

HOSTING AN AUCTION

Not everyone chooses to contribute to the United Way campaign through payroll deduction, but hosting an auction provides a fun, easy way for everyone to get involved. Your auction can be as large or small as your want. It can all be an easy add-on to an existing campaign event.

How Do I Run a Successful Auction?

United Way can host the auction on the DonorPoint platform. Set up is easy, outbid notices are sent automatically, and payments are collected online. Ask your UWGC Account Manager for more information.

The key to running a successful auction is getting people excited about the items. Prior to the start of your auction, send a message to employees highlighting the top items. Then, when the auction launches, provide clear instructions on how to participate. Be sure to send periodic reminders and generate some friendly competition on popular items. When the auction closes, be sure to announce winners.

What Makes a Good Auction Item?

Collecting donations is the most time consuming part of the process. Your campaign committee should have a standard request letter and start reaching out to local businesses and partners 4-6 weeks before the campaign kick-off. Popular items include experiences and memorabilia. However, don't be afraid to get creative:

- Combine smaller donations into a larger, more appealing basket.
- Auction off internal company perks, like preferred parking or extended lunch hours
- Have departments come together to build baskets

Though it is great to have some high-value items to generate excitement, be sure to balance these with some items that have a lower minimum bid to encourage participation.

How Do I Determine Starting Bids and Bid Increments?

Best practice in auction set up is to have the starting bid be 30% of the value of the item. Another best practice is to set a minimum bid increment, usually at 10% of the value. This means that an item valued at \$100 would have a starting bid of \$30 and minimum bid increment of \$10.

Mid-way through your auction, review the items and see if there are any that have not received a bid. For items that do not have a bid, drop the minimum bid by 15-20% of the item's value. Then, send a message to your staff announcing the new price points to encourage participation.

Questions? Contact your UWGC Account Manager or email donate@unitedwaycleveland.org.