

Using Facebook and e-mail/mail campaigns for good causes

These events all work because they are based on one of the most timeless principles of charitable giving... People give to PEOPLE. What is compelling about each of these campaigns to those who are solicited is that YOU asked THEM to help you. Make your appeals personal.

Facebook -- There are many ways to use Facebook.com to help a worthy cause. Your goal should be to circulate the information in as many Facebook networks as possible to maximize the full viral effect.

- **Causes:** Especially useful for creating public awareness or throwing your support behind an existing good effort in your community. Link it to the online donation form of the charity of your choice or tell supporters how to mail a check payable to the charity to you or directly to the charity. For a more interesting online presence, link to video or YouTubes of the good works of your charity (good examples: charitywater.org; heifer.org)
- **Events:** A terrific way to publicize your good works. Utilize the RSVP function to gauge participation and open your settings to make sure others can forward the invite to those they know who'd be interested.
- **Status Campaign:** Whether you publicize your participation in a Facebook app by a charity (i.e. "Vote for St. Jude in the Target.com contest), solicit people to sign an online petition, share your intention to attend an event and ask others to repost and do the same, consider ways you can influence your own Facebook network to share in your good works.

E-mail – The subject line is key and should contain specifics and the call to action, i.e. "Help me fight childhood cancer" or "eat at Reynoldo's this Friday to support Boys & Girls Club". Then create copy that describes your cause, why it's important to you, and send it to your contacts. Be sure you have a clear call to action in the copy too (link to a donation site, "please reply and buy a ticket", "forward this to others you think would enjoy it" and so on.

Mail – Letter writing campaigns are time-honored successes in philanthropy. Alpha Beta chapter at Illinois State University has grown their annual letter writing campaign for St. Jude to more than \$50,000 on occasion. The copy they use in their letter campaign is below to give you an idea of where to start. They mail letters to friends and family across the country, and have even set up a booth on campus with slightly varied letters appropriate for use by any ISU student, along with blank envelopes, then ask other students who pass the campus booth to stop and address an envelope to someone they know. This is a great way to "kick it up a notch" – send it not only to those YOU know, but get letters into the hands of those that someone else knows.

"I am in Epsilon Sigma Alpha, an international service and leadership organization, at Illinois State University, and St. Jude is one of our main philanthropies. Letter writing is our biggest event, and last year we raised over \$32,000 alone from family donations. All donations, big or small, go a long way in helping to provide care for children at the hospital. This year our overall goal is \$60,000 and we hope you can help us to achieve it! Again, every donation helps. Here are some ways your money can help change the lives of the children at St. Jude: \$5= 5 IV Bags or 5 infant heel warmers; \$10= Rehab weights; \$20= Bone marrow needle; \$50= Complete blood count test; \$85= Crutches; \$150= Walker; and \$500= One day of oxygen. I really believe in this cause, and I hope you can find it in your heart to donate."

