your page will help you build up some momentum. It's also good to start with people you are most comfortable with.



# 2

## Use the Onion Method

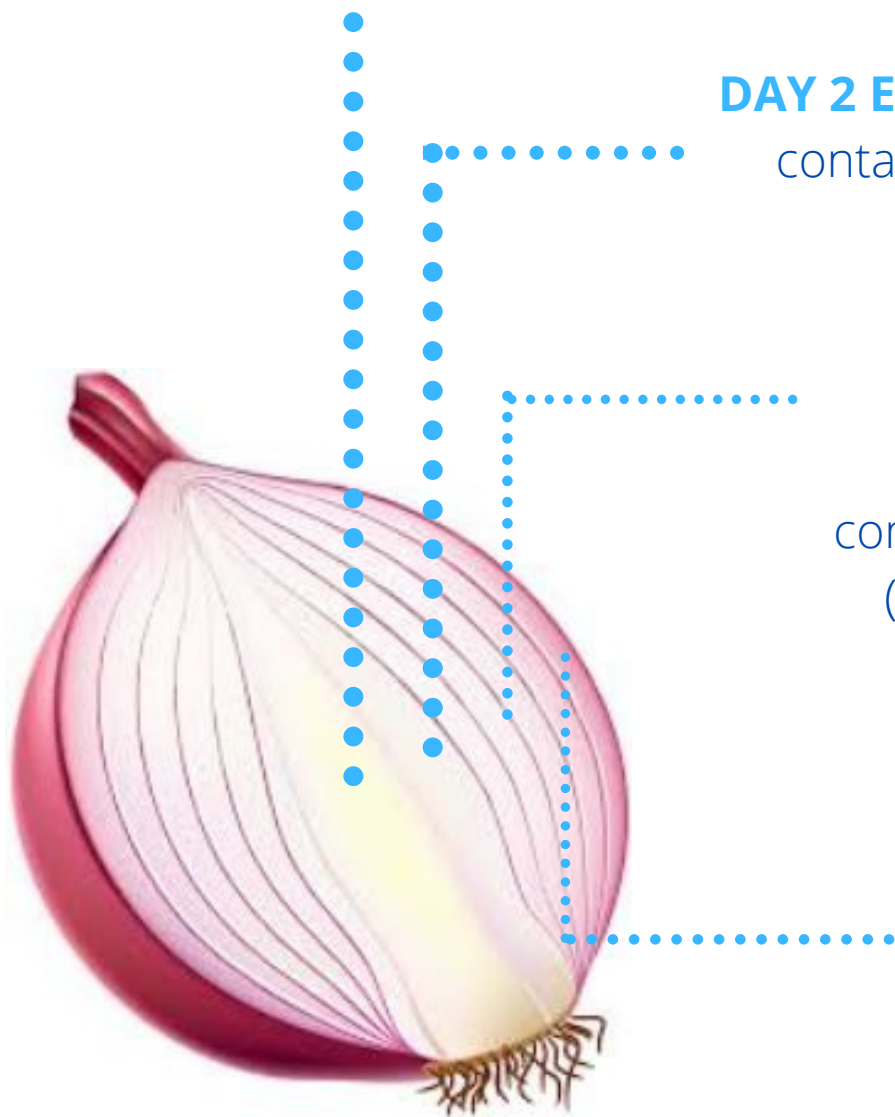
Think about your fundraising strategy like peeling an onion from the inside out. The best fundraisers start by asking their closest contacts first (the core) then progressively working outward to more distant contacts (the outer skin)

**DAY 1 EMAIL #1.** Send to 5-10 very close contacts (family and your closest friend or two)

**DAY 2 EMAIL #2.** Send to 20-15 closest contacts (your entire circle of good friends)

**DAY 3 EMAIL #3.** Send to as many other contact your feel comfortable sending a message to. (co-workers, friends of friends, distant relatives, your entire address book, etc.)

**DAY 4 SOCIAL MEDIA.** Promote on social media to anyone who will listen.



# 3

## Think About Your Email Audience

There is no perfect formula to writing an email asking family and friends for donations, but here are some of the best practices to guide you.

### WRITING A GENERAL EMAIL

Start by explaining your connection to ACS CAN and why it's important to you. Describing how ACS CAN has touched your life is probably the most important element of your message.

In a sentence or two explain the good work ACS CAN is doing. This helps potential supporters understand where their money would be going and what it would be used to accomplish.

Make a direct ask for financial support.

Include a link to your fundraising page.

Thank your supporters for their donation.

### WRITING TO YOUR CLOSEST CONTACTS

You know your closest contact better than anyone. Don't feel like you have to stick to a script.

If a one line message is going to work, go ahead and do that. If a longer personal message will work best, do that.

