

November 2020



ENCOUNTER!

Meeting Jesus
on Higher Ground.

Blessed are you when they insult
you and persecute you and utter
every kind of evil against you
[falsely] because of me.
(Matt. 5:11).

WISDOM

from ICSC strategic partners

This month's contributions come from
the following ICSC Strategic Partners:



DIOCESAN



Each month ICSC sends you practical information, whitepapers, and tips, as well as other insightful information from our Strategic Partners to assist you with your responsibility as stewards of the Church. We are very grateful to our Strategic Partners for their partnership and commitment to ICSC, and their professional wisdom is a wonderful gift to ICSC members.

In this edition ICSC brings you:

- * a checklist to guide you through planning big impact, small events compliments of **ACS Technologies**.
- * a survey showing improved fundraising trends presented by **CCS**.
- * Advent ideas for your parish provided by **Diocesan**.
- * how a development audit unlocks new possibilities from **Greater Mission**.

SMALL EVENTS, BIG IMPACT PLANNING CHECKLIST

Some of your parishioners may still be skeptical about being around a large group of people. This doesn't mean you can't still make an impact in their lives. Hosting small community events such as a barbecue, movie night, or game night can help your parishioners connect. Matthew 18:20 says, "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." Don't be discouraged if you can't hold your normal events. Think of ways you can scale it down. Here's a checklist to help guide you through the process of planning your small events:

- ☐ **Get an idea:**
Work with your team to discover what fun, service, or ministry-related small events you can do.
- ☐ **Update your web and social media:**
Create an event on Facebook, your website, or your church management software.
- ☐ **Recruit a team:**
Identify specific roles that you need covered at your event; then recruit volunteers for those positions.
- ☐ **Plan the event:**
Create a timeline for when everything needs to be done. Meet with your team to go over their roles. Set up the layout.
- ☐ **Promote the event:**
Pass out flyers in your neighborhood, find people who are active on social media to share your event, use yard signs, etc.
- ☐ **Prepare to connect:**
Designate special volunteers to work the crowd. Teach volunteers how to strike up a conversation with new attendees.
- ☐ **Follow up:**
Select certain volunteers to follow up with attendees. Invite them to your next event or service.
- ☐ **Have fun:**
Remember, if you're not having fun, neither will your attendees. Make sure your whole team can enjoy aspects of the event.

Discover more tools and strategies for growth, giving,
ministry, and more at ministry.acst.com



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CCS Survey Shows Improved Fundraising Trends and Evolved Donor Engagement Tactics



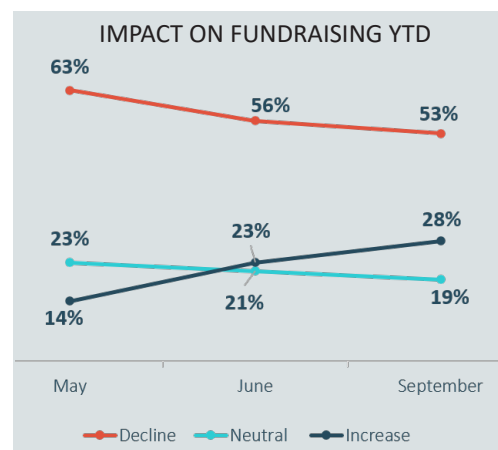
CCS Fundraising - Fall 2020

The first two installments of CCS Fundraising's [Philanthropic Climate Survey](#) series in May and June 2020 documented the immediate effects of a crisis in nonprofit fundraising. Our third-edition survey conducted from September 9 to September 16, 2020 provides a window into a nonprofit sector that—at this point, half a year into the global pandemic—has moved past the initial onset of crisis and into adapting to a “new normal.”

The Pandemic's Changing Impact on Nonprofit Fundraising

Our September survey results, comprised of responses from nearly 1,400 individuals representing nonprofits of all major subsectors, show that although the pandemic has brought widespread fundraising challenges, its negative impact on fundraising has lessened over time.

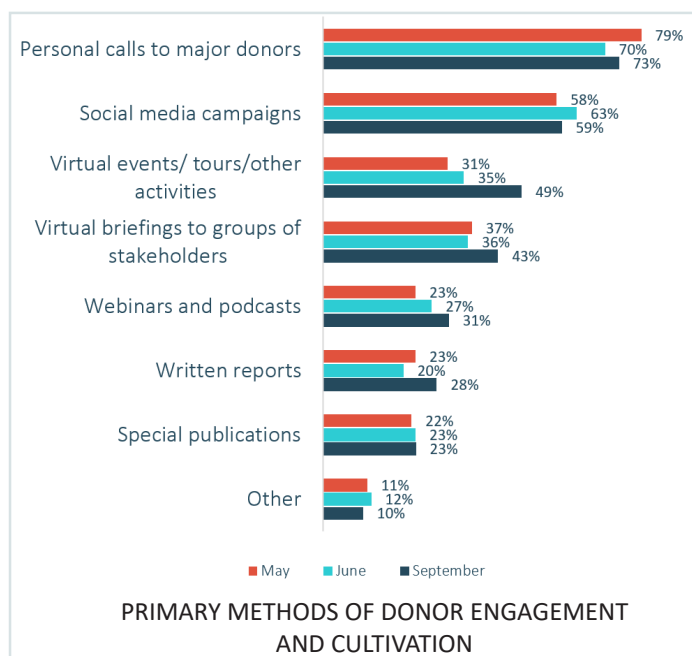
In our most recent survey, 53% of respondents reported that the pandemic has led to a decline in fundraising at their organization. As illustrated in the graph to the right, the proportion of respondents saying that they experienced a decline has decreased markedly from a height of 63% in May. Moreover, the proportion of respondents reporting a fundraising increase amid the pandemic has doubled since May, rising from 14% to 28%.



