

The Science of Running a Successful Raffle

One of the most overlooked revenue opportunities at a fundraising event is the Multi-Basket **Raffle** (also known in some areas as a Tricky Tray, Chinese Raffle or Basket Raffle). When planned correctly, a Raffle can become one of the highest-return fundraising activities of the evening.

The key word is **planned**. And structuring your raffle is indeed a science.

Many organizations simply place raffle prizes on tables, hand guests some tickets, and hope for the best. While that approach may generate some revenue, it potentially leaves thousands of dollars on the table.

A successful Raffle is actually a science—a combination of psychology, merchandising, guest engagement, and strategic pricing. Every decision you make influences how many tickets your guests purchase and how excited they become throughout the event.

Word of Caution: If you think that running a Raffle in your State is not allowed contact us We have a resource that allows you to run a Raffle/Sweepstakes legally in all 50 states, providing that you are a registered non-profit. Call us for the inside scoop on this exciting loophole.

1 - Start with the Right Prize Mix

The biggest mistake committees make is collecting whatever items are donated without considering how attractive they are to attendees.

Your prize selection should appeal to a wide variety of interests, including:

1. Travel packages – A trip or cruise
2. Sports memorabilia
3. Hand-signed guitars and celebrity collectibles
4. Restaurant gift certificates
5. Spa and wellness experiences
6. Wine and gourmet baskets
7. Family entertainment packages
8. Electronics and technology
9. Home décor and seasonal gifts
10. Alcohol or Beverage packages

At least one of your prizes needs to be GRAND. Something worth more than your top Raffle buy-in. The goal is for every guest to find multiple prizes they would love to win. The more desirable the prizes, the more raffle tickets people purchase.

2 - Presentation Sells Tickets

People buy with their eyes.

A beautifully displayed prize can generate dramatically more ticket sales than the exact same item displayed poorly.

Use attractive table coverings, risers, lighting when possible, professionally printed bid cards, and signs that clearly describe each package. Group similar items together and make premium prizes stand out.

Remember:

Perceived value often becomes actual fundraising value.

3 - Create Different Prize Levels

Not every prize should be worth the same amount.

An effective Raffle includes:

- 11. Premium prizes
- 12. Mid-level prizes
- 13. Smaller, fun prizes

Having different prize values creates excitement while allowing every guest to feel they have a chance to win something they value.

4 - Sell Tickets in Two Bundles

Guests almost always purchase more tickets when they receive a perceived bargain.

Instead of selling only individual tickets, offer packages such as:

- 14. 1 ticket for \$20
- 15. 26 tickets for \$100
- 16. Add a ****BONUS**** for everyone who buys the \$ 100 bundle

The larger the package, the better the value.

Many guests who intended to spend \$20 will happily spend \$100 when they believe they're getting significantly more chances to win.

Don't sell your raffle tickets for the cost of a soda/beverage. And only offer two options.

5 - Make Purchasing Easy

Nothing slows revenue faster than lines.

Sell tickets:

- 17. Before your Event ----- through Social Media
- 18. At registration
- 19. During cocktail hour
- 20. Throughout dinner
- 21. Via roaming volunteers
- 22. At clearly marked ticket stations

If you're using mobile payment systems, make purchasing as quick and convenient as possible.

The easier it is to buy tickets; the more tickets guests will purchase.

6 - Display the Buckets Strategically

Each prize should have its own clearly labeled ticket container, basket or bag.

Leave enough room around each display so guests can comfortably browse and drop tickets into the containers without creating congestion.

Crowded displays discourage participation.

7 - Keep Guests Engaged

Don't allow the raffle area to become invisible after cocktail hour.

Throughout the evening, have your MC, Host or DJ remind guests that the raffle remains open.

The emcee or auctioneer should periodically highlight exciting prizes, announce when ticket sales are nearing the close, and create urgency with countdown announcements.

Examples include:

23. "Only 15 minutes left to enter!"

24. "Last chance to win the vacation package!"

25. "Don't forget the signed guitar!"

Friendly reminders consistently increase last-minute ticket sales.

