5 Tips

to Plan Your Annual Giving Campaign

The beginning of the year brings much planning and preparation. Your teams are planning events, recruiting volunteers, writing communications, and scheduling meetings. Every team and staff member is thinking ahead to what this year brings and what goals they need to meet.

But are you considering your goals around giving?

As you're looking at what you can do to grow your church and the Kingdom, consider how growing tithes and offerings can boost your ministry. What if you could not only increase financial gifts but also increase recurring donations you can count on throughout the year? What if you share the benefits of pledging and making gifts to meet those pledges?

We've seen other ministries increase their contributions, pledges, and recurring gifts by planning annual giving campaigns, so we've put together five tips and tricks to help you along the way to creating your own giving campaign.
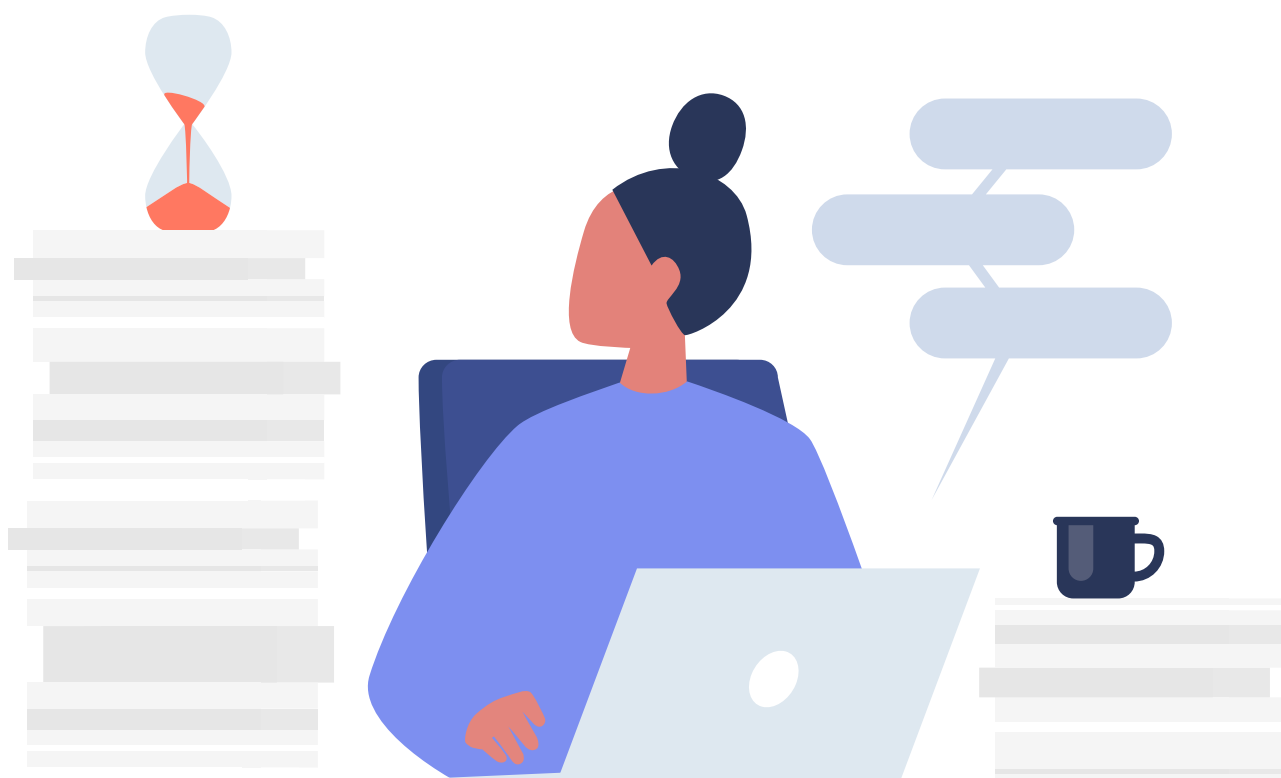
GIVING
GOALS

Timing is everything.

If you've every hard of "white noise", then this next statement will hit home for you. Too much chatter may as well be no chatter at home. Overcommunicating will cause your members and contributors to tune out. If you speak about giving every Sunday or even every month, your contributors may feel their tithes and offerings mean more than they do to your ministry.

Therefore, finding the sweet spot in timing your campaign is vital. Consider a twice-yearly campaign, with March being ideal time for your first half of the campaign to remind members to give over the summer months as they are planning vacations and weekends away. October is an opportune time leading into the holiday season to hold the second half of your annual campaign. Start planning a few months in advance to be sure you have time to get into the queue at your church for announcements and materials.

Run your giving campaign for a few weeks to have time to communicate your message effectively. Later, we'll talk about what those weeks look like and how to include many touchpoints to reach your contributors within that time.

Determine your focus.

