

How to Thank Your Donors

Be Prompt

General Donation:

Event Donation:

After an event, you have the opportunity to capitalize on the memories and connections made during the event to drive more engagement with your supporters. But your event will only be top-of-mind for so long. Think of it this way: If you were an event attendee, which of the following would feel more meaningful and leave you with a better impression of the organization that hosted the event?

1. A thoughtful “Thank you for attending!” message received Two Days after the event?
2. A thoughtful “Thank you for attending!” message received Six Months after the fact?

Clearly, the thank-you message sent just a few days after the event would feel more genuine and thoughtful, positively impacting your view of the organization. By moving quickly like this after your event to complete your follow-up tasks, you’re demonstrating to everyone involved that they matter to your organization and that you’re eager to have them continue supporting your nonprofit for the long-term.

You can set yourself up for prompt follow-up by planning your follow-up activities during the larger event planning process. Doing so will help you view your follow-up work as part of the larger effort that goes into a successful event, rather than a nice afterthought. Plus, you won’t be scrambling the day after your event to determine what sort of thank-yous you want to send out or how you’ll secure support from people you interacted with at the event.

Genuinely Thank Donors, Sponsors, Volunteers

Start with thanking everyone who made your event a success. Depending on the event, this may include:

- Corporate sponsors and community partners.
- Attendees and donors.
- Volunteers.
- Emcees, speakers, entertainers

Before you resort to planning to send the same thank-you note to everyone you want to thank, though, determine the thank-you strategies you can use to make each group feel seen and valued for their unique contributions.

Here are some strategies to consider:

- **Match the thank-you to the contribution:** For instance, you might thank your event volunteers by sending them each a thank-you note. Or, for a major donor who contributed several luxury auction items, you could personally call them as well. **s in order.** Never underestimate how good a personal phone call makes someone feel. Showing gratitude on the same level as the contribution will empower you to communicate the impact that each individual had on your event and will also help you effectively manage the time and resources you have allocated for event follow-up tasks.
- **Leverage tech to give your thank-yous a creative spin:** A handwritten thank-you note is an effective tool for recognizing your supporters, but nowadays, it’s not your only option. Try creating thank-you videos, sending eCards, or sharing supporter spotlights on social media or your blog. Not only will these strategies get your message of gratitude across, but they’ll also be unexpected and surprising for your supporters, making your nonprofit stand out from the crowd.
- **Make it personal, no matter the thank-you:** No matter the size of your thank-you or who it’s for, you should always do what you can to personalize it. Use your supporters’ first names and any specific information from the event, such as the donation amount contributed or hours volunteered to make the thank-you message feel like it was carefully crafted for that individual. Whatever you do, don’t make the mistake that many have made and send out messages that have the wrong name on them, or messages that are clearly canned.

Recognizing your supporters in the right way is critical for building new relationships or strengthening continuing relationships. A thoughtful thank-you can set a positive tone for future interactions and contributions.



Highlight the results of the event or your running journey

Here are a few things you can share with your community of supporters to demonstrate the impact of your event:

Fundraising Results from event or fundraising update during your journey: Fundraising dollars are the fuel you rely on to do more good. Share what your fundraising goal for the event was and how much money you raised. You can also share an update on your goal towards your fundraising.

Videos and Photos From the Event or long runs: Events are great for making memories with your community of family and friends. Share photos and videos from the big day to remind your supporters of the great times you had together. Pay special attention to how you craft your videos. Short, highlight reels from events often do very well as donors will watch the video through its entirety to see who they spot and to relive exciting moments. They may also feel compelled to share the video on social media or with those who were not able to attend, which further builds your outreach.

Mission Focused Stories: If appropriate, you can also share how people were affected by your event—just make sure to get their permission first! For example, you might create a social media post/video includes an interview with your mission connection and show how the funds raised will impact others like them.

Reporting the results of your events will also be important for remaining accountable. Make sure you gather and organize all of your event data in one place so that you can easily pull insights to share.



Ask for Feedback

One of the best ways you can communicate to supporters that you care about them and their experience with your event (and prepare for future events) is to seek feedback on the event experience.

You can solicit this feedback in a variety of ways. For example, you might call some of your top donors to ask them about what they thought of the event. Or, to get more general feedback, you might email out a short survey or share it on your social media profile.

However you decide to ask for feedback, make sure to ask open-ended questions. Instead of something like “Did you enjoy the event?” opt for “What was your favorite part of the event?”

this is super important should you ever want to do this event again for future fundraisers.



Encourage Further Involvement

The days and weeks after an event or your entire running journey are the perfect time to invite friends and family and other supporters to get involved with your journey or Tedy’s Team, in a variety of ways. In your follow-up communications, share with your supporters what is on the horizon for Tedy’s Team, and how they can lend their support.

For example, you could encourage your supporters to:

Attend Another Event of Yours: If your supporter enjoyed attending your event, chances are they’ll be interested in attending another! Try sending an email with a calendar of upcoming events and asking supporters to save the dates. You could even provide a special registration discount for returning attendees.

Volunteer on Race Day: Encourage event attendees to get on-the-ground experience with your mission by signing up to be part of your volunteering program. This will give them the chance to deepen their connection to and investment in your organization.

Learn More About Our Cause: Send event attendees educational materials, like your recently-published blog post or your annual report. This will encourage them to become more familiar with the particulars of your work and how they can continue to contribute.

Follow Us on Social Media: Keeping up with our organization on social media gives supporters an opportunity to see frequent updates on your cause and any upcoming campaigns or events. Plus, it’s an easy ask—all your supporters will need to do is click a button!