



YOUR GUIDE TO RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL RAFFLE

BIG RIVER ONLINE

250 W. HURON, SUITE #203
CLEVELAND, OH 44113

855-244-7487

WWW.GOBIGRIVER.COM

INTRODUCTION

A raffle can be a huge nonprofit moneymaker, but careful planning, thoughtful execution and the right tools are critical to success. This guide is intended to lead you through the raffle process from planning to wrap up. Whether your raffle is offline, online or a combination of the two, you will take away valuable insights and ideas.

Resources at the end of the guide provide access to tax and legal documentation to help you ensure that your raffle complies with state and federal laws.





PLAN

PLAN

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Recruit a group of leaders to manage the raffle.

Who can you ask?

Staff

Volunteers

Board Members

Beneficiaries & their families

Members

Corporate Partners

Schedule committee meetings throughout the raffle campaign to check in. How are ticket sales progressing? What can you do to improve them?

*Use a tool to track online/offline sales. Be sure progress is updated in real time and committee is able to view it.

TAX & LEGAL

Be sure to assign someone in the committee to review applicable tax / legal rules for charitable raffles in your city/state. At the end of this guide, is a full list of raffle laws by state with links to relevant resources

RAFFLE RULES

What are the rules / terms of the raffle? Define them and make them available to participants.

1. Date and time of drawing.
2. Can same person win more than one prize?
3. Does winner need to be present?
4. How will winner be announced?
5. How will all participants be notified?
6. Is there an age-restriction?
7. Is there a geographic restriction?



PLAN

CALCULATE

Before you can go about securing prizes, setting ticket price, etc. you need to run some calculations based on your fundraising goal, fixed costs for running the raffle, additional revenue, etc.

Additional Revenue Stream(s):

Corporate sponsors. How can you recognize them and get their donations?

1. Ticket sponsor – logo on all ticket stubs
2. Prize sponsor – grand prize provided by....”
3. Banners at drawing event
4. Short commercials during streaming broadcast

[CLICK HERE](#) for a dynamic online ticket calculator. Adjust your goals and costs to calculate ticket price & number of tickets to sell.

Fundraising Goal: _____

Total Estimated Cost: _____

Additional Revenue: _____

of Tickets to Sell: _____

Ticket Sale Price: _____



- **The higher value your prize(s), the more you can charge for tickets.**
- **High value prize + limited tickets can be a good option too. People know their odds.**
- **Ask buyers to cover fees. If you sell raffle tickets online, consider asking buyers to cover credit card processing fees so 100% of the ticket sale goes to mission.**



PLAN

PRIZES

The more ambitious your fundraising goal, the higher value your prizes should be.

Note: prizes may be purchased or donated. If you can't get high-value items donated, then be sure to negotiate the lowest possible price. Estimate all costs associated with your raffle so you can set good expectations regarding the number of tickets that need to be sold.

Ultimately, the key to successful ticket sales is quality prizes. Of course, you can always offer cash prizes, but you should be able to secure in-kind donations for your prizes so the money from ticket sales can go entirely to mission. To do this, be sure to give yourself plenty of time (3-6 months) to submit donation requests and secure your prizes before you want to start promoting the drawing.

- Grand prizes might include:
- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Luxury Vacation | Cash |
| Car / Truck | Dream house |
| Boat | Exclusive Access (sporting event or concert) |

Before you resign yourself to spending money on prizes, seek out donations first. There are a number of companies that routinely donate items perfect for a raffle.

TRAVEL

Travel is always a good grand prize. Ask your board or other constituents to donate a week at a time share or vacation home. Often people are happy to donate access for the sake of your cause. If they have questions about the tax deductibility of this donation, be sure to have them consult an accountant and/or review IRS rules regarding charitable contribution of partial interest in property.

There is also a wide range of corporations that routinely accept donation requests, so explore all available options. The number of requests fulfilled is limited, so submit as many donation requests as you can. Be sure to review the terms before submitting a request to be sure your organization falls within the guidelines prescribed by the company.



