



The Seven Secrets to Grow Your Community Fundraising Income 2015

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Community Fundraising is generally the last item on the 'To Do List' within a fundraising portfolio, yet this form of fundraising has grown in popularity, especially with the rise of social media.

Research conducted by **more** reveals that many Australian charities are missing out on a potentially lucrative income stream because they are not applying core fundraising principles to their community fundraising program. The research reveals that

- 67% of charities grew their community fundraising over the last three years
- Only 14% of charities had a direct fundraising 'ask'
- 32% only offered an offline registration process
- 11% of online registrations were not linked to a fundraising platform
- Only 7% had specific social media platforms for their community fundraisers
- Only 4% of charities chased for funds after the event date
- 25% continued communications after the event date

Charities need to utilise their internal fundraising knowledge and the insights that they apply to other portfolios to their community fundraising program. They need to recognise the importance of investing in this area and nurture these highly engaged supporters.

The Problem

Every Fundraising Manager is under pressure to find the 'next big thing' to increase their revenue stream. If the direct marketing area is driving regular giving, if bequest prospects are being converted and major donors well stewarded, then what is next? An event?

Lots of charities think that creating a new event will help them increase their brand awareness whilst acquiring lots of new supporters but, with a very crowded market, it's hard to find a niche event that gets cut through.

Every charity has what professional fundraisers would describe as 'Community Fundraisers', supporters who are actively coming to them by holding their 'own' events. When you look at how the charity supports these fundraisers and tries to acquire and retain more like-minded individuals, best practice has gone out of the window.

This poses the question, why don't charities spend more time listening to, and focusing on their community fundraisers? Is it because charities are not sure how to manage this style of program or because they haven't had a piece of research which provides them with the evidence that shows them this could be the 'next big thing' they have been waiting for?

New Research Provides Answers

This new research shows not only the value of community fundraising to your portfolio but how to maximize your income through some easy actions. It is time community fundraising got serious!

More mystery shopped 28 diverse Australian charities and analyzed the income of 21 charities across their CFR portfolios. This research enabled More to gain true insights into how we as a sector can 'turn around' community fundraising.

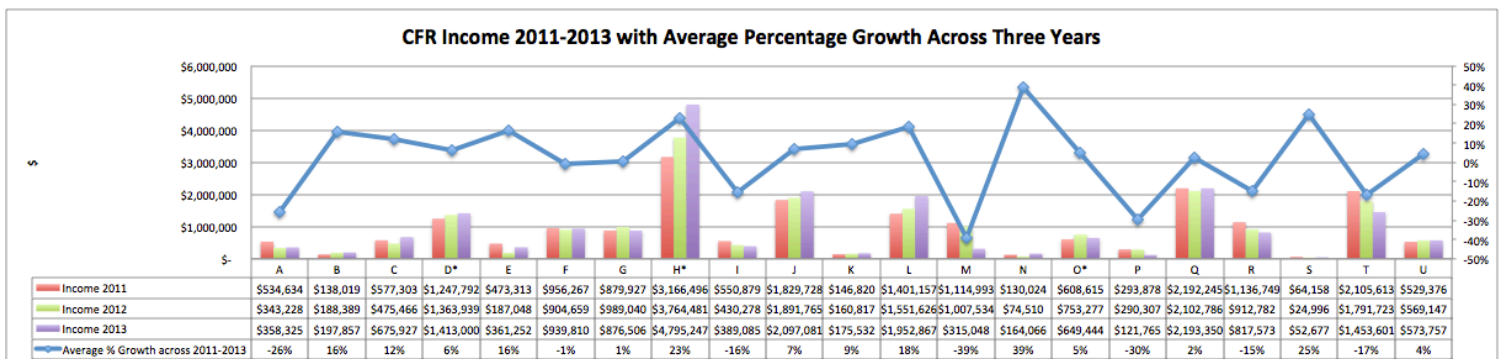
Research Findings

The benchmarks

21 charities provided **More** with their annual CFR income for 2012 and 2013. This revealed:

