



raiseMN
A GiveMN Initiative

YEAR-END FUNDRAISING GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

While Give to the Max Day is Minnesota's single largest day of generosity and giving, it's just the kick-off to a busy year-end fundraising season for many nonprofits!

Calendar year-end fundraising (CYE) is incredibly important for nonprofits. Here's why:

1. National studies consistently show that most philanthropic giving happens in the **last two months** of the year.
2. In fact, some research shows that 10% of all yearly giving happens in the **last three days** of the year.
3. In a survey of GiveMN.org donors, individuals reported that they are most **likely to give** during Give to the Max Day *and* at the end of the calendar year.
4. Many organizations' fiscal year aligns with the calendar year. These last couple months are crucial in order for many nonprofits to hit their budgeted revenue.

Use this guide to continue your momentum from Give to the Max Day into CYE fundraising and beyond! The next few pages will walk you through key components to maximize your year-end campaign.

If you need assistance with setting up your campaign on GiveMN.org, reach out to our Help Team anytime by emailing **help@givemn.org**.

And, if you find this workbook helpful and want more guidance, schedule a **free 15-minute call** with our team to learn more about how working one-on-one with a fundraising coach can take your development plan to the next level!

FUNDRAISING REVIEW

Did you participate in GTMD23?

Yes No (skip the next two questions)

What was your GTMD23 Goal?

\$ _____

Did you meet your goal?

Yes No

What did you raise during GTMD23?

\$ _____

If you didn't meet your GTMD23 goal, how much do you have left to raise in order to meet it?

\$ _____

Time out! **Coach Clara here**...if you didn't reach your GTMD goal, that is OK! There are lots of reasons this might have happened. Maybe you ran a campaign earlier in the year that shifted your revenue around...maybe you sent one fewer GTMD email than last year...or maybe it's something totally out of your control like donors changing their giving priorities. When setting your year-end goal, it's a balance of keeping it achievable, aspirational, and rooted in your mission work.



What do you think is an achievable yet aspirational goal for CYE?

Consider past amounts raised during campaigns, how much you need to raise to meet your budgeted annual revenue, and how the goal number ties back to your mission.

\$ _____

EXAMPLE 1

Hamster Helpers has a fiscal year of January 1 - December 31. For the current fiscal year, they set a budget of \$100,000 in revenue by means of individual donations.

They fundraised during Give to the Max and set a goal of \$5,000. They raised \$3,500.

Before Give to the Max, they had raised \$90,000 through direct mail campaigns, emails, event donations, and contributions from board members.

So, they have **\$6,500** left to raise between GTMD and December 31. They make a game plan for board members to call donors that haven't given this year yet to ask for their support. They know that making a personal ask is more likely to secure a donation, so they write a script for board members to use and include messaging that asks donors to increase their giving by 15% this year.

If half of the donors on their call list increase their donation, they'll hit their \$6,500 goal and meet their revenue budget for the year.

EXAMPLE 2

Individuals for Iguanas has a fiscal year of July 1 - June 30. For this fiscal year, they budgeted to receive \$500,000 in revenue from individual donations and grants.

They fundraised during Give to the Max and exceeded their \$10,000 goal. At the end of their campaign, they had raised \$13,750!

Since December 31 isn't the end of their fiscal year, they know they have time to still meet their budgeted revenue. However, past CYE campaigns have represented 20% of their individual fundraising revenue so they know this is still an important time to fundraise.

Last year, they raised \$30,000 between GTMD and Dec. 31. So this year, they're going to set a goal of **\$35,000**. To reach that goal, they plan to send an email to donors who gave during their spring campaign earlier in the year and will email donors who gave last year, but haven't given this year so far.

GEARING UP FOR SUCCESS

Now that you've identified what your CYE fundraising goal is, **let's review what worked well for your fundraising this year.** We want to lean into our strengths and focus on what we do best in the next couple of months!

Think back on your fundraising this year. What campaign went well?

What about it was successful and what about it resonated with your donors?

Consider these key elements to help make your CYE campaign as impactful as possible:

Does your fundraising ask...

- Tell a story about mission impact?
- Create empathy and feel relatable?
- Describe a clear problem and solution?
- Clearly state how much you need to raise and why?
- Provide a way for the donor to give? (envelope, link, etc.)

Are you sending your ask to...

- People who have already showed that they care about your work?
- People who have supported your work in the past?
- People in multiple ways? (Email, social media, letter, phone call)
- People that are likely to give? (recent donors, volunteers, board members)

Pssst! According to a GiveMN survey, 43% of donors said that a story about an organization's work is what inspired them to give! Having a meaningful and authentic story to share makes a huge difference!

BRAINSTORMING YOUR ASK

With a few weeks left in the year, now is the time to ask your audience for a gift to support your work! Use the space below to brainstorm your story and who you'll send your campaign to.

What story are you telling to demonstrate why you need individuals to support you with a financial gift?

Pro tip: Work smarter, not harder by reusing a story from a previous campaign! Just be sure to edit and repackage the story to make it feel fresh.

Who will you be sending your fundraising appeal to?

Pro tip: You can ask donors who have already given this year! More than 80% of donors report to GiveMN that they like the frequency with which they're asked for their support and 3% even wished they were asked more often!

Some people to consider asking include (but aren't limited to!) board members, lapsed donors, volunteers, and more.

Need help creating your story or identifying your audience? Check out our **[Guide to Mastering Fundraising Campaigns workbook](#)** to get started!

IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED

Consider some of the following ideas for creating urgency in your CYE campaign. We don't want to create a false sense of urgency for donors, but providing a clear timeline and reason why their support is needed *now* helps strengthen your ask!



Include a P.S.

Research suggests that **more than 90% of people read the P.S. in a letter before they read the letter itself!** Including a succinct P.S. at the end of the letter is a way to grab readers' attention and make your ask clear.



Lean into December 31

Some donors want to make sure they get last minute gifts in before January 1 so they can include charitable contributions in their tax-deductions in the spring. Messaging like “**Make your tax-deductible donation by Dec. 31!**” can help grab attention and create a tangible timeline for your audience.



Have an attitude of gratitude

The end of the year is when many of us are reflecting on the highs and lows of the last twelve months. Let your audience know that their support has helped make your work possible over the last year! **You can thank donors and ask them to continue their support at the same time.**

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Calendar year-end is an incredible opportunity for organizations to help people give back to community, enact their values, and give the gift of generosity. **However you choose to fundraise at the end of the year, just know that you are creating an *opportunity* for people to show that they care** - that is a gift, not a burden!

At the end of the day, it's important to create a CYE strategy that works for your organization. Only have time to send one email? Great! That is success! Reaching out and offering the opportunity for people to get involved is what's important - you know your people best so lean into your expertise and trust your gut!



Want help?

We got your back. **Sign up for a free 15-minute call with our team to learn more about how working with a fundraising coach can benefit your organization.** Our coaches can help you sort through your year-end metrics, create a game plan for 2024, and more!

We also have our Mastering Fundraising Campaigns workbook available at no-cost, too! If working through a template is more your style, then that's the best place to start. From drafting a story to identifying which communication channels to use, our workbook has you covered.

