



Metropolitan Group

Communications that make a difference.

# **LIBRARY FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES AND TOP TIPS**

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## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Use of clear and consistent messages is essential for the campaign.
- Broader library communications/operations must link to campaign.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Use facts well (in ways that are relevant to people and that tell the library's story) make sure they are RIGHT.
- Create staff ownership and understanding of the execution of the campaign.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Don't underestimate the importance of a sophisticated donor database and its management.
- Use the library's fundraising entity as the preferred repository for all gifts.
- Establish a clear policy indicating that private donations are above and beyond public funds.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Libraries are uniquely positioned for planned giving
  - cradle-to-grave: student days, raising kids, career path, major travel, retirement
- Build endowment and sustainability strategies into the fundraising campaign.
- Create an “event-conducive” library with outlets, staging areas, lights that dim and a facility charter that allows responsible serving of alcohol.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Distinct communities of interest, ethnicity and profession create affinity.
- Harness the power of opening events and link them to sustained fundraising strategies.
- Every gift “counts” –it is important to leverage all gifts through public recognition and publicity.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Strong community partnerships are important (public broadcasting, cultural and humanities organizations)
  - propose a list trade.
- Public and private support is a necessity for a great library. Communicate that public dollars provide quality and private dollars create a margin of excellence



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- People want an “experience” that’s consumer-friendly:
  - Coffee
  - open stacks
  - comfortable seating
  - areas to visit and gather
- All are excellent opportunities for private partnerships and donor recognition.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Corporate sponsors and media partners significantly enhance a library's marketing capability and the results of the campaign.
- Bookstores are allies, not competitors.
- Consider screening card-holder database for wealth.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Challenge gifts work—the campaign needs a “leadership” and an “every donor” challenge gift.
- A set calendar of regular cultivation events is critical to success—donor dinners, hard hat tours, author dinners, etc.
- Library staff are great storytellers and effective presenters to donor prospects.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Provide tasteful and consistent donor recognition materials (bookplates, bookmarks, flexible donor wall, every donor plaque, furniture, rooms and areas).
- Furniture/shelves are tangible “sales” items with opportunity to leverage “step-up” gifts with payment options.
- A new building increases use—an opportunity for collections and program fundraising.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Specialized program funding and national funds are available (Kresge, IMLS, Gates, NEH, Starbucks).
- Many major donors do not hold library cards but they do VALUE libraries and have a library story in their past.
- Book groups are excellent prospects and need to have incentive to self-identify.



## FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES

- Grandparents are a strong source of disposable income that supports children's programs, collections and capital.
- Library staff (present and retired) are good donor prospects.
- Public art is fundable.



## **FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES**

- Most donors are more motivated by libraries and books than libraries and technology, but the technology-oriented donors must receive the case in their language.



## QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



## METROPOLITAN GROUP AGENCY PROFILE

- Library services:
  - Capital campaigns
  - Endowment campaigns
  - Program and annual funds
  - Summer reading program campaigns
  - Public funding initiatives
  - Brand communication plans
  - Strategic planning



## METROPOLITAN GROUP AGENCY PROFILE

- Library clients
  - City and county libraries
  - State libraries
  - Research libraries
  - Archives and special collections
  - Friends organizations
  - Library foundations
  - Library associations



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