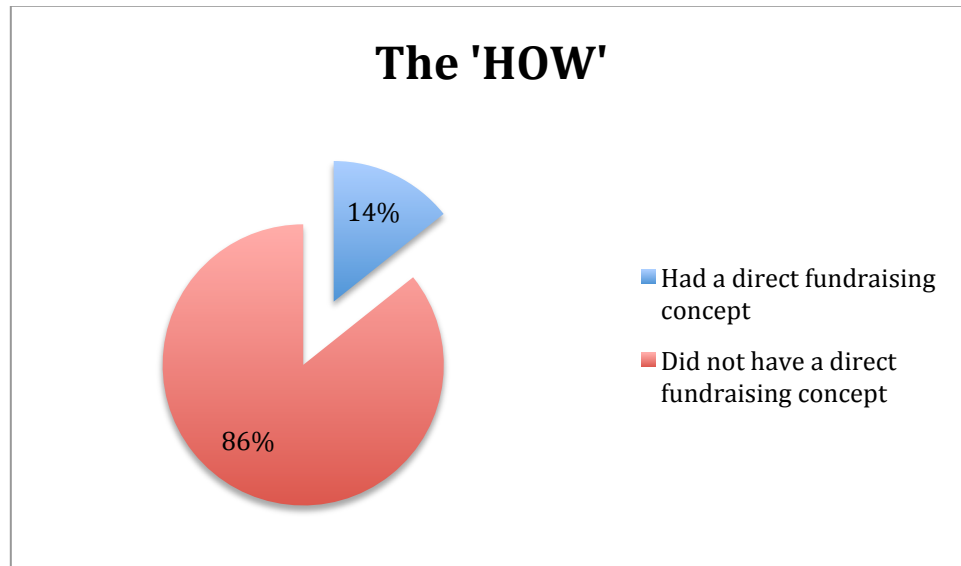
1. 67% of charities grew when looking at the average across all years
2. For the charities that had a positive growth across the 3 years, the average percentage growth was 13%
3. The average income across the three years is \$959,199.29

CFR Income 2011-2013 with Average Percentage Growth Across Three Years

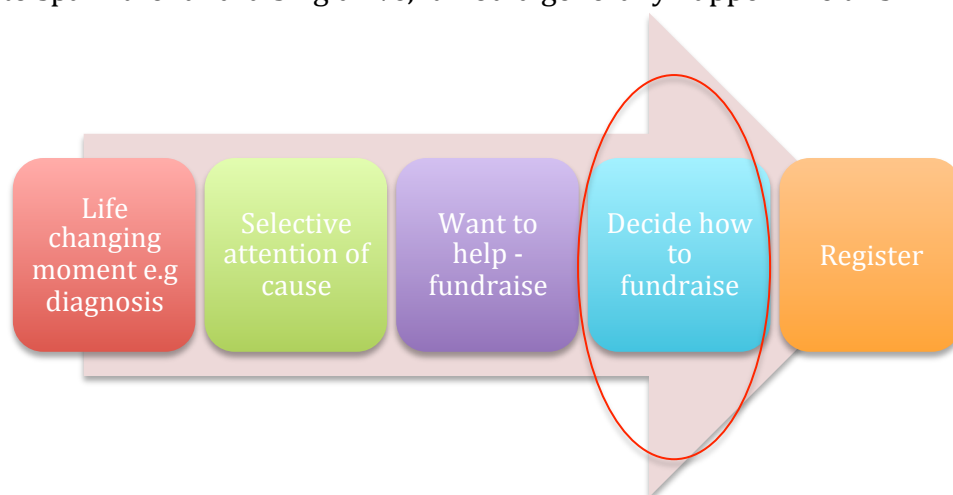


Charities do not give direction to community fundraisers on 'HOW' to fundraise

Only 14% of the charities we survey offered their community fundraisers support material on how to raise funds and ideas with related case studies.



When thinking about the logical journey a potential supporter would go through to spark the fundraising drive, it would generally happen like this:



Typically, the first interaction a charity would have with a community fundraiser is when they are deciding 'how' to fundraise. The charity needs to sufficiently inspire them about the activity if they are to ensure they follow through on their initial interest and complete their registration.

This inspiration needs to be offered to your community fundraiser in many formats: talking about your charity's mission, success stories and how others have already successfully raised funds. *At this stage in the process the inspiration needs to be focused on helping your community fundraisers decide HOW they want to raise funds.*

Give your community fundraisers clear directions on ways to fundraise, and use your analysis of what previous fundraisers have done to guide them towards things you know work and that you can provide support for.

But remember if you produce the classic A-Z of fundraising you will paralyse them into doing nothing through the paradox of choice. Too much choice is overwhelming and leads to inaction. And no one is going to do a xylophone marathon! The wild and wacky people that we love so much in community fundraising will still do wild and wacky things but everyone else wants to be told what will work.



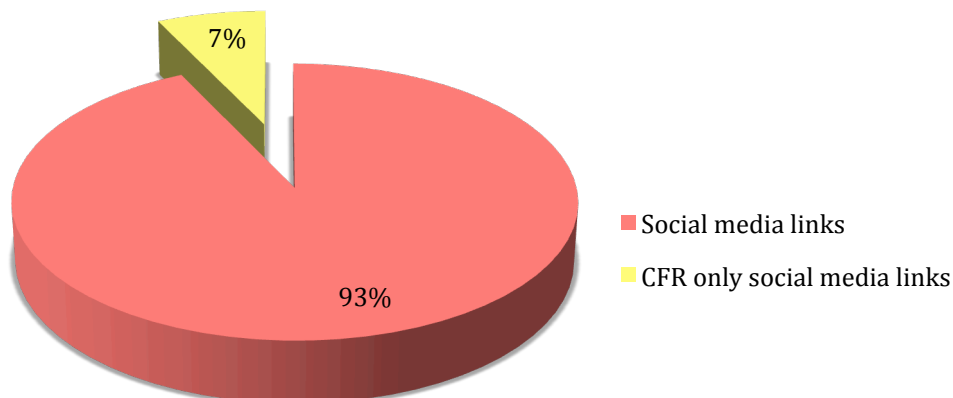
Make sure they have all the tools they need to hold a successful fundraiser, this will make them feel supported and informed. For many people this will be the first time they have ever done a fundraiser on their own so this level of care and attention is essential if you want them to succeed and do more for you in the future.

