

## Best Practices: Virtual Silent Auction

So, you want to host a silent auction? You have come to the right place! Here you will find some best practices for online silent auction management!

- 1) Establish a Silent Auction company lead and group
  - a. Having 1-3 people to manage your silent auction ensures a streamlined and stress-free process.
  - b. Collaborate with partners who want to work on your auction. Recruit vendors and auctioneers who will be ambassadors for your cause and keep their networks actively involved.
- 2) Choose your silent auction platform. Invest in an online platform such as Greater Giving where you can import your auction items, set prices, start the bidding, and collect the money!
  - a. Decide how you will be collecting your funds. Most platforms will ask for a credit card, ensuring payment is made. We highly encourage accepting credit cards/debit cards only for ease of tracking and receiving payments.
- 3) Outreach to local businesses
  - a. Reach out to local businesses and organizations to request in-kind gifts and encourage your colleagues to use their connections to obtain gifts as well (think local boutiques, experiences such as the Zoo, Aquarium, sporting events, shops, etc.)
  - b. If you want to brainstorm further for places of outreach and example emails, reach out to your United Way contact! We are here to help!
- 4) Upload your items onto your giving platform
  - a. Study up on the platform you'll be using prior to the announcing online events or adding it to your website. Invest in training courses and utilize the call support program if help is required. It's easier to learn the details before using a program than to try finding and fixing mistakes afterward.
  - b. Create engaging and short descriptions that catch a user's eye, and incorporate photography for every item.
  - c. Items can be gathered and sold as a package to make it more attractive. For example, a date night basket would include tickets to the movies and gift card for dinner at a restaurant.
  - d. Insist on good-quality photos of your auction items and include everything in your auction packages. Make it a point to write descriptions that will attract bidders with enticing descriptive word choices.



- e. Limit the number of items offered in a silent auction. Focus more on the **quality** of the item than the number. This will allow you to raise more money with less work and keep bidders from getting lost in a long list of desirable items.
- 5) Share the auction with your colleagues!
    - a. Send emails reminding your colleagues that the silent auction is live, remember to add the link to the silent auction to every communication sent out
    - b. Add the silent auction information to your employee intranet
    - c. The key to holding an Online Auction is the same as for any live event—promotion! Attendance can be just as high, if not higher, for an online-only auction. And with fewer costs, you have an opportunity to maximize your impact.
  - 6) Proving to your sponsors that you are committed to going forward with your fundraiser and making it successful is key to keeping those relationships on solid footing for the future.
    - a. By being flexible in this difficult time and providing a place for them to shine during your virtual auction, you'll demonstrate that you take their participation seriously and value their contributions.
    - b. You can upload their company logo at the bottom of the bidding page which will scroll through while bidders are participating.