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Product Fundraising: The ABCs of Selling Goods for a Worthy Cause



Product Fundraising: The ABCs of Selling Goods for a Worthy Cause

I bet you are all familiar with product fundraising. You probably have tried selling goods in your school way back in your college days, or maybe you know someone or a non-profit group selling products just to raise funds. Well, thousands of school and non-profit organizations have relied on product fundraising for meeting most of their goals. They believe that fundraising in this way can greatly aid them in achieving all that they will need to fund whatever projects they may have set.

To some degree they are right. Product fundraising can greatly help them meet their fundraising purposes. But, product fundraising is not just as simple as selling goods and obtaining profits. There are some necessary things involved that every member of the fundraising group has to take into consideration. The problem on how to make the fundraising event as successful as the Girl Scouts' annual cookie sale, for instance, is there. And, many are wondering if the product fundraising is worth the effort. This is basically where the importance of considering all that is involved in product fundraising comes in.

So what really are involved in product fundraising? How can you make it one of the most successful events you've ever attended?

Let us know the answer to such questions by reading the following details.

Product Fundraising: The Definition

The idea of product fundraising is something that is not new. As a matter of fact, it has been around for more than a century now. And when people hear the term “product fundraising”, they easily associate the idea of purchasing and re-selling of the popular consumer products by a non-profit group or organization. However, the non-profit organizations like charitable institutions are not only the ones that consider product fundraising. There are still other organizations out there that practice this fundraising type for profit. In both cases, it is the organization that sponsors the sales that keeps a part of the gross sales.

In product fundraising, the products can be purchased in bulk, also known by many as wholesale. These products are paid in advance by the fundraising organization, and then re-sold to the public. There are also some instances in this kind of situation when the products can be ordered through catalogs, order forms, and other possible methods. In turn, it is the consumers or the public who pay for the product when the order is placed or when final delivery is completed.

It is interesting to know that in today’s highly competitive world most of the products re-sold at product fundraising events are offered at pretty reasonable prices. They are given with a pretty affordable price tag for the notion that the lower the price is, the more the consumers will be. But this has nothing to do with the product quality, which is but one of the most of the important things to consider when planning for product fundraising. But before we move on to the product quality, let us first know why product fundraising is so effective.

Why Product Fundraising is Effective?

Many people are asking and wondering what makes product fundraising an effective tactic. The main reason is the product fundraising usually involves a professional fundraising company who is expert about everything involved in fundraising. Also, it is usual for this kind of event that sales representatives are part of the group. It is these representatives and the company itself that serve as

liaison between the supplier of the goods re-sold and the volunteers who are willing to fundraise. It is further worth noting that the fundraising companies are exactly the ones which provide advice and ideas about trouble-shooting, support, products, guidance and other beneficial services that can help make the event as successful as it should be.

It is also commonly noted that the chance for the product fundraising events to work is high for the reason that the products sell fast and people like purchasing the products knowing how great the purpose of the fundraising group is. It is indeed like buying for a worthy cause.

With that, it's no wonder that most of the product fundraising non-profit organizations have been noted to obtain a net profit of approximately \$2 billion just for selling goods, be it on the streets, door-to-door, through telephone, or through the internet.

So the definition and the effectiveness of product fundraising is already mentioned. Now, I bet it is wise for you to know how the fundraising company is involved in the product fundraising event, how the products are given for the non-profit organizations to sell, and how exactly to find the best fundraising company that handles product fundraising. All of these are worth noting as everything you'll learn from here can be applied exactly to your own product fundraising event, in case you are considering it.

For further emphasis, please read on.

Who are the Product Fundraisers?

As mentioned earlier, the product fundraisers are companies that provide services and product to the non-profit organizations that wish to fundraise for a

worthy cause. The fundraisers are actually the ones which aid the non-profit organization in their fundraising programs. It is expected from them to possess the necessary skills, expertise and knowledge that can be used for making the fundraising event as successful one. And just like other business companies out there, the product fundraising companies differ according to how big and small they are. They even differ according to how the company is run and of course, according to the services and products they offer. For instance, there are some product fundraising companies that owned are owned and run by families who collectively employ people who are willing to help non-profit organizations for meeting their specific needs. And since the product fundraisers distribute goods and services to the organizations, it's no wonder that today these companies are known collectively as fundraising distributors.

How the Companies Benefit from the Fundraising Efforts

Being the providers and distributors of goods and services to the non-profit organizations, the product fundraisers in some way benefit from the fundraising efforts exerted by the fundraising groups. But in what way?

It is given that the product fundraisers provide products and services to help the non-profit organizations in raising funds that can be used for meeting whatever worthy purposes the organizations have set. These services and products, of course, come with a price, and what many have said, the rewards of a good relationship with a fundraising company are well worth the investment. The company then benefit from the fundraising efforts in a way that they get a portion of the fundraising income. However, what they obtain from the gross proceeds is spent to cover the cost of them doing business.