Acquisition needs to happen for CFR

Acquisition for Community Fundraising can be a tough nut to crack. It's all about building or utilising a community who are passionate about your cause – your 'tribe'. This is where social mobilisation comes into its own. What better way to find like-minded people than on social media where everyone bares all?

Our research showed that only 7% of charities had invested time and energy into creating specific social media assets for their CFR 'tribe'.

Social Media Charity Vs. CFR



The problem with using the organisations social media entities is mixed messaging. They have decided to help and they want to be supported to succeed in what they have chosen to do. Your job is to take them on a journey to succeed in community fundraising. That's it.... for now. We can worry about all the other valuable messages and conversion later – for now keep them focussed on the task at hand – a successful community fundraising activity.

Community fundraising happens 24/7 and your fundraisers are all at different stages in their journey. Your content needs to constantly inspire and engage your community fundraisers. To do this effectively you need to think of your supporters as three core types:

- **Doers** – Get them to show others what they have been doing. This makes them 'feel good' and can inspire other potential fundraisers
- **Thinkers** – Use the identified fundraising options to tempt 'thinkers' into ways that they could fundraise
- **Talkers** – Get your community to spread the word on social media. Get them to share and like posts, talk about what others have done, share mission information and the 6 key community fundraising activities

Once you have your 'Thinkers' and 'Talkers' in your sights, the most important thing is to get them to register and stay with you. Whilst this sounds like the easy part, it was surprisingly the area that needed a lot of love and attention for many charities that participated in our research.

Getting Your Thinkers and Talkers to Register and Stay with You

Here are a few quick tips:

- *Lost & Found* – Make your program easy to find. Ask yourself, are your community fundraising web pages buried deep in your charity’s website? Can a googler typing “fundraiser for....” easily find your registration pages? One well-known charity took six clicks before I even got to the Community Fundraising pages!
- *Quick & Easy* – How long does it take you to register as a Community Fundraiser? If it is in excess of four minutes, forget it!
- Don’t overwhelm a potential fundraiser with every single question about their event and why they are fundraising. Get the basic information about them and the event and collect the rest at a later stage. Make sure this data collection is done online and is linked to a fundraising platform as well as your social media entities.



Do It For Cancer! Registration.

A | A | A+

➤ **About you** ➤ **Contact details** ➤ **Personalise your page** ➤ **Finished!**

The quickest and easiest way to register and get sponsored online

Registering your fundraiser and setting up an online giving page as an individual or a group takes no time at all. If you want to register and fundraise as a group, after you have given us your details, you will be prompted to create a group giving page. This allows you to fundraise together with friends and family to see who can raise the most cash.

So let's get started!

Tell Us A Little Bit Of Information About You

Name *	--Title--	First Name	Last Name
Gender *	--Select--		
Date of Birth *	--Day--	--Month--	--Year--
Email Address *			
Confirm Email Address *			

Your Login Details

Help us to create your log in which you will use every time you want to edit your online giving page with photos or messages or send messages to

- *StoryTime* - Every charity has an amazing story to tell, whether it’s about the mission or what great things your supporters have already achieved. Use these powerful stories to get potential supporters over the line and more committed to succeed.

charity: water DONATE STORE WHY WATER? WATER PROJECTS BIRTHDAYS ABOUT US mycharity: water

Pledge your birthday.

Remember your best birthday ever? Bring that feeling back.

800 million people still live without clean water. Pledge your next birthday to help.

PLEDGE VIA FACEBOOK

or

MM	DD
first name	last name
email	

55,281 people have already pledged.

PLEDGE VIA EMAIL

send me news and updates on charity: water

Mission information

See what you have been up to this Sport Relief

View our gallery

Case Studies

Previous fundraiser Upload photos/videos Next fundraiser

Maria

1 photos Thirsk

“
Suzannah age 6 1/2 finishing her Triathlon. Swim 30m, Cycle 2.5 miles and Run 1 mile. An amazing little girl!!!”