The Evolving Response of Nonprofit Professionals

As the pandemic continues, our data suggest that virtual donor engagement methods are becoming more and more prominent in nonprofit fundraising operations. In September, a combined 49% of respondents reported that they held some sort of online fundraising event to date, up from 31% in May. This 18-percentage-point increase was almost exclusively driven by survey respondents converting previously planned galas, dinners, and other fundraisers to a new virtual format, as opposed to creating new virtual events.

As a positive indicator for the future of fundraising in an increasingly virtual world, our latest survey results suggested relatively widespread comfort with virtual solicitations at the major gift level. So far, 43% of survey respondents have conducted a virtual major gift solicitation, primarily through phone and video methods. Moreover, another 29% of respondents are considering a virtual major gift ask, contributing to a combined total of more than 70% of respondents who have either already solicited a major gift virtually or are considering doing so.



To see more results from our Philanthropic Climate Survey series, check out our newly released third-edition report [Fundraising Impact of COVID-19](#) and access all three reports at ccsfundraising.com/publications.

It's a Time to Prepare

Ideas for Advent

1

FOR PARISHES

- On social media, link to articles like the pope's message. Pull out a line or two as a quote.
- In bulletins, print pieces such as your priest's homilies, a message from a pastoral staff member or a Catholic blog. Make sure these pieces are ones that express confidence in God's goodness and mercy.

2

FOR FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS

- Choose a Scripture verse as your Advent theme: "Be vigilant at all times" (LK 21:36) or "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths" (MT. 3:3)
- Resolve to post only positive social media posts throughout Advent.
- Set aside one evening a week for family time: reading a book together, playing games, going for a walk. At the end of the evening, have a parent offer a blessing to each child. "May God bless you + (Name), And keep you in love." The child answers: "Amen."

3

FOR TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

- Share positive videos that promote conversation, rather than ridiculing someone.
- Invite friends over and put away your cell phones! Instead, play a board game, cook or watch a movie together. First person who checks their phone has to do dishes!
- Choose a Scripture verse you really like and put it on a sticky note in your school locker. It doesn't have to be big - it's just a good reminder to you throughout your day.

4

FOR GROUPS

- Set up a group in an app or on social media for your parishioners to join.
- Each week create discussion topics based off the scriptures – explore themes of Who Jesus was and promote conversations for parishioners to share, learn and inspire each other.
- Create quick messages to parishioners using email templates or in-app messaging tools to remind parishioners to join in and share any other information to inspire their faith.

How a Development Audit Unlocks New Possibilities

As development professionals, we are all about unlocking new possibilities. However, sometimes we can get locked into old patterns of behavior, processes and systems. While we may be succeeding, there can be opportunities for improvement that are hard for us to see, because we are so close to it.

Conducting a development audit with the help of an independent third-party expert can provide an objective analysis of what you are doing well and what can be improved, expanded or added. A development audit presents a fresh look at how your department operates on a day to day basis and recommends specific strategy ideas that can form the heart of your future plans.

A development audit takes shape with a careful review of every aspect of your development program. **These would include extensive data analysis of current development initiatives:** encompassing giving trends, goal structure and the overall effectiveness of the program. Key leadership of the organization (parish, diocese, school or agency) would be interviewed to gain their perceptions about the current development programs. Additionally, an audit will review all communication methods and materials and current policies and procedures. Another aspect of the development audit is to benchmark against best practices used by similar organizations.

Included in the overall analysis would be a review of major gift, legacy gift and annual giving efforts. A complete Donor Screening/Constituent Study of the current donor database should be conducted to analyze the potential giving capacity within the clients' organization.

The approach should go far beyond basic research and rating. An audit should analyze your staffing, budgeting, reporting, roles, staff training and general operational operations development efforts. Leadership Circles, donor stewardship, accountability, transparency, and acknowledgments are important to evaluate. Ultimately, the goal of the audit is to provide the leadership of the organization and the development professionals with a roadmap for success in the future.

In these difficult times, when so many of your operations have changed dramatically, this is a perfect time to analyze how you can improve your efforts to unlock new possibilities for funding the advancement of your mission. For more information on best practice methods or development assessments please contact **Greater Mission** at info@greatermission.com.