PLAN

Hotels / Resorts

Marriott: <https://marriott.versaic.com/login>

Intercontinental Hotels Group: <http://www.ihgplc.com/index.asp?pageid=826>

Fairmont Hotels: <http://www.fairmont.com/corporate-responsibility/community-engagement/charitable-program/donations/>

PGA Resorts: <http://www.pgaresort.com/donations>

Cruise Operators

Royal Caribbean: <http://www.royalcaribbean.com/ourCompany/community/charitableGiving.do>

Norwegian Cruise Line: <https://www.ncl.com/about/corporate-giving>

Carnival Cruise Lines: <http://www.carnival.com/about-carnival/carnival-foundation/apply.aspx>

Airlines & Car Rental

United: <http://www.united.com/web/en-US/content/company/globalcitizenship/community.aspx>

Southwest: <http://southwest.sponsorport.com/>

Spirit Airlines: <https://customersupport.spirit.com/hc/en-us/articles/202097916-How-can-I-request-a-donation->

Hawaiian Airlines: <https://www.hawaiianairlines.com/employee/pages/giving/index.aspx>

Alaska Airlines: <https://www.hawaiianairlines.com/employee/pages/giving/index.aspx>

Avis: <http://www.avis.com/car-rental/content/request-donation.ac?navId=T6M21S06>



PLAN

SPORTS

Depending upon your audience, sports memorabilia can be an enticing prize. Many teams support nonprofit organizations in their general geographic region, so look for teams that are near you.

Professional

If you have professional sports teams in your area, ask them for autographed merchandise. They all have rooms full of autographed items for just this purpose. Typically, you need to ask at least 6 weeks in advance of your event will need to provide some proof of your charitable status and the intended use of the requested item(s). Most have online forms that you can use to submit your request.

College

Universities – If there is a university near you, it may supply branded promotional giveaways or other items in response to donation requests. Typically, they accept a limited number of requests of the course of a fiscal year, so submitting your request as close as possible to the start of a new fiscal year is a good idea. (Fiscal year starts July 1st)

Hey Buckeyes – every year, OSU football fulfills a limited number of requests for balls signed by the head coach: <http://www.ohiostatebuckeyes.com/community/donations.html>



PLAN

TICKETS

Tickets – printing, design, cost, lead times, other considerations

- 1) Self-printing raffle tickets has a number of pitfalls:
 - a. You can't assure that each number is unique
 - b. Printing / cutting / perforating can take a lot of time
 - c. It's easy for someone to create fraudulent tickets.

- 2) Raffle printing services

There are a number of companies that provide printed stock raffle tickets or allow you to design your own custom ticket. Pricing depends largely on customization and volume and can range from 50¢+ to 1¢ per ticket. To avoid excess fees for rush orders, be sure to order your tickets well in advance of the start of your raffle.

- 3) Digital raffle tickets have a lot of benefits:
 - a. Automatically generate unique numbers
 - b. Collect and track all buyer data for easy reporting
 - c. Can be purchased with a credit card online
 - d. Stubs are automatically populated with buyer info – no manually filling out stubs.



Most successful raffles promote ticket sales both offline and online. This gives you the broadest means of connecting with buyers and closing sales.



omnichannel



PROMOTE

PROMOTE

PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY

You can have a meticulous plan and fantastic prizes, but if you don't effectively promote your raffle, your bottom line will suffer. Here are a few ways you can spread the word.

Website

Prominently promote the raffle on your organization's home page. A prominent call to action button "BUY TICKETS NOW" should direct visitors to an online form where raffle tickets can be purchased.

For those who prefer to buy tickets offline, be sure to provide information about where/when they can buy them.

Social Media

Identify a dedicated hashtag for the raffle and use it in all social media posts.

Update your Facebook page to feature the raffle – link to landing page where tickets can be purchased online.

Tweet info about prizes, your mission, etc. – link to landing page where tickets can be purchased online

On-site / In-person

Put signs up in / on your facility promoting the raffle.