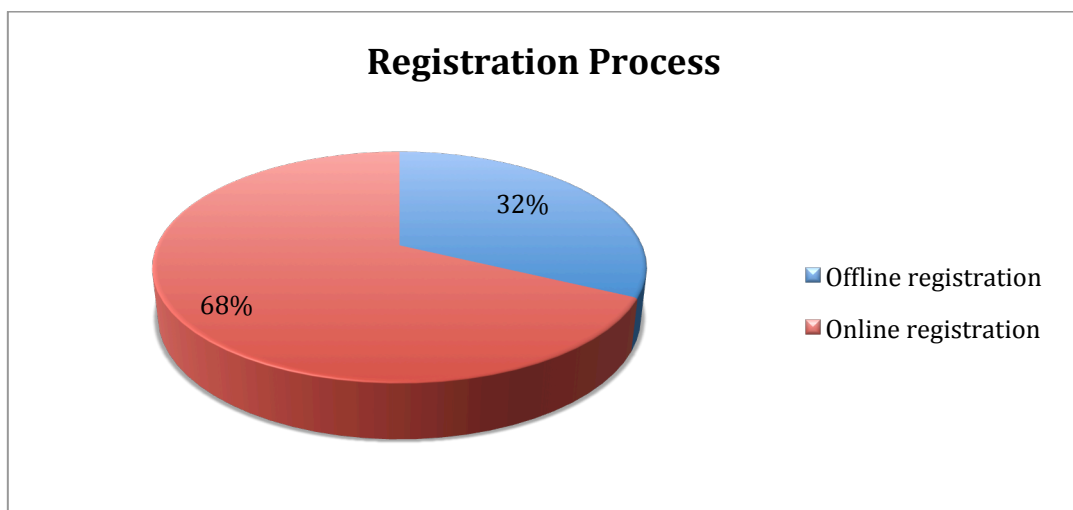
- *Talk The Talk* – Many of your current fundraisers are eager to share their own story but are you enabling them to do so? For most people supporting a charity is an amazingly gratifying experience. So why keep doing all the leg work yourself? Get your community fundraiser to talk to other new supporters to help allay any concerns or fears they may have. Your new

fundraisers are far more likely to listen to your past fundraisers as they are independent, like them and have relevant recent experience. They are more believable than you are!

- *Engagement Fundraising* – The more engaged your supporters feel, (emotional reward, feedback, recognition, satisfaction) the more they will do for your cause. Engage your fundraisers to take action by ensuring you keep them connected to your cause.

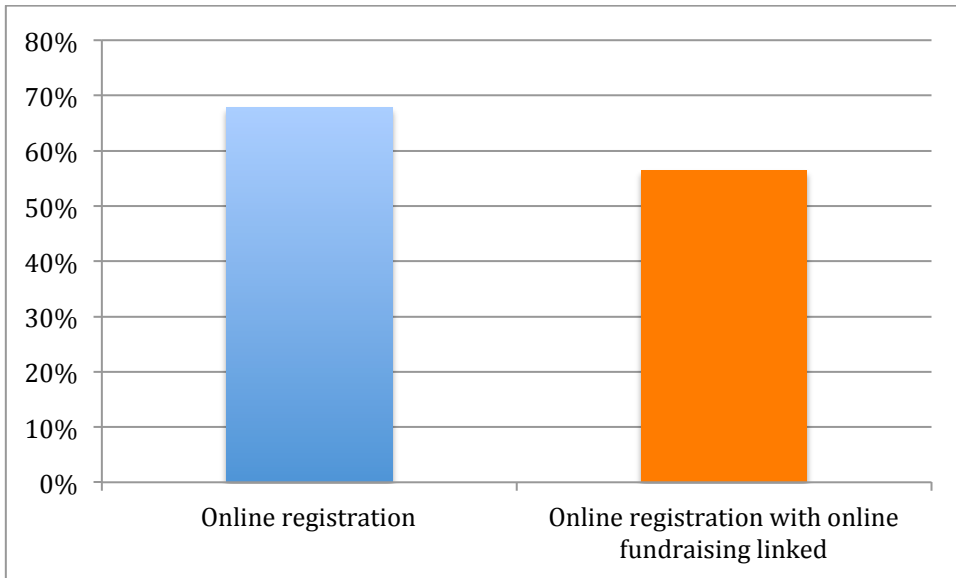
Simple, fast online journeys are best

Over one third of the charities only offered an offline registration process.