Just make sure you make a direct financial ask and a link to your fundraising page.



**When you're writing to your contacts, just be yourself. If something feels forced or inauthentic, scrap it.**

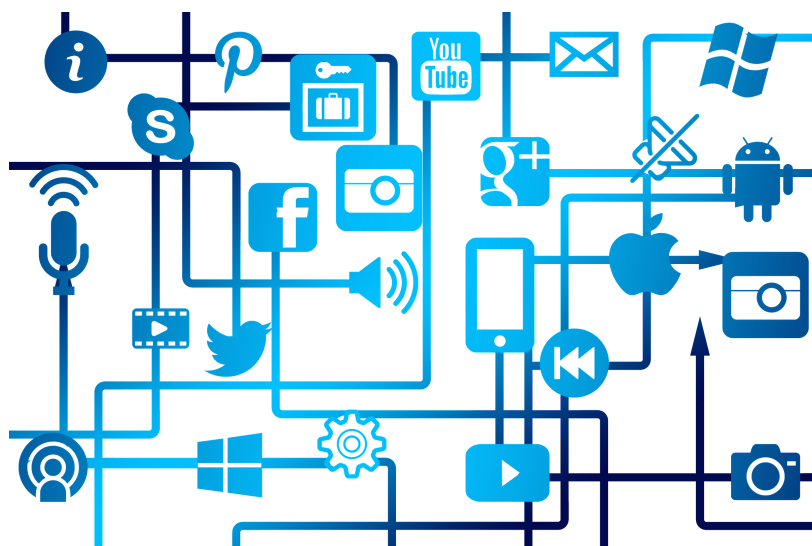


# 4

## Make the Most of Social Media

Start fundraising through your preferred social media channels after you have sent out your initial batch of emails.

**GET YOUR TAG ON.** Start on Facebook by tagging those that have already donated thanking them for their donations. When you tag someone your post get shared in your activity feed and the other person's activity feed as well. This also sets the frame that people are donating to your page.



**SET INTERNAL GOALS.** \$100 by one week, \$200 by two weeks etc. Use your social media accounts to update followers on your progress toward each goal and ask for people to help you get over the next hurdle.

**DONT MAKE EVERY POST AN "ASK".** Share inspiring news stories or other positive anecdotes about ACS CAN.

**EMBEDDED SHARE.** Inside CANRaiser you will find share buttons right inside the funsraising center

# 5

## Follow Up

By setting internal goals you accomplish two things. First, you create more urgency when you ask friends and family for support. Second, you give yourself a built-in reason to follow up.

### USE GOALS AS A FOLLOW UP TOOL

Reach back out to non-responders when you're approaching one of your internal goals. Remember people can easily miss or skip over your initial outreach!

And of course, include progress updates in your follow up messages.

### GIVE 'EM GOOD CONTENT

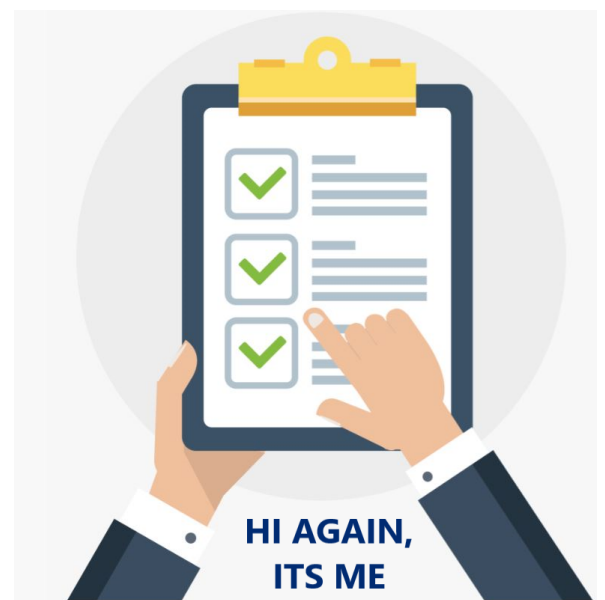
Consider including any inspiring stories or personal anecdotes you have about ACS CAN.

Or share related current events or news articles.



### CONTINUE TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA.

Social media is a softer medium for communicating with your contacts and it's acceptable to frequently post updates on those channels.



# More Tips and Resources

ACS CAN has put together a wealth of tips and resources to help you with fundraising. If you have any other questions, reach out to [acscanfundraising@cancer.org](mailto:acscanfundraising@cancer.org).

We're here to help ensure that your fundraising doesn't miss a beat.

[Volunteer Fundraising Toolkit](#)

[Fundriasing Tip Sheet](#)

[CANRaiser Instructions](#)

[Trivia Night Resources](#)

[Volunteer Guide to Society Donations Batching](#)