The costs considered by companies when dealing business with their clients usually include:

- The cost of the products and other materials, such as brochures, parent letters, and order forms, etc.
- The costs associated with the services provided, including packing, stocking, handling inventory, shipping, and troubleshooting.
- A fair profit that can be used for the company's survival.

The product fundraising companies nowadays are rapidly growing with more and more non-profit organizations realizing the importance and effectiveness of product fundraising. However, with a number of companies available out there for you to choose from, finding the right company is a bit puzzling. It is even more puzzling knowing that the products and services that the product fundraising companies offer differ largely. This is basically where the importance of knowing how to find the right product fundraising company comes in.

So if you want to know exactly how to find the best fundraising company that can assist you with everything you'll need for your fundraising project, note the following guidelines. I have stressed these guidelines primarily to help you decide on which of the available product fundraising companies to consider. Simply note these ideas and be sure to carry it with you in case you feel like finding a company that will help you fundraise for a worthy cause.

The Guidelines for Choosing the Right Fundraising Company:

- Look for the quality of the products. Make sure that the products and services offered by the fundraising company have the potential to catch the attention of the consumers. Consider a sense of freshness.
- Know the background of the company. Always remember that not all product fundraising companies have built a reputation so great for them to

be worth your attention and respect. So take a closer look to the company's reputation. Know how long have they been serving the non-profit organizations or how long have they been in the business.

- What about the company's customer service? Are they represented by good customer relations officers? Simply know more about it.
- Know the marketing materials they provide. Are the marketing materials great enough to attract audience? Are the materials free? If not, how much is the price?
- Make sure that the product fundraising company you are considering has maintained a clear and written policies and procedures.
- Look for the companies refund and return policies. This is very much important in case you may get products that are below the standard quality you expect them to possess. I am actually about product defects. And, if you found that the company has maintained such kind of policies, read and review them carefully.
- Consider the nature of the company's shipments. Know how long it takes for them to ship and deliver the goods you've purchased. How timely are their shipments?

If you've looked at these guidelines carefully, there's a great possibility for you to find the best product fundraising company. So take your time when searching for the right company. Don't haste.

Types of Product Fundraising

The fundraising companies generally offer a number of different fundraisings services to the non-profit organizations. These services come in a variety of types, and so far the most well-known methods include the following:

- ***Scratch Card Fundraising*** – One of the most practiced tactic for product fundraising is the scratch card fundraising. This basically involves scratch off cards that generally work like donation systems. The supporters of this kind of fundraising are asked to get cards with 50 cancelled dots. Then, they are told to scratch off about two dots and donate the amount revealed from the scratched dots. For the supporters benefit, the group gives them a sheet of useful national coupons as thank you gifts. Note that this tactic has been a hit for the outstanding profits it gives. According to some surveys, many of the fundraisers will make 70% profit from just buying a single card, and about 90% of the profit can be obtained by buying as few as 100 cards.
- ***Cookie Dough Fundraising*** – When it comes to pre-sell fundraisers, the cookie dough fundraising is the most successful. This is shown exactly by the number of non-profit organizations relying on cookie dough sales as the main source of their fundraising. And with today’s growing number of groups recognizing the efficiency of this tactic, a number of brands and types of cookie dough were introduced to help make the sale goes well.
- ***Brochure Fundraising*** – This is but another staple of fundraising. This types involves the use of gift catalogs designed to take advantage of the major gift giving seasons, the reason that brochure fundraising is sometimes known as “seasonal sellers”. As such, don’t be surprised to find gift items and gift wrap along with the brochures. The brochures are just used for orders and order forms are provided for the supporters to consider what they want from what is offered.

- ***Magazine Fundraising*** – It is this tactic actually which had swept some of the major areas in the United States by storm. Today, this is still considered as a hit with most homes in the United States subscribing to at least one magazine that is offered for fundraising purposes. And, with the growing popularity of this trend, more and more fundraising groups are taking advantage to that by started selling magazine subscriptions as fundraisers.
- ***Candy Fundraising*** – Of the well-known product fundraising tactics, it this type which makes up one of the largest portions of the product fundraising. Candies are even considered as the most common direct sale fundraising item in the world these days. The most marketed brands of candies include Hershey's, M&M's and the Original One Dollar Bar.
- ***Pizza and Discount Card Fundraising*** – It is this trend actually that holds the highest profits in all of the fundraising. Several programs have been geared to both the smaller and larger groups, and some the cards offered are given with the need for customization. However, the cards are pricier and more time consuming to put together, but the profits it brings are enormous, the reason that pizza and discount card is preferred by most fundraisers.
- ***Lollipop Fundraising*** – Just like candies, lollipops are oftentimes used as the primary material for product fundraising. It is sold to the supporters in all shapes and sizes, and with a number of non-profit organizations considering it, it's no wonder that lollipop fundraising is considered throughout the world as the most common item in fundraising.

There are other items used by most non-profit organizations for product fundraising. It is important to note, however, that each brings a different level of profit. Each also differs according to how much the cost. So when considering a

product fundraising, it is always a good idea to decide on the tactic that will best suit your specific needs. This is also true when choosing the right product fundraising company to be trusted.

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