

How to: Use Virtual Events to Fundraise Via Text Giving

A closer look at how to organise a virtual event and effectively promote text giving to raise funds.

How to: Virtual Events

Virtual events are a great way to raise funds and maintain engagement with supporters. Virtual events are particularly important during this period when physical events can't take place, but are likely to be popular in the longer term too!

⚡ 1. Choose your event

From the now well-known virtual quiz to the less frequent like an online workshop with your charity ambassador — there are so many event types to choose from.

Keech Hospice Care spoke to their supporters, who were struggling to maintain a social life during the coronavirus lockdown. The Hospice decided that a virtual quiz would allow supporters to maintain a social life whilst fundraising for the charity.

Other charities like the National Theatre and Barn Theatre have broadcast performances online for supporters missing being able to go and watch shows in person.

⚡ 2. Decide how to broadcast

If your event requires streaming or broadcasting, we've found that Facebook Live and YouTube have worked well for various events. They're free, easy to use and easy for supporters to access.

Zoom has also been used for events where registration is required in advance, though for most events you will need a paid version.

Top tip: To start hosting virtual events you don't need expensive equipment - just your mobile phone will do! It may be worth buying a tripod and microphone for your phone to ensure the video and audio quality are good.



⚡ 3. Share the event details with supporters

Market your virtual event using the same platforms as you would a physical event - let supporters know via email, social media and any other methods that you would usually use!

Compared to physical events, people tend to sign up to virtual events later and there's a higher drop out rate. Therefore, it's recommended to scale up your communications in the days leading up to the event.

Top tip: Whilst the drop out rate might be higher, don't miss the opportunity to engage with supporters who showed interest but didn't attend. If you've collected marketing consent, why not send them an email or text to let them know how it went, or share a post-event blog post on social media?

⚡ 4. Set up text giving



We suggest having a bespoke keyword for the event. This means you can monitor the fundraising total for the event more easily.

Pick a simple keyword so that it's as easy as possible for people to donate. For their quiz, Keech Hospice used the keyword 'QUIZ' - it doesn't get much more simple than that!

When setting up your keyword, you may wish to include messages to ask donors to complete a Gift Aid declaration, or even ask them to set up a regular donation.

⚡ 5. The donation ask

You can sell tickets in advance if preferred, but we've found that most events perform best when they're free to join with an optional donation.

We suggest that, at a minimum, there is a donation ask at the beginning and the end of the event.

Top tip: If you're unsure how much to ask supporters to donate, a good rule of thumb is to think about how much they'd spend on attending a physical version of the event and then ask for slightly less.