

 **DISC MAKERS**[®] PRESENTS

FUNDRAISING WITH DVDs:



Share content, tell your story,
and raise money

When it's time to raise money for your club or organization, you may already have your go-to method of procuring funds. But there's always room to improve, and maybe it's time to find an additional revenue generator — or it may be time for a totally new solution. Perhaps you're terrified by the whole concept.

Before you send out the troops to work the local intersection with plastic buckets, consider this: providing your prospects with an item that has a high perceived value can help bring returns in a big way. A CD or DVD that highlights the talents of your group, provides a sample of the service you provide, or simply entertains your audience is a potential money-maker that can be a stand-alone piece or can be easily bundled into a larger package. Truth is, it can be pretty inexpensive to produce — as long as you plan ahead and work efficiently.

Part 1: The content

If you're in a church choir, theater troupe, or any performing group, figuring out what content to provide might be simple: a recording of a concert or performance, either audio or video, could be all you need.

If your group is not a performing ensemble, there are plenty of ways to produce material that provides value.



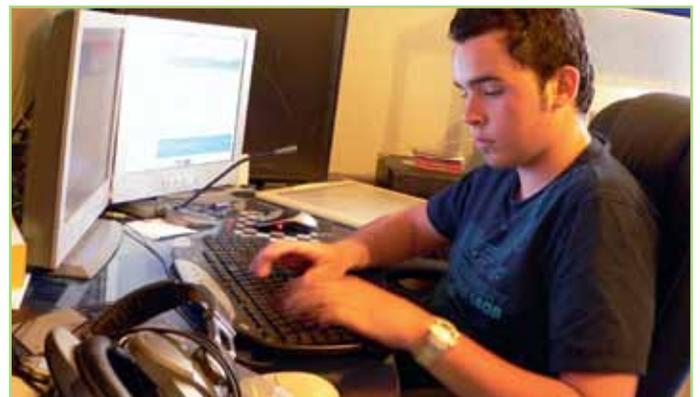
- **Compile photographs.** My children's daycare center put together a slideshow of still photos that chronicled a year in the life of the children at the center. Set to music, the video looked professional enough, and the parents and grandparents ate it up.
- **Compile videos.** If you have available video content — tutorials, video you've shot of your group in action — compile it on a disc.
- **Film a seminar, presentation, or class.** If your group gives any type of public presentation — or if you can stage one — providing a sample of your core skill could be an effective video and easily produced.

- **Create an audio book.** If you produce content that is typically delivered in print, recording a sample as audio-book content could be a creative way to provide useful information to your prospects.

Part 2: Filming/Recording/Production

Once you've determined what you'd like to include on your fundraising disc, step two is producing the content. This could involve filming, recording, and editing — not to mention organizing and scheduling. Here's some advice to help you manage this process.

- **DON'T worry** if your production isn't comparable to the latest Transformers film. You're not competing with Hollywood releases, and you won't be held to that expectation.
- **DO bring a level of professionalism** to your finished product. If you endeavor to produce a video, it has to provide a certain level of professionalism, or your prospect — who might have donated a smaller sum without further expectations — will be disappointed.
- **DO use local/available resources.** If you have someone in your group with professional or credible experience with



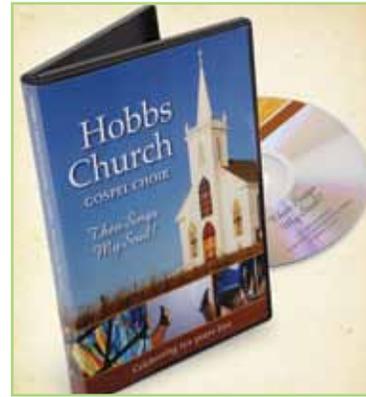
video, video editing, sound recording, etc., see if they'd be willing to donate their time or find a way to barter for the service — or promote them as a sponsor.

- **DO try to find sponsors** to cover your costs for production (and manufacturing, etc.). For whatever services you need to seek assistance with, try to barter for sponsorship placement. The more you can do to offset your production costs, the more you make on the project, so get creative. Offer sponsor levels, topping off the highest level with a private performance or special service by your organization.
- **DON'T use just anyone** in the organization with a minimal understanding of what they're doing and cheap software programs. Lack of experience or expertise can cost your production dearly and add significantly to the manufacturing time of your product.
- **DO pay close attention to the audio quality of your production.** Audio is 50% of the final product. If the sound is poor, the picture appears worse, so it's important to pay close attention to the audio when making a video.
- **DO keep it simple.** If this is your first time creating a video or CD, start simply and don't get too ambitious. Having something to sell, with simple but useful content, is better than getting mired in too large a project that never gets completed.
- **DO know the specs and requirements for CD/DVD replication BEFORE you start filming.** Some of the questions you need to ask before you start your production include: In what format should my video be? In what format should my artwork be? What is the best method to send in my assets?

