

A photograph of a man with glasses and a plaid shirt talking to a woman in a meeting. The image is overlaid with a blue grid pattern.

*charity*DYNAMICS

Participant Coaching  
for *Impact*

# If you build an email... will they fundraise?

Do event participants really need those extra pieces of communication to be moved to fundraising success?

**The resounding answer is YES.**

Based on our analysis of national peer-to-peer programs with centralized coaching emails and participant engagement data, we can confidently say that:

1. Receiving coaching emails is critical to participants taking actions that are known to lead to increased fundraising.
2. Participants who receive coaching emails raise more money than those who opt out of coaching emails.

Even though we continually add more and more tools to help communicate for and with our participants, email still matters and will always matter. We often look at email metrics in a complete silo and focus on the unsubscribes, but we don't look at how many of our participants are opted out of email. We must look at both because we don't want the number of those not receiving email to grow so large that it hurts who is activating on fundraising.



# The Challenge

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So, are you ready to dial it up to 11 as we look at those who accept email and how they are fundraising versus those who don't accept email? First, we will dive into the data of what we found across three national P2P programs and then dig into solutions and strategies for email marketing and events.



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Nonprofits perform life-changing work, and email marketing is a key way for them to rally people to their cause, raise funds, and direct action.

—Chad White, Litmus

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# The Data

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Most P2P events will look at data and separate how emails are performing (opens, click-throughs, and unsubscribes) from the actual participant fundraising behavior (updates page, sends emails, makes a personal donation).

Let's look at how these two areas work together and what participants who choose to receive your emails are doing versus those who have opted out.

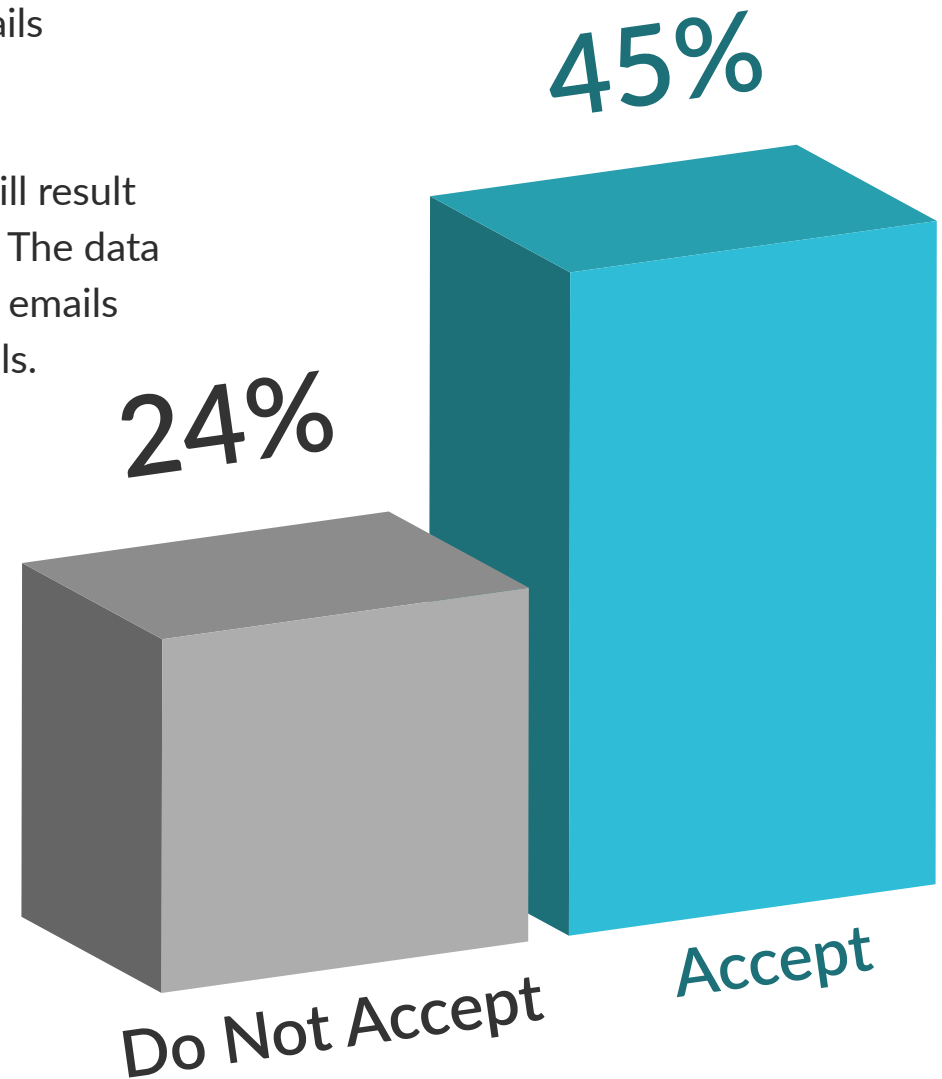


# Fundraising Online

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In this chart, we see the percentage of participants who are fundraising online against receiving email. We look at fundraising online only here because the coaching emails directly relate to online activities for fundraising.