8 - Timing Matters

Avoid closing the raffle too early.

If guests know ticket sales remain open throughout dinner or until shortly before the live auction, they often return several times to add more tickets after seeing what others are interested in.

Creating multiple opportunities to purchase typically increases overall revenue.

9 - Volunteers Make the Difference

Assign committee members' specific responsibilities, such as:

26. Prize display

27. Ticket sales

28. Answering guest questions

29. Monitoring prize tables

30. Closing the raffle

31. Drawing winners

32. Announcing winners

33. Prize distribution

When everyone knows their job, the raffle runs smoothly and professionally.

10 - The Psychology Behind a Multi Basket Raffle

Unlike a silent auction, where only one bidder wins, a Multi Basket Raffle allows every guest to participate in dozens of prize drawings. This can effectively monetize everyone in your audience.

Guests enjoy choosing where to place their tickets based on:

34. The value of the prize

35. Their personal interests

36. The number of tickets already in each bucket

37. Their perceived odds of winning

This interactive experience keeps guests engaged throughout the event and encourages repeat visits to the raffle tables.

11 - Common Mistakes to Avoid

Avoid these frequent fundraising mistakes:

38. Too few attractive prizes

39. Poorly displayed packages

40. Difficult-to-read signage

41. Long ticket purchase lines

42. Closing ticket sales too early

43. Not promoting the raffle during the evening

44. Too few volunteers managing the area

45. Drawing winners before everyone has had a chance to participate

Each of these mistakes can reduce fundraising revenue.

Final Thoughts

A successful Raffle is much more than a collection of donated items—it is a carefully designed fundraising experience with carefully curated items.

When committees focus on prize quality, presentation, pricing, guest engagement, and efficient operations, ticket sales increase dramatically.

The organizations that consistently raise the most money understand that successful fundraising isn't based on luck, it is a science.

It's based on creating an enjoyable experience that encourages generosity while making guests feel like winners throughout the evening.

With thoughtful planning and attention to detail, your Raffle can become one of the most profitable—and most anticipated—parts of your fundraising event.

The Math Behind Your Raffle

Sell 100 Guests \$100 of Raffle Tickets = \$ 10,000 Gross Sales

Sell 200 Guests \$100 of Raffle Tickets = \$ 20,000 Gross Sales

Sell 250 Guests \$100 of Raffle Tickets = \$ 25,000 Gross Sales

Subtract from that...the cost of your 5 (or so) Raffle prizes and you can see your NET Profits

Pro Tip: Have 400 students in your school sell \$ 1000 of Raffle tickets to their Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Neighbors and family

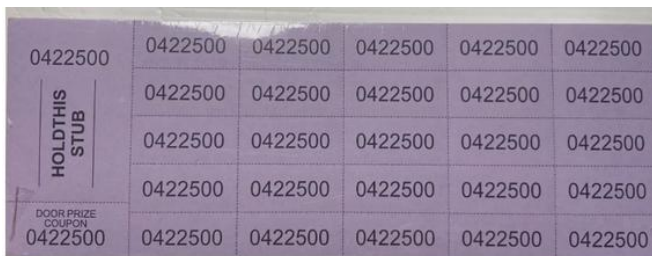
Associates = \$ 400,000 Gross Sales (This is the Divide & Conquer strategy)

Resources

These are the raffle tickets you should use. Perforated and easy to use, every ticket a donor gets has the same number and the donor keeps the stub for their end-of-evening drawing experience.

You can easily keep track of master numbers and the buyer. Winners DO NOT have to be present.

These can be found on Amazon or EBay.



These vouchers are available to your group for FREE. This is not a timeshare. More details can be found here: https://charityworks.net/travel_voucher)



For more information, Guitars and/or Trips for your Raffle Grand Prize, or Affordable auctioneers, contact:

Ira Klein | CharityWorks / Author & Consultant **(925) 250-6968** **ira@charityworks.net**

[Click here to book a 30 min consult with Ira.](https://calendly.com/iraklein82/30min?utm_source=newsletter4)

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