Decide your campaign focus. Analyze where your contributions are today, and what would make a difference in pushing them forward. If you already have a large amount of your contributors giving online, consider focusing on increasing recurring donations. If your contributors haven't adopted online giving yet, make your focus to push online donations and make your contributors more aware of the benefits of online giving. Or maybe you have a big need this year like building renovations or a large mission trip and pledging could help meet those needs. Determine your needs and choose your campaign focus.

Once you have your focus, think of a name for your giving campaign that speaks to your ministry and goals. Be creative, but make it impactful and relevant to your ministry.
Here are a few examples:

Generosity on Repeat
(with a focus on recurring giving)

Influence the Outcome
(with a focus on giving towards a specific mission or ministry)

Pledging is Paramount
(with a focus on pledging and creating recurring gifts
 to meet those pledges)

Delivering the message.

As we stated earlier, overcommunicating is a definite no-go. However, you do want to deliver the message of your giving campaign in an effective way for your audience. The best way to do so is spread your message through different channels at specific times. Here are some common ways other ministries see success in communicating their giving campaigns:

- *From the pulpit or stage*
- *In their lobby or entrance area*
- *Through email and text messages*

We all know that your members listen to your senior pastor a tad bit more attentively than they listen to others. Use that to your advantage by having your pastor introduce the giving campaign while in the pulpit or on stage.

Once your pastor has introduced the giving campaign (and people actually listened!), send an email communication with a link to a pre-recorded video of your pastor re-iterating the importance and message of the campaign. If you use text blasts, work that in a week after the email communication to reach those who may not open their emails often.

Don't forget your usual communication channels, such as pre-worship slides or slides that show in your lobby or entrance area. Display slides that are consistent with your giving campaign message showing how your contributors can easily give, pledge, create recurring gifts, etc.

Using all of those communication channels ensures you are hitting majority of your contributors by appealing to them before worship (slides), during worship (pastor announcement), and outside of worship (email/text).

Peer influence works.

It's human nature to want to fit into the majority. That's why FOMO is a thing! We all have a fear of missing out when we can't go somewhere or when we don't do something others are all doing. How can you create that same feeling when it comes to online giving in your church?

Consider how providing your online givers a way to be included in in-person giving could push those who use the excuse, "I want others to know I'm giving faithfully," to make the switch to online gifts. Pew cards are one way you can not only include those who give online or via text, but you can use those who hold them up to influence others and raise curiosity.

If those not giving online see a large wave of people (maybe even some of your leadership on stage or in the choir) holding pew cards up during the time of giving, they will be interested in why so many are doing it. This curiosity combined with the awareness your giving campaign is creating around online giving will certainly compel others to try online giving. Have your pew cards available and ready each service during your giving campaign to be sure your online givers can take part.

I give online!

ACST can help.

> "*Realm makes it easier for staff to process church contributions, for congregants to see their statements, and for people to set up their own recurring giving. It's been really helpful not having people relying entirely on the financial department.*"

Jenni Brookes
Director of Operations
Idlewild Presbyterian Church

ACS Technologies understands an increase in tithes and offerings means an increase in going out to disciple and reach others. Our giving tools are built with that in mind. Track giving and keep up with fluctuations and giving trends with detailed reports and quick insight dashboards. Provide giving tools for your contributors that go beyond making a simple one-time donation by also permitting them to set up automated giving. And don't forget how important the option to offset processing fees can be to both your ministry as it relieves a financial burden and also to your contributors as they may consider that to be a part of their faithful giving.

Reach out and see what we can do to help you increase your giving.

That's what ministry partners are for.

Choosing the Right Ministry Partner

The know-how you need from experts you trust.
ACS Technologies is the original pioneer of Church Management Software (ChMS). We are firmly dedicated to serving local churches all over North America by providing the best-in-class ministry software and service solutions that help you fulfill Christ's mission for your Church.

Tools and support to strengthen churches.
We build great software, but we don't stop there. We have a "service-first" approach that truly sets us apart. With hundreds of dedicated support and consulting personnel, your staff can reach our team 24/7. We're in your corner to help you with the ministry challenges you face every day.

Ideas and solutions powered by integrity.
Integrity is real for us, and it means consistently being faithful stewards by doing the right thing for church success. We have earned the trust of pastors, church staff, congregants, our employees, and colleagues for over 40 years.

A plan to meet your needs and move your ministry.
We're not just interested in satisfied customers. We see ourselves as your real ministry partner and will work with you to make disciples that will last for an eternity. We're excited to talk about your goals, create a plan together, and set you up with the software, service, and resources you need.

We believe in YOU!
ACS Technologies believes in the local church. Over 75% of our team has experience serving in their local churches. We know firsthand that serving the Church means serving people, and we take seriously our commitment to helping ministries like yours achieve their God-given mandate - to make disciples in their communities, states, and across the world.

Let's Talk

We know the challenges of switching or implementing new technology and how that can be intimidating. But we also know the unbelievable changes that have happened within churches that have partnered with us for their ministry needs. Let's connect and see how we can assist you in the greatest thing you do - grow God's Kingdom.

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