You are asking the participant to check off a list that will result in them sharing their personal online fundraising page. The data clearly shows that almost double of those who receive emails fundraise online versus those who do not receive emails.



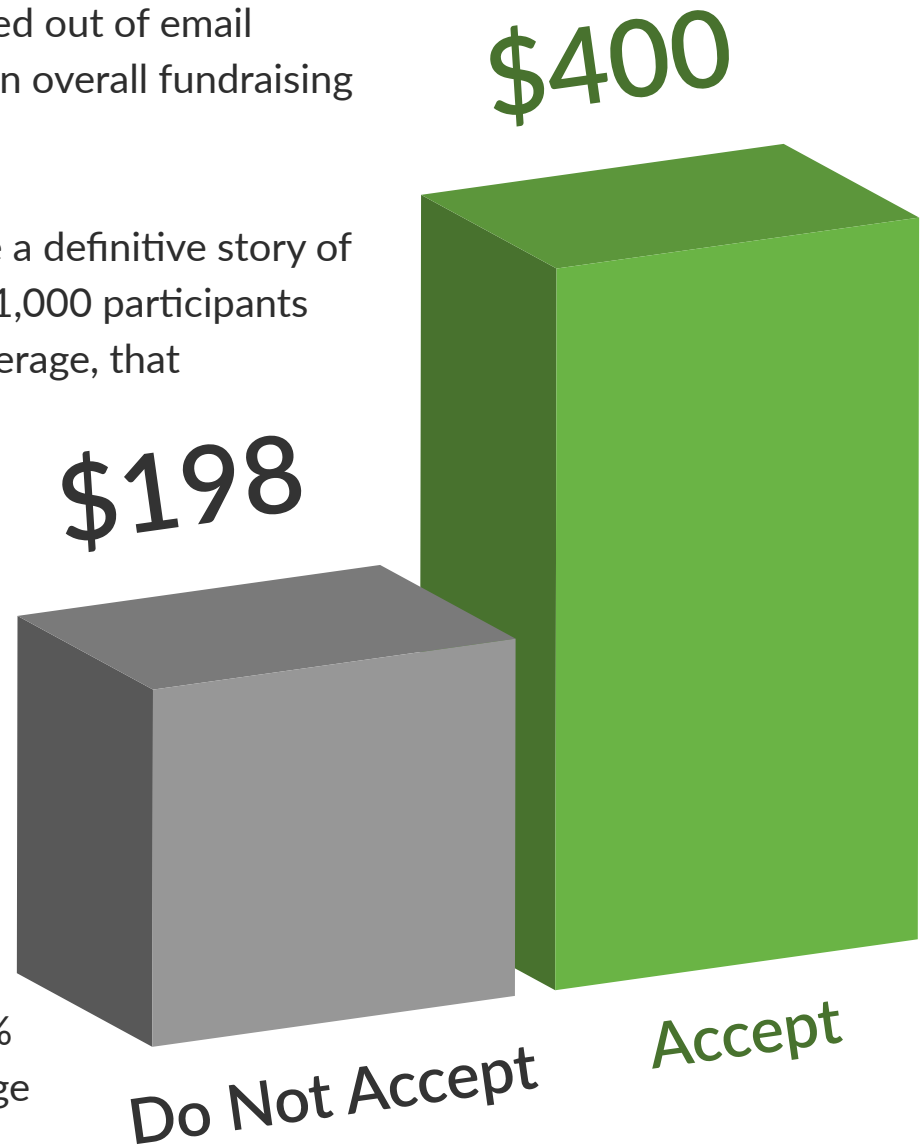
# Average Raised Online

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Next, we look at the average raised online by these same two groups. Again, those receiving emails are raising double those that have opted out of email communications – which will always be a better result in overall fundraising revenue.