Distribute tickets to volunteers and ask them to sell them at work, in their neighborhoods, at community events, etc.

Be sure to keep some tickets on-hand in your office in case people stop by.

Local Media

Write a press release or directly contact your local media to let them know about your raffle and to ask them if they would be willing to announce it on-air or promote a link on their websites.



Corporate partners

Ask your corporate partners to spread the word to their employees and clients.
Ask if they will send an internal email to staff with a link to your online raffle page.
See if you can distribute flyers or put a sign at the front desk.

Peer-to-Peer

Embracing a peer-to-peer strategy is the best way to sell as many tickets as possible. The most effective way to structure a peer-to-peer sales force is to promote both online and offline ticket sales.

OFFLINE

If you are distributing printed tickets to volunteers, be sure to keep track of who has which tickets.
Assign someone responsible for overseeing distribution and collecting any unsold tickets

Define a clear process for collecting ticket stubs / cash and making bank deposits.

Keep track of how many tickets each volunteer as sold so you can recognize top sellers

ONLINE

Online platforms virtually eliminate the tedious administration related to distributing, collecting and managing ticket sales. Each volunteer gets his/her own webpage where they can sell tickets. They can share the URL for their personal page(s) via email, social media, etc. The website automatically delivers ticket stubs to each buyer, deposits cash into your bank account, and keeps track of each volunteer's sales.



Enabling online peer-to-peer sales protects both volunteers and ticket buyers.

VOLUNTEERS

No books of tickets to carry around

No cash in hand

TICKET BUYERS

Personal information & payment is encrypted and secure





ANNOUNCE THE WINNER

ANNOUNCE THE WINNER

Collect all cash and ticket stubs on appointed cut-off date. Add offline ticket stubs to the hopper. Print stubs from online ticket sales and add them to the hopper.

****If your raffle software doesn't automatically inactivate sales on your scheduled cut-off date, be sure to go in and manually shut down online ticket sales****

Where will the drawing be held?

Will there be additional activities/entertainment – food, a band, cash bar, other?

Who will setup / teardown?

Will prize(s) be on site? How will you display them?

Is security required for the event?

Consider broadcasting the drawing live online using a service like [Boxcast](#)

Invite local media to attend

Assign someone to take pictures / video and share via social media

Reward those who sold the most tickets & those who worked on the raffle committee– prizes and public recognition at the event.





WRAP UP

WRAP UP

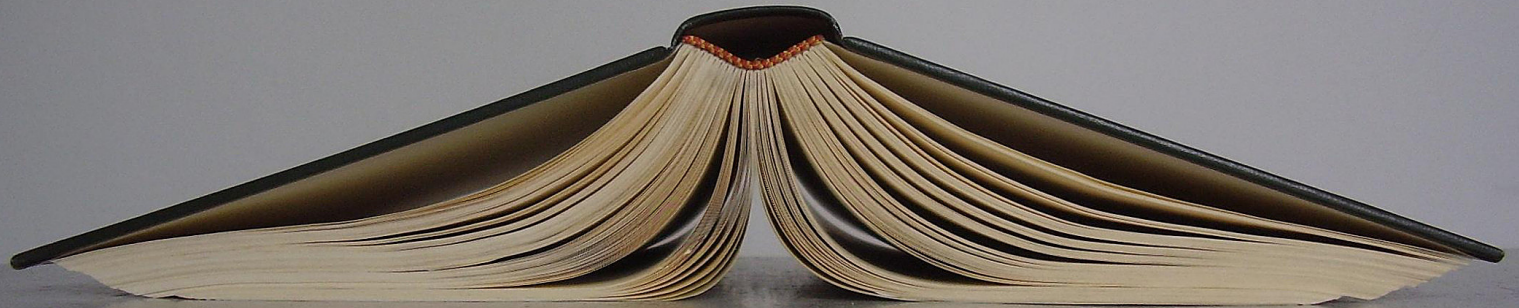
Notify participants of the winner and thank them for participating

1. Send email announcement to participants
2. Announce winner via social media
3. Post winners on your website
4. Post a big flyer in your lobby

People will be paying close attention to the notifications about the outcome of the drawing, so use this opportunity to promote another upcoming event or activity.