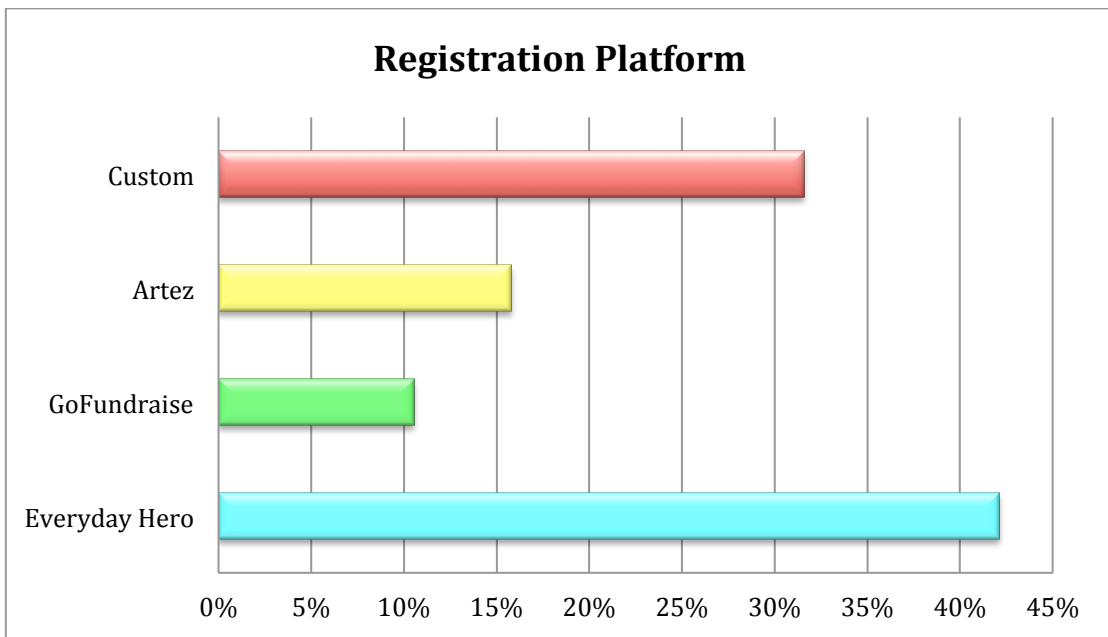


Offline registration is a deterrent for potential fundraisers: it is much more time consuming and the volume of compliance paperwork that is attached can be off putting. One very well known charity that shall remain nameless included compliance paperwork with 22 terms and conditions spread across three pages!

The other important issue raised by only offering offline registration is the lack of integration with the online world. This helps to create a barrier to creating an online fundraising page as you are asking the registrant to complete two actions rather than offering them one seamless process.



For the 57% of registrations that were fully integrated, Everyday Hero was the most common platform to be used.



Mapping out your current supporter journey with all the 'touch points' they have with your charity is a great way to identify areas for enhancement.

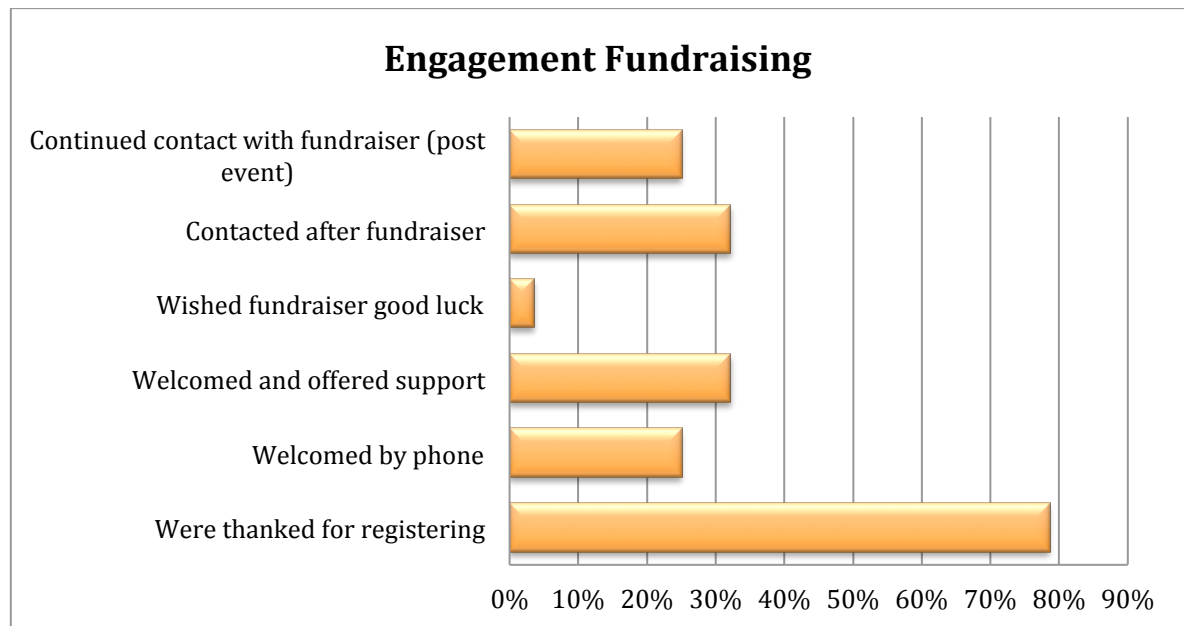
You should think of your supporter journey in five stages:

1. Registration – Entry point to completion of registration
2. Information – Once registered, supplying key information to the fundraiser to make them compliant and successful

3. Support – Continual communication of fundraising tips and project outcomes. This is in addition to more general support
4. Follow up – Three stage follow up to ensure funds are banked in a timely manner
5. Inspiration – If you want to retain your fundraiser keep them engaged with your charity either in the community programme or another part of the organization.