When we look at the two charts above as a pair, we see a definitive story of fundraising behavior with email. To simplify, if we have 1,000 participants and 45% of them are raising money online at a \$400 average, that comes to \$180,000 (and that's just the average as you know some will raise above or below this amount). By the same token, for our 1,000 participants, if the 28% that did not accept emails raise an average of \$198, that comes to \$47,520. So those who accept email will bring in approximately 279% more than those who don't accept email.

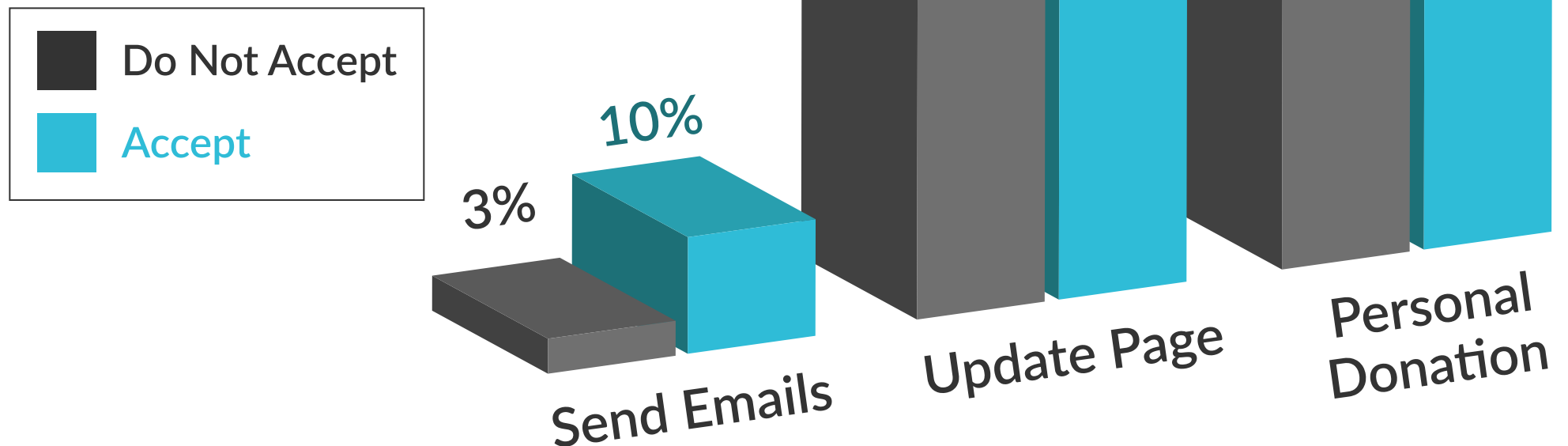
If we want to take the data one step further and get a little fancier, we could also look at email openers versus non-email openers. In analyzing the data from one organization, the results were overwhelming – 78% of email openers were fundraising online and the average they raised online was \$572 versus \$79 for non-email openers. Email openers raised 624% more!



# Coaching Emails

The primary goal of an engagement or coaching email stream to your registered participants should always be to teach them how to succeed at fundraising. We examined the percentages of those who accept/do not accept email against participant fundraising behavior, or the actions participants take to reach their fundraising goals.

Again, in every category, the segment receiving emails has a significant advantage over those who don't – which will always translate into more fundraising dollars coming in.



# Make the Impact

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The very nature of P2P fundraising is asking your community to reach out to their network to bring money back to the organization. We must believe that each fundraiser can make an impact for your mission if we lead them, influence them, and provide a little bit of inspiration. Impact involves getting results.

We now know that coaching is critical to participant fundraising success. Here is how to make the most of them:

- P2P participants are eager to learn how to become fundraisers and the best way to teach them is by using single, clear calls to action.
- Help participants overcome their fears of asking friends and family by providing templated emails to send out and reminding them to keep asking.
- Show participants in emails, in video, or in person how to make use of available online tools. Use conditional content for those who have or have not activated if your email tool allows for that.
- Acknowledge each participant's successes by being their champion when they reach their goals and pay attention to the numbers on the local and national levels. Local staff will want to keep an eye on teams and participants that take serious strides in fundraising. National staff will want to look at this on the event level and communicate to chapter staff regarding email plans and benchmarks.

