GO FOR THE GOAL:

Your December Checklist

Our helpful guide to winning big with your Christmas and Year-End fundraising goals

s you clear your Mission's Thanksgiving tables and put up your Christmas trees, build on the momentum of your holiday giving campaigns to finish the year strong.

December is a prime time to invite donors to continue with the



About a third or more of annual giving happens in the last month of the year.

giving spirit of the holiday season and help you meet your Christmas and Year-End goals.

And with <u>donors eager to take advantage of that last chance</u> to make a tax-deductible donation for the year, December is not only a great month for you to receive, but also for them to give!

Here are some ideas to build on the momentum of your Thanksgiving and #GivingTuesday campaigns to meet – or exceed – your Mission's goals in December.



WHAT MATTERS MOST



SETTING YOUR GOALS

December – a time to finish strong and dream about what's ahead. Many people wait until January to list out goals for the New Year. <u>Take time now to plan for your Mission's next-year needs</u>. Set a deliberate plan for how your Christmas and Year-End giving campaigns will help you start the New Year strong!

- **Be SMART.** It's easy to dream big, but choosing achievable goals for your Christmas and Year-End campaigns takes a little more concrete planning. Follow these "SMART" steps to set campaign goals your donors will be eager to join you in meeting.
 - **Specific.** Would you attend a party without knowing who was hosting, or where or when it was held? You wouldn't know where to show up! Ensure donors will join you at the "giving party" by being specific in describing your campaign goals.
 - <u>Measurable</u>. Whether your Mission needs money or more items, <u>make the need countable or "count-downable"!</u> You'll be able to easily update donors and followers throughout the campaign on your progress in meeting your goals, and let them know how they can specifically join in.



For example, you might start with goals like...

"\$100,000 for expenses next year"

"25 new mattresses for the shelter"

• **Achievable.** Be sure to reach high, but also reach out to donors with your goals in sight. Donors are more likely to give toward a need that feels attainable. <u>Make goals with clear steps on how to get there</u>.

• **Relevant**. Choose goals that directly answer needs. This fosters donor trust that the Mission wisely uses the gifts they share.

"\$100,000 to fund 50,000 meals. Each meal costs \$2.00." \leftarrow Achievable

"25 new mattresses for our Women & Children's shelter because more Families have been coming to the Mission looking for a place to sleep."

• <u>Time-sensitive</u>. Consider immediate needs of your Mission, as well as needs you'll have three months down the road. <u>Choose a "need by" date for goals that can serve as an exciting countdown for donors</u> who participate in this race to meet the need.

Those starting goals have now become some of the SMART-est!

"\$100,000 <u>by December 31</u> will allow the Mission to start providing 50,000 meals next year – only \$2.00 a meal!"

"25 <u>by December 25</u>! Help the Mission buy 25 new mattresses for our Women & Children's shelter, providing a good night's sleep for those in need!"

TI PRO TIP!

If you have multiple goals, consider making the smaller one the focus of your Christmas campaign and the larger one the focus of your Year-End campaign.

Time-sensitive!



MEETING YOUR GOALS

Now that you have your goals in place, start taking steps to meet them! Let the momentum from your Thanksgiving and #GivingTuesday campaigns propel you forward in your Christmas and Year-End giving campaigns.

<u>Communicate frequently and fast across social media platforms and email</u> during this month full of giving that comes on quickly at the end of the year. Here's a checklist of ideas, and at the end, you'll find a sample communications calendar your Mission can adapt to make the most of your December giving campaigns!

WEEK 1

- Start with a thank-you. Begin by giving thanks for what's already come in through November giving! Express thanks to donors through mail, email and social media for how much they've helped.
- **Recap results and renew the invitation.** Update your donors and followers on the results of your #GivingTuesday campaign. Did they help you exceed your goal? Did the Mission fall a bit short? Remind donors of the need that remains, and renew your invitation to them to give toward the goal before year's end!

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE RECAP/RE-INVITE YOU CAN USE!

"Your generosity this #GivingTuesday helped the Mission raise \$5,400 to help feed and care for neighbors in need! But we still need \$4,600 to meet our goal of \$10,000 by midnight on December 31 to help hungry, homeless people. Continue in the giving spirit of the season. Share a meaningful gift today to bless our Mission guests this month and into the New Year! Give online at MissionURL.org."

TE PRO TIP!

Consider treating the funds you raise through #GivingTuesday as part of your Year-End campaign number. This helps a bigger Year-End goal feel attainable to donors – and you!

Countdown to Christmas! Start posting a countdown to Christmas across your social
media platforms. Share status updates on what's still needed to meet your campaign
goals, and invite your followers to share a gift. You could even pair your countdown copy
with a short story and photo of one of your Mission's guests to put a face to the people
they're helping.

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES:

"15 days till Christmas! Last week, your gifts bought 6 new mattresses for guests at the Mission's Women & Children's shelter. Help us meet our goal of 25 new mattresses by Christmas by sharing a special Christmas gift today! Give online at MissionURL.org. #25byDec25 #ChristmasMissionCountdown"

"15 days till Christmas! Most people can hardly wait for the holiday. But for those in a homeless shelter, it can be a hard time. Help the Mission give our guests a sense of home and family – a Christmas feast, halls decked with decorations and special celebrations. Your Christmas gift today will provide holiday meals for those in our care and the hope of the season all year long! Donate online now. #ChristmasMissionCountdown"

"15 days till Christmas! Jesus and His family knew what it meant to have no place to call home. This Christmas, help other families with nowhere to turn find "room at the inn." Help the Mission raise just \$2,000 before Dec. 25 to meet our Countdown to Christmas goal! Share a special Christmas gift today to help families in need! Donate online at MissionURL.org #ChristmasMissionCountdown"

ST PRO TIP!