Consolidate contact list for all participants so you can promote future raffles to them. If you sold tickets online, you should be able to easily extract contact details and purchase history. For tickets sold offline, manually track contact details.





RESOURCES

RESOURCES

IRS NOTICE

[“Tax-Exempt Organizations & Raffle Prizes”](#)

RAFFLE LAWS BY STATE (UPDATED JUNE, 2015)

Be sure to review the raffle laws for your state. Wherever available, links have been provided to either the laws themselves or to resources for those seeking a permit / license.

Laws and regulations are subject to change and websites can change as well. If you stumble on a broken or out-of-date link, please let us know by emailing help@gobigriver.com

STATE	STATUS	NOTES	RESOURCE LINK
Alabama	Illegal	(Code of Alabama §13A-12-20, Article IV § 65, Const. of Ala 1901)	
Alaska	Legal	Permit Required	link
Arizona	Legal	Check to be sure you qualify	link
Arkansas	Legal	Permit Required	link
California	Legal		link
Colorado	Legal	Permit Required	link
Connecticut	Legal	Permit Required	link
Delaware	Legal	Permit Required	link
Florida	Legal	Permit Required	link
Georgia	Legal	Contact County Sheriff's Office for permit	link
Hawaii	Illegal		link
Idaho	Legal		link
Illinois	Legal	Contact County Clerk for permit	link
Indiana	Legal	qualification application & gaming license required	link
Iowa	Legal	License Required	link
Kansas	Temporarily Illegal	Amendment expected July 2015	link



STATE	STATUS	NOTES	RESOURCE LINK
Kentucky	Legal	License Required	link
Louisiana	Legal	License Required	link
Maine	Legal	License May Be Required	link
Maryland	Legal	State & County Licenses May Be Required	link
Massachusetts	Legal	Permit Required	link
Michigan	Legal	Permit Required	link
Minnesota	Legal	Permit Required	link
Mississippi	Legal	License Required	link
Missouri	Legal		link
Montana	Legal		link
Nebraska	Legal	License Required	link
Nevada	Legal	License Required	link
New Hampshire	Legal	License Required	link
New Jersey	Legal	Registration Required	link
New Mexico	Legal	License required for more than 4 raffles per year	link
New York	Legal	License Required	link
North Carolina	Legal		link
North Dakota	Legal	License or Permit Required	link
Ohio	Legal		link
Oklahoma	Legal		link
Oregon	Legal	License Required	link
Pennsylvania	Legal	License Required	link
Rhode Island	Legal	Permit Required	link
South Carolina	Legal	Registration Required	link
South Dakota	Legal	Written notice to Secretary of State Required	link
Tennessee	Legal		link
Texas	Legal		link



STATE	STATUS	NOTES	RESOURCE LINK
Utah	Illegal		link
Vermont	Legal		link
Virginia	Legal	License May Be Required	link
Washington	Legal	License Required	link
Washington D.C.	Legal	License Required	link
West Virginia	Legal	License Required	link
Wisconsin	Legal	License Required	link
Wyoming	Legal		link

Disclaimer

No warranties or guarantees are implied or expressed. Information compiled here is not meant as a substitute for the advice of a licensed attorney. To ensure compliance with state and local regulations, consult with an attorney. Proceed without legal counsel and risk investigation and/or penalties if a complaint is filed or law enforcement agencies become aware of non-compliant activities.





BIG RIVER
FUNDRAISING THAT FITS

This guide is provided by Big River Online. Big River fundraising software was designed specifically to help nonprofit organizations raise more money online with easy-to-use, innovative tools. Big River provides unified solutions for all kinds of donor commerce including donations, recurring donations, events, memberships, raffles and more.