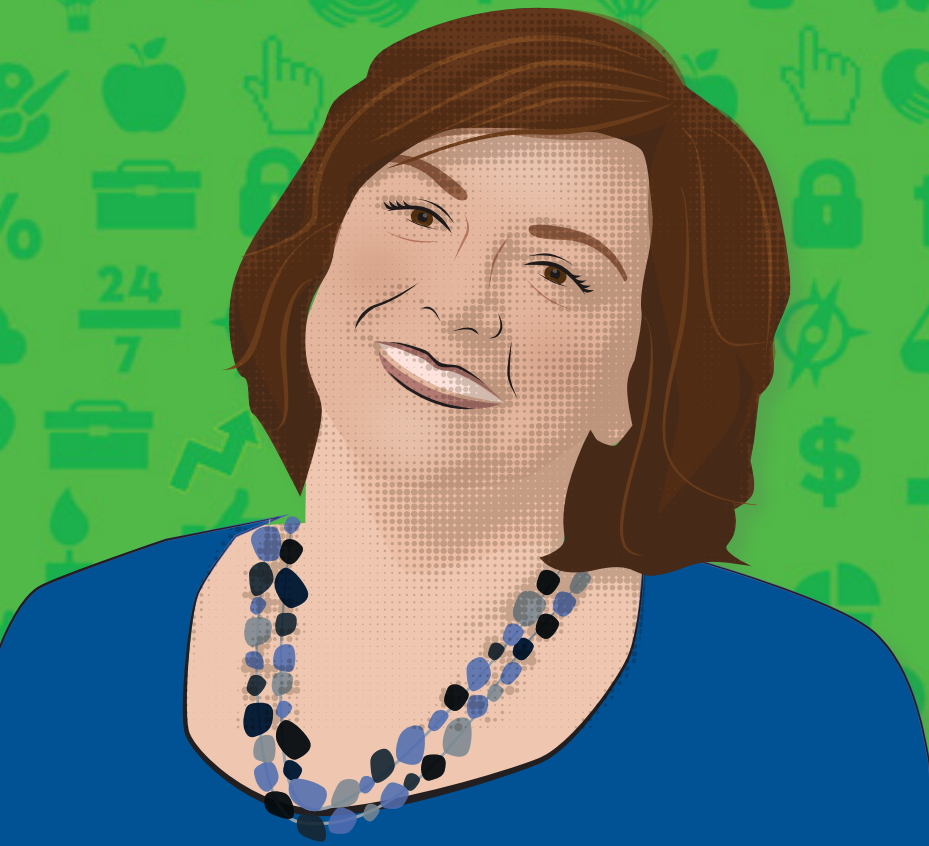


PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING IS A SOCIAL MEDIUM



DONNA WILKINS, CEO and founder of Charity Dynamics, provides vision and leadership that comes from a solid foundation of over a decade's experience helping nonprofits leverage technology. She founded Charity Dynamics in 2004 to provide a smart, responsive option to clients ready to adopt innovative strategies for their online programs. Charity Dynamics' Boundless Fundraising™ platform has been helping special event participants raise over \$200 million since 2008.

It's the Medium (not the Message) That is Changing

If you read the blogs and the news, you might think that using social media to improve peer-to-peer fundraising is a relatively new idea. But really, peer-to-peer fundraising is and has always been "social."

It's just the medium that is changing. For years, people have stood in front of stores ringing a bell with a red kettle to get their community members to donate to The Salvation Army, going door

to door to ask their neighbors for donations to health charities, and setting up tables to get their colleagues to buy cupcakes at bake sales. So logically, if we understand how people have been engaging their friends and family to fundraise for decades, we can use social media to help event participants do what they've always been doing.

Most peer-to-peer fundraising events are using social media as part of their marketing to some degree today. Leading organizations have developed tactics that demonstrably use social media to engage participants and raise real dollars. Charity Dynamics' and Blackbaud's [Making Event Participants More Successful with Social Media](#) study showed the strong impact of social media on peer-to-peer fundraising. As an example, people who used Twitter were shown to raise more money and reach more donors than those that don't. What's more, returning participants using Twitter set higher fundraising goals and were also more successful in reaching their goals. Twitter users also increased their personal fundraising goals at least three times more and raised nearly 10 times more online than their peers who did not use Twitter.

Three Strategies for Using Social Media

Today, top organizations are employing three types of strategies for using social media to raise more money.

BROADCASTING CONTENT TO STRENGTHEN PARTICIPATION

Most event programs are using social media to broadcast messages that increase recruiting, deliver coaching messages, and build awareness for the event. It's becoming common practice to launch events with a coordinated website, email announcement, and social media content. Social media is a great way to distribute topical information, to stoke anticipation, and to keep the time leading up to the event fun. A great way to develop strong broadcast content is to visualize that you're running into your participants

day to day in passing or at the office coffee pot. Think of what you would say as casual conversation. Try messages that convey that you're glad they are on the team and that you can't wait to see them at the start line. Engage them with questions like whether they have other friends who want to join and how their fundraising is going. Just before the event remind them to bring sunscreen. And, right after, compliment them on their contribution to the event's success and, of course, tell them, "Great job," and "Thank you."

EMPOWERING PARTICIPANTS TO IMPROVE RESULTS

Special events programs have pioneered social media marketing tactics that empower their participants to drive program goals. You can emulate these programs by remembering to add social media tips and tools to your standard fundraising messages. Remind participants to use social media to acknowledge donors. Add sharing links and directive text to your event website and emails. Consider using tools like Boundless Fundraising™ to drive event registration and fundraising activities from within Facebook. The most sophisticated organizations are building social media tool kits that give participants sample content and outreach ideas for engaging their friends through social media – similar to the way organizations have historically provided sample emails and printed letters.

USING BEHAVIORAL INTELLIGENCE TO DRIVE INNOVATION

Today's most sophisticated programs are developing intelligence from social media activity to better understand participants' preferences for communication and what

motivates them to participate. You can source code links to your registration and donation forms to understand who is signing up and fundraising through social media. Once you have identified these "social" participants and donors, you can understand how they behave and perform compared to your average participants. The findings will help you brainstorm ways in which social media can be used to drive results.

A growing number of organizations are also appending social profile data to their email files. Many are tracking mentions of their events across networks using social listening tools. These two data sources provide organizations with a better understanding of the networks that participants are most actively using and what topics are most relevant to them. This data and analysis can serve as a social media version of a focus group. The outputs from the focus group can be the identification of influential participants, generation of new content ideas, and changes to investments in social advertising.

What You Can Do Right Now

Social media can be used in many ways to support peer-to-peer fundraising. To determine where it will be most effective for your program, step back from Facebook and Twitter, and watch how your participants are interacting with friends and family. Extend these patterns to make connections for recruiting and fundraising. The secret to success lies in making it easy to make those same connections online.