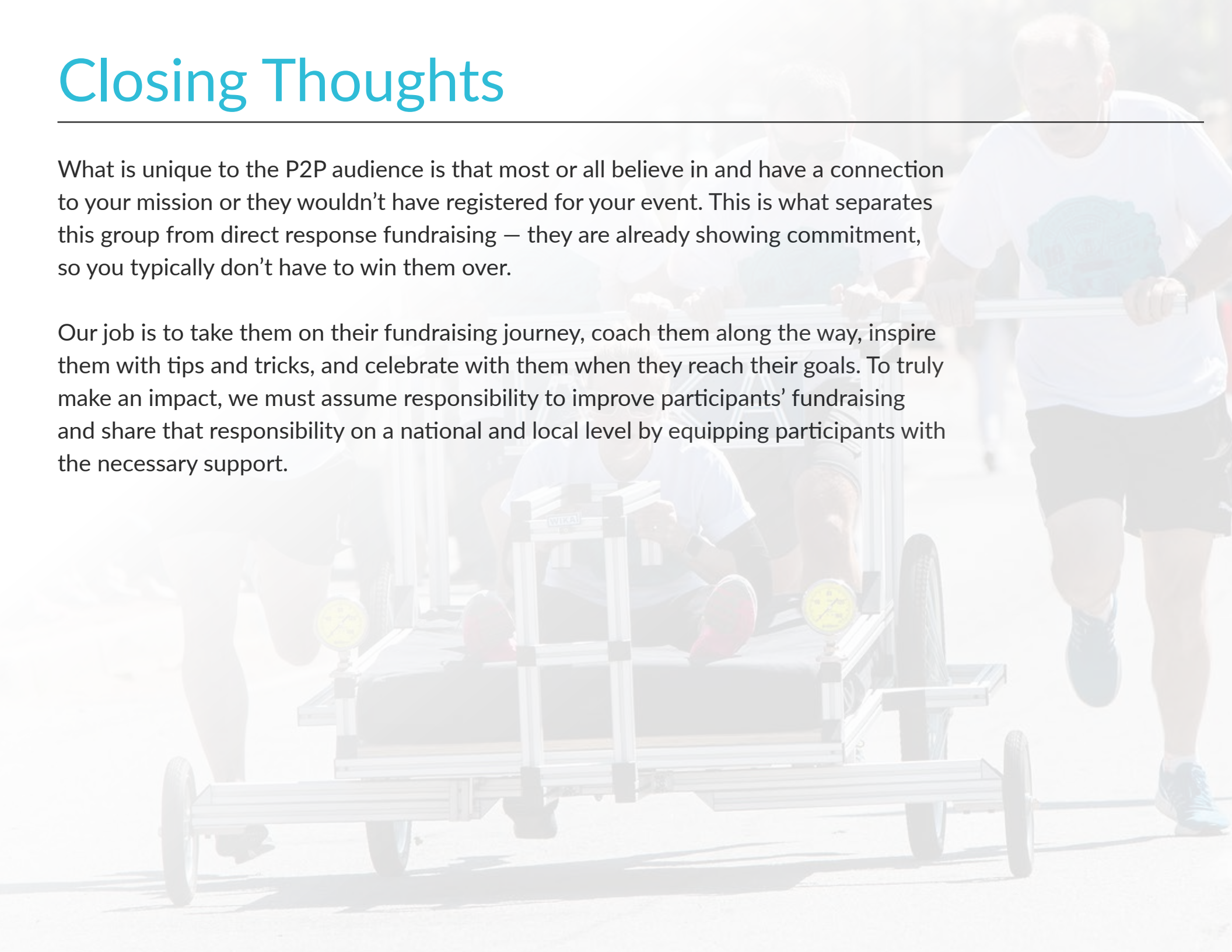


# Closing Thoughts

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What is unique to the P2P audience is that most or all believe in and have a connection to your mission or they wouldn't have registered for your event. This is what separates this group from direct response fundraising — they are already showing commitment, so you typically don't have to win them over.

Our job is to take them on their fundraising journey, coach them along the way, inspire them with tips and tricks, and celebrate with them when they reach their goals. To truly make an impact, we must assume responsibility to improve participants' fundraising and share that responsibility on a national and local level by equipping participants with the necessary support.



# About the Author

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Colleen joined Charity Dynamics in 2014 and has been in the non-profit space for nearly 14 years. She helps build comprehensive fundraising and user experience strategy, is great at relationship management and connecting the fundraiser or donor to the mission of an organization.

Most of her experience lies in event or peer-to-peer fundraising and she loves to see organizations build on their success year over year. Her past positions include Sr. Development Manager, Individual Gifts at ZACH Theatre; Team LIVESTRONG Manager, LIVESTRONG Foundation; Sr. Campaign Manager, LLS/Team in Training; and Singer/Actor at Walt Disney World.

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Partner with Charity Dynamics to develop an online marketing plan for your event program targeted at engaging and coaching participants to raise