Number the need. Include stats in your status updates and other social media communications to show how much the Mission still needs to meet its goals. This gives donors a clear idea of how you'll use their gifts, and how the gifts they give can really help! Adding a hashtag like #ChristmasMissionCountdown provides a way for followers to search for, track and contribute to your progress.

• **Call for volunteers.** Will you be hosting a Christmas meal for your Mission guests or other special celebrations? Make sure you've secured the helping hands you'll need. Post to social media about volunteer needs, sign-ups and trainings – and add this information to your website too!

WEEK 2

Holiday drives. As people shop for holiday gifts and Christmas feast ingredients, invite
them to include the Mission's needs on their lists. Involve donors by asking them to share
in-kind gifts collected at drives.

HERE ARE A FEW DRIVE EXAMPLES:

- Adopt-a-Family. Can you imagine waking up Christmas morning to find no gifts under the tree? No cookies baking in the oven? No family gathering to celebrate Christ's birth? This is reality for many homeless and struggling families. Ask for donations of simple gifts and items needed for your holiday meal.
- Winter Rescue Kits. Winter can be a dangerous time for people living on the streets. Hold a drive for kit items to provide warmth and comfort to those in need. Collect blankets, socks, hand warmers, coats, etc. Provide donors with the option of purchasing a "virtual kit," donating a fixed amount online that can be used to purchase kit items.

TE PRO TIP!

Want more holiday drive ideas adaptable to the Christmas season, and suggestions on how to involve the community in hosting these drives on your behalf? Ask our Client Services Team for your copy of the Thanksgiving One Sheet at **ForRandy@brewerdirect.com**.

• **Business involvement.** Invite businesses to match donations made during your Christmas or Year-End campaigns. Reach out to businesses in your community to donate a percentage of their sales to your Mission. This is a great way to raise funds as many people are out and about purchasing presents!

AND THESE BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS MAKE GREAT CONTENT FOR YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS TOO! CHECK OUT THIS EXAMPLE:

December Auto Sales Help the Mission

Once again this year, Crown Motors on Main Street will generously donate \$100 to the Mission for every vehicle the dealership sells during December. Last year, we received more than \$20,000 from this promotion! We're hopeful the community will respond with an outpouring of support once again!

TE PRO TIP!

Also <u>reach out to businesses</u> – <u>and churches and other community organizations</u> – <u>to hold drives for needed items this month on the Mission's behalf</u>. Invite churches to pray for you and your guests during this busy season, as well. These are great ways to involve your community in meeting non-fiscal needs!

WEEK 3

- **Don't forget major donors.** The relationships you've been cultivating with major donors throughout the year often pay off during the holiday season. <u>Call top donors to thank them for their partnership</u>. Consider sending them a small thank-you gift or personally delivering hand-written notes from grateful Mission guests. <u>Reaching out to these special supporters conveys your appreciation for their past generosity and also gently reminds them to give again.</u>
- **Christmas Eve.** Today's your last day to appeal to donors for a Christmas campaign gift! As the clock counts down, share with your followers once again how much remains to meet your goal before Christmas or if you've already met it, post an update to celebrate and say thanks!

WEEK 4

• **Thank & update.** With Christmas over, lose no time in thanking donors for their gifts toward your Christmas campaign. <u>Update them on what is still needed to meet your goals for Year End before midnight on December 31.</u>



Don't forget to thank volunteers who served at your Christmas celebrations too! People who volunteer are more likely than non-volunteers to donate, so it's important to honor them well and maintain positive relationships.

• Last chance to give! Between Christmas and New Year's Eve, don't be shy about communicating daily with your donors and followers (across social media, by email, etc.). Highlight that in these last six days of the year, donors have their last chance to make tax-deductible donations when they give to the Mission. And if they missed out on being part of your Christmas giving campaign, they can still help you meet your Year-End goal!



FINISHING WELL, STARTING STRONG

Happy New Year – and congratulations! You made it to Year End. Take a moment to finish well so you can start the New Year strong and be set up for success.

- **Start (again) with a thank-you.** As you did at the beginning of December, start January thanking everyone who gave to, volunteered for or in some way supported the Mission during your Christmas and Year-End campaigns.
- **Results and resolutions.** As you say thanks, share the results of your campaigns and how donors were central to helping the Mission reach its goals. <u>January is a great time to set some more goals "resolutions" for the months ahead. Invite donors to partner with you in achieving these too, reaching out to those who gave in December!</u>

Your Mission can adapt this sample communications calendar to keep followers of the Mission up-to-date on how they can join in on your December giving campaigns!

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
, SOI4	"Countdown to Christmas" post #1	#GIVING TUESDAY	Thank-you post for #GivingTuesday gifts	1110	Post calling for Christmas meal volunteers	SAI
	"Countdown to Christmas" post #2		Post about holiday drive		Post about business donating % of sales	
	"Countdown to Christmas" post #3			"Countdown to Christmas" post #4		
CHRIST- MAS EVE "Countdown to Christmas" post #5	CHRIST- MAS	Thank-you post for Christmas meal volunteers	"Countdown to New Year's Eve/ Year-End" post #1	"Countdown to New Year's Eve/ Year-End" post #2	"Countdown to New Year's Eve/ Year-End" post #3	"Countdown to New Year's Eve/ Year-End" post #4
NEW YEAR'S EVE	Thank-you post and share results of your Year-End campaign (as soon as you know them)	Ţ			*	

ST' PRO TIP!

Explore how Brewer Direct can craft your Mission's unique message into a successful, integrated fundraising approach to help you meet and exceed your goals for 2018! Contact Shellie Speer, Executive VP Client Strategic Development, at sspeer@brewerdirect.com or (719) 210-6207.