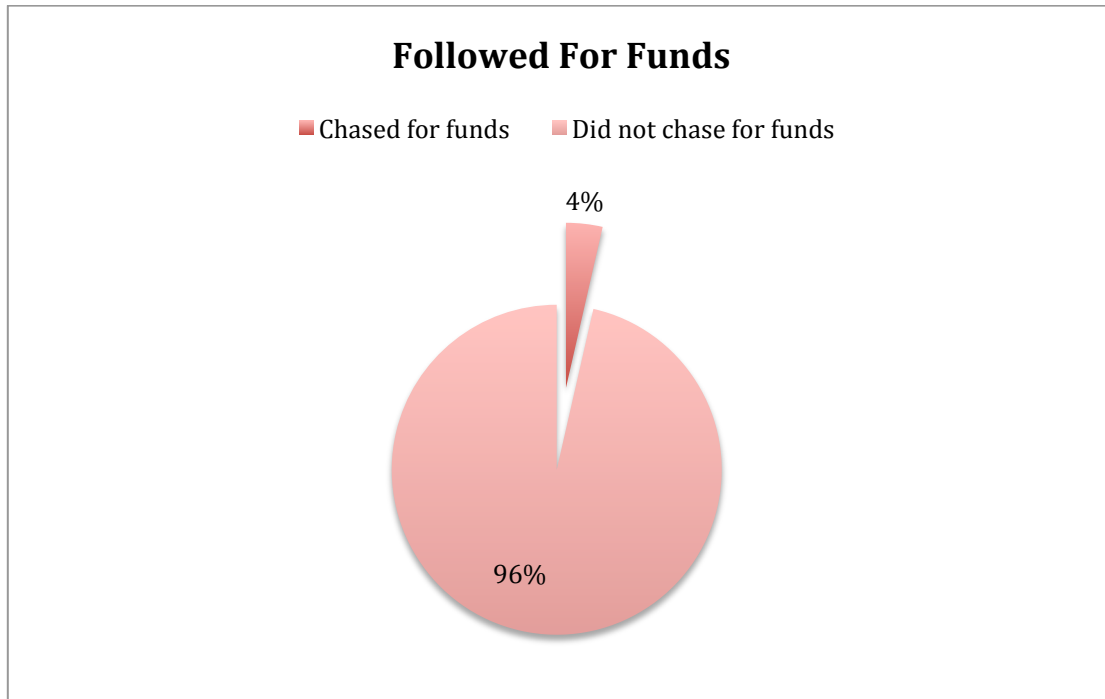
Supporters need constant engagement or you will loose them

After the community fundraiser completed their registration only a measly 4% of charities got in touch with them to wish them good luck on their fundraising journey and only 32% contacted them after the event.



Engaging community fundraisers is what keeps them inspired, connected to the cause and loyal. Their supporter journey is ongoing and not just about registering for the event and banking the funds they have raised.

Having said that, only 4% of charities actually chased me for the funds that I should have provided.



Experience-mapping helps to identify how supporters are treated during each of these 'touch points' with your charity. Understanding the supporter journey 'experience' can help draw prospects from other programmes, offering supporters new propositions, products and gift levels.

The goal of experience mapping is to:

- **map the journey** (and therefore better understand the supporter interaction via visual representation),
- **manage the data** (what information gaps are there and how can these be filled?),
- **manage the supporters experience** and,
- **engage with the charity** by planning the contact moments and communications.