The best results are achieved if you start with the highest resolution content. For hand-off to our [Authoring House](#) or to our plant for replication, the closer to uncompressed source material, the better.

Part 3: Manufacturing/ Packaging

Just because you don't have a big budget for your production, it doesn't mean your package has to look like it. The look, feel, and packaging of your disc say a lot about how serious and professional your organization is.



- **DO make your package look as professional as possible.** CD and DVD package prices are as low as ever, and with so many options to choose from, there's no excuse not to house your fundraising meal ticket in a handsome package that's perfectly suited for your purposes. From the elegant DVDigipak

to the convenient jacket and standard jewel case — there's a package to suit your project. Check out our [comparison page](#) for ideas.

- **DO use local/available resources.** As with production and filming, if you have someone in your group with experience as a designer, see if they'll donate their time or barter for a sponsorship trade.
- **DON'T use your nephew as a designer** just because he's got a computer and some free time. How your product looks on the outside will go a long way to convincing a prospect that your organization is worth contributing to.
- **DO use a design template.** Whoever ends up doing the design, make sure they use our design templates when they supply the files. You can download our [templates](#).



Making a DVD? Get these checklists first!

If you're making a DVD, one important step for DVD authoring is to fill out [The DVD Menu information Guide](#) and the [The DVD Authoring Checklist](#) to the best of your ability. We use this valuable information to determine the best way to author your DVD. The forms are available on the [Authoring House FAQ](#), along with answers to many more common questions.

- **DO use space on the packaging to thank sponsors**, which can include company descriptions, logos, contact info, etc. Make advertising space on the finished product one of the perks for donating money, time, or expertise to the production. Depending on the type of package, you can dedicate an entire panel to thanking your sponsors or for use as an ad.
- **DO order enough discs to cover your expected early sales.** Nothing's worse than a missed opportunity when you're raising money. Make sure you have enough discs on hand to satisfy the demand.
- **DON'T order way more than you need.** The one thing worse than missing an opportunity is handicapping your efforts by spending too much up front. Try to get a realistic idea of how many discs you can sell, and order accordingly. Remember, you can always reorder and have discs in hand in a matter of days.
- **DON'T plan your event before getting your finished product.** If this can't be helped, be sure to work in plenty of time to allow for delays in manufacturing. Having a major fundraising event and not having your fundraising pieces in hand is a massive blunder. Don't cut things so close that you might miss your event.

Part 4: Selling and Fundraising



As with any sales and marketing effort, using as many sales channels and rallying all possible resources is the best way to maximize your efforts and achieve your fundraising goals.

- **DO create a story around your project.** People want to feel connected to a cause and to a charitable effort — and to other people. A compelling story will help sell your organization and cause, and will entice people to get involved and contribute. Cultivate a story and make it part of your message, your production, and your pitch when raising funds.
- **DO make selling/fundraising a group effort.** There is strength in numbers, and in this case, the larger your network of fundraisers, the better your chance of meeting your goals. Incentivize your group's members with a prize or public recognition for a job well done.
- **DO set quantifiable goals and have a clear plan** to execute your fundraising efforts. Write it out and make sure everyone involved understands it, and is on board. Know what you expect to make off every transaction. Keep your

communication open and continuous, and be adaptable to change.

- **DO keep an eye open for unexpected opportunities.** Once you're in the fundraising mindset, find creative opportunities you might not have thought of originally. Community days in your local area, local blogs or online communities that have a shared focus, upcoming social events that you can take part in — there are no rules and lots of rewards for creative thinking when it comes to drumming up places to spread your message.
- **DON'T rip people off.** Consider the National Public Radio model. Not many people would buy an umbrella for \$100, but as a reminder and a badge of their pledge, an umbrella seems like a fair reward for a \$100 donation. If yours is a charitable cause, or one that stirs people to action, use your DVD as a carrot to entice a larger donation — but don't gouge them for money. You want support for next year's effort. People will remember if you sold them a bill of goods.
- **DO hand to hand sales.** Plan events and find opportunities to be able to interact face to face with potential donors. There's a reason why the Girl Scouts set up their table outside the local supermarket when cookie season comes around. Engage someone in conversation and it's easier to tell your story and get them to open their wallet.
- **DO bundle your CD/DVD with an event.** Include your disc as part of the price of entry to your spaghetti dinner/beef & beer/dance recital, etc. and people will be willing to spend extra.
- **DO create an online sales portal linked from your website.** If you have a website, there are plenty of software solutions and services you can use to help facilitate online sales. Once you have a place online to accommodate donations, use flyers, emails, social networks, and even snail mailings to drive people to your site and convert folks you wouldn't get face-to-face. Do an online search for "online donation service" or "sell online" and find the solution that best suits your needs.
- **DON'T create an online sales portal if you can't fulfill orders promptly.** Offering items online is only feasible if you have the ability to process the requests. That means someone in the organization has to monitor the sales, have the packaging materials on hand, and the postal duties covered. You ought to have the capacity to fulfill online orders in a timely manner if you're going to offer them.

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