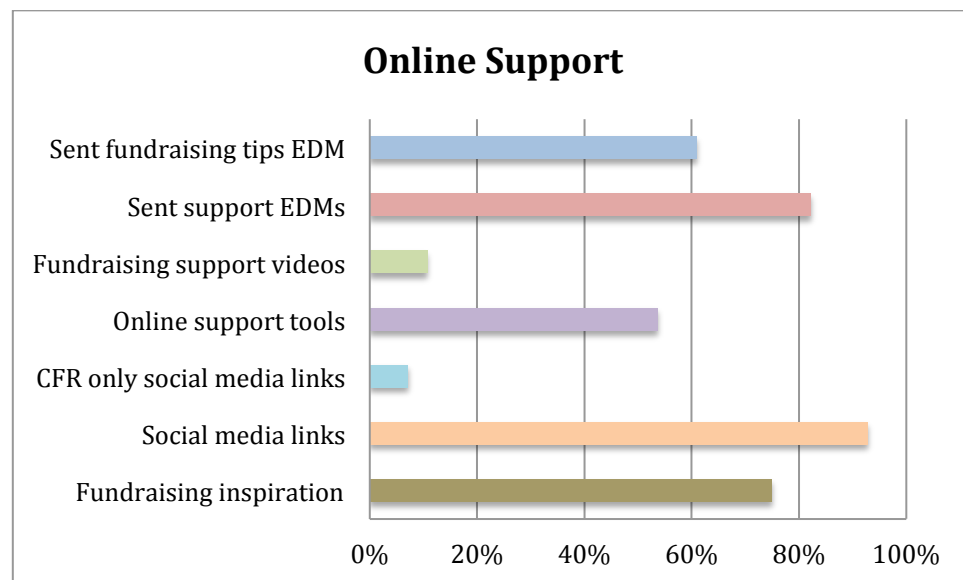
Support tools are lacking

We all know that there is a great deal of diversity between supporters; it's just the nature of the beast. However, the ultimate outcome is the same for all supporters, to raise as much income as possible.

When comparing what support tools were on offer to community fundraisers the variation was quite extreme.

Online

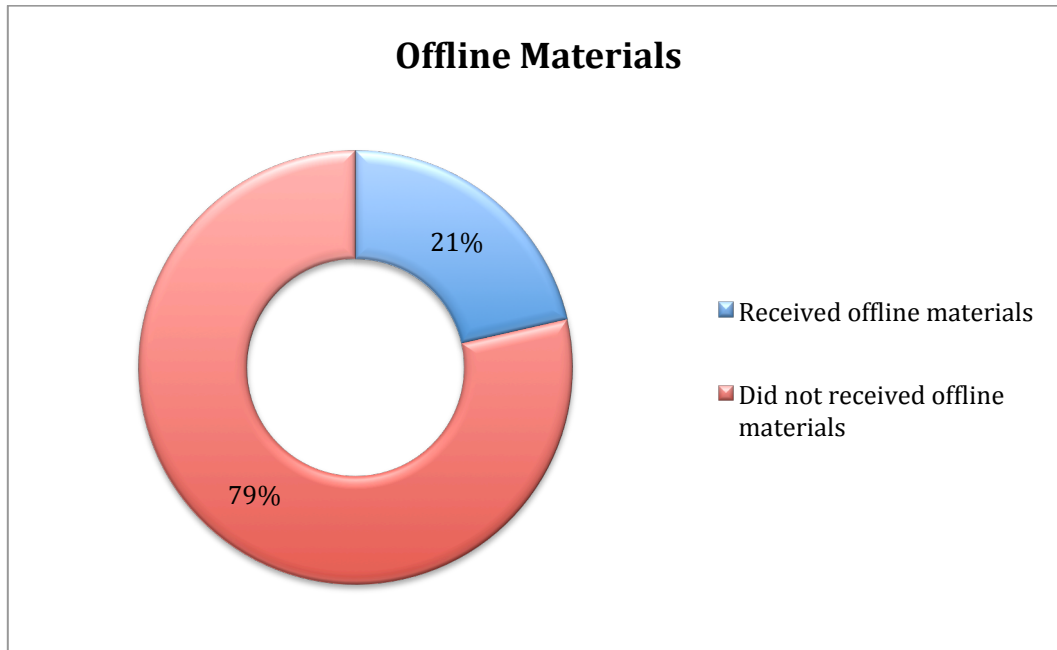
The majority of charities used two key forms of online support; links to the charity's core social media entities [93%] and support EDMs (welcome & thanks) [82%]. Whilst these two elements are important it was a surprise that only 61% of charities sent through fundraising tips and advice. After all, raising money is the main aim of the game.



There is a distinct lack of video support. Recent studies from the US have shown that videos drive high engagement quickly - 39% of potential supporters looked up the not-for-profit online within 24 hours of watching a video. They also discovered that 80% of supporters used online videos to learn more about a not-for-profit organisation.

Offline

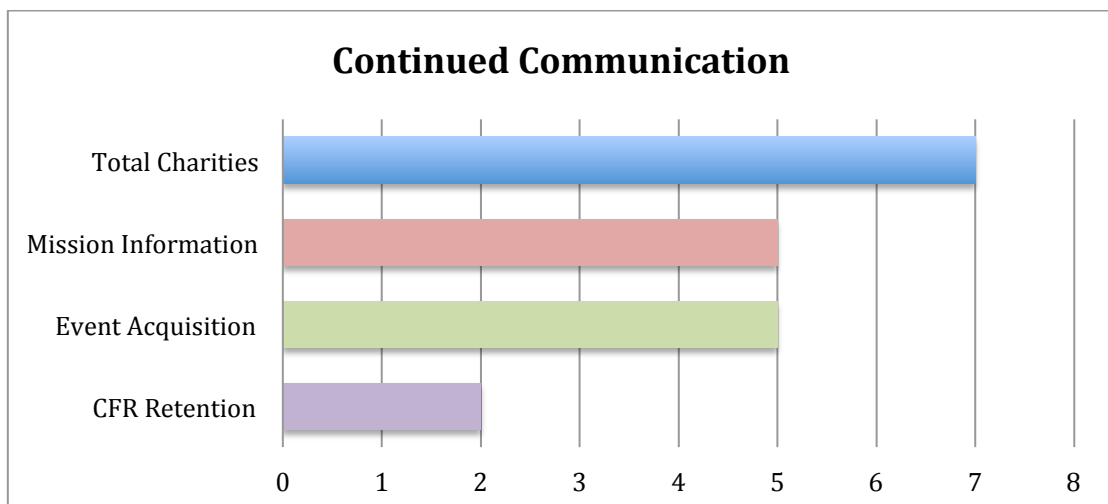
While we are moving to a digital world offline tools still have a strong place in many fundraisers requests. Only 21% of the charities actually sent materials through the post.



Charities are not seeing the lifetime value of their supporters

Some of the most passionate fundraisers will be from your community program. However, it would seem that once they have 'done their duty' they are lost in the abyss of the charity's database.

Only seven out of the 28 charities [25%] continued to communicate. Out of these seven charities, the core communications were either requests to do another fundraiser or purely mission information. No other call to action was sent, such as seeking feedback on my first experience, volunteering opportunities or an invitation to become a donor.



It seems that this is a common issue within the community fundraising programs both in Australia and the UK:

'Thankfully community fundraising has firmly re-established itself as a critical part of the mix, but charities seem to think that this area runs on goodwill and thin air! Few community fundraising teams get an even slightly recognisable investment fund for growth/development. Worse still community fundraising is often isolated or disconnected from other areas of fundraising so totally dependent on other strategies and how other resources are invested; particularly true in relation to the disconnect with digital development and teams'.

Tony Elischer, 101fundraising.org

Conclusion

Charities need to focus their attention equally across their fundraising portfolio both internally and externally to recognize natural trends, like the growth in CFR.

Too many charities put growing CFR in to the 'too hard' basket'. No time or resources are allocated to ensuring best practice is followed within the programme and no analysis of the results is undertaken. With a clear strategy and viable investment, CFR should be a lucrative income stream for the organization.

It is very apparent across mass campaign events that the funneling of engaged supporters and inspiring them about the activity is a key first step that is often absent. These effective methods need to be overlaid from team to team to increase growth portfolio-wide.

Creating simple and effective online entities will increase acquisition without the need for a heavy resource arm and allow supporters to have a very easy and inspiring journey with the organization.

Resource time needs to be allocated into educating supporters not only around 'how' to fundraise but also about the organization itself. These supporters are your brand advocates who will go into their community and tell your story. If charities do not provide the requisite inspiration and support tools they increase the risk of losing their supporter or the wrong information being communicated.

In a competitive market place it's imperative that charities are acknowledging and extending every supporter to reach the maximum income potential. If handled correctly CFR supporters could be a charity's regular giver or even bequestor.

More Community Fundraising Strategy Review

Welcome to the world of Community Fundraising. This is just the beginning!

Now that you have finished reading this whitepaper, don't stop there! This is just the beginning of a beautiful new partnership that you will start to build between you and your Community Fundraising Program.

Now it is time to test out the best practices we've covered and build on them with your own creative ideas to find out how you can start to grow a whole new portfolio.

If you have read this whitepaper and want to change your Community program but don't have the staff or the expertise to do it, never fear, we can give you **MORE**.

MORE Strategic will deliver:

- A full review on the status of the program through data and perspective interviews
- An understanding of the knowledge of your current community fundraisers
- Best Practice education for you staff, including how to apply the principles you learn
- A three year strategy to grow your Community Fundraising program
- Our findings to assist internal audiences gain support and funding for future growth

What are you waiting for? [Get in touch now](#) so we can help you out and grow your income stream.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Julie Roberts [@Julie_Roberts1](#)

Julie has over ten years of not for profit experience across the UK and Australian market. She has been responsible for redesigning the strategic direction for many events and leading teams into financial growth.

Her last role at Cancer Council NSW as Community Fundraising and Innovation Manager saw her change the face of Community Fundraising, as we know it. After much research, changing the brand identity and producing a multitude of online assets this led to the creation of Do Your Thing, (now known as Do It For Cancer). This saw the income growth by 292% (\$1.2 million to \$4.7 million) and has set a new sturdy income stream for the organisation.



Julie is also a founder member of the Australian Charity Events Managers Forum and continually strives to better the Events not for profit market place.