GROWING smiles

Fundraising Coordinator Success Playbook

Essential tips, strategies, and resources to help you run a smooth and profitable Growing Smiles fundraiser.

WHY THIS GUIDE MATTERS

Save Time and Avoid Mistakes:
We've outlined what actually works, based on real coordinators' success stories — so you can skip the trial-and-error.

Cut Through the Noise:
You don't have time to figure it all out from scratch. This guide gives you proven steps that make fundraising simpler, faster, and more organized.

Raise More Money with Less Stress:
By following a few key strategies, you can boost your plant sales — without burning out or doing it all yourself.

Stay on Track with Built-In Tools:
We'll show you how to fully use your Growing Smiles team website — including goal tracking, messaging tools, and easy payment options.

Get More People to Participate:
With ready-to-use tools and tips for engagement, you'll find it easier to rally your team, your community, and even local businesses.

Learn How to Share Your "Why":
The 3-act story method outlined in the guide helps you explain your cause in a way that gets people to actually care and contribute.

Get Inspired by Real Fundraising Success Stories:
Quick tips from real PACs, teams, and schools that beat their goals — with ideas you can steal and use right away.

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Customize Your Fundraiser's Website

You get your own custom fundraising website to collect and manage orders, share your story with photos, and use built-in tools to boost your sales!

Why Should You Personalize Your Website?

Your fundraising website is how supporters learn about **you, your cause, and the fundraiser**—so make it count. Personalize it with team photos and your story to help people connect and feel inspired to support. We recommend logging in to your team site and **following along step-by-step.**

Customize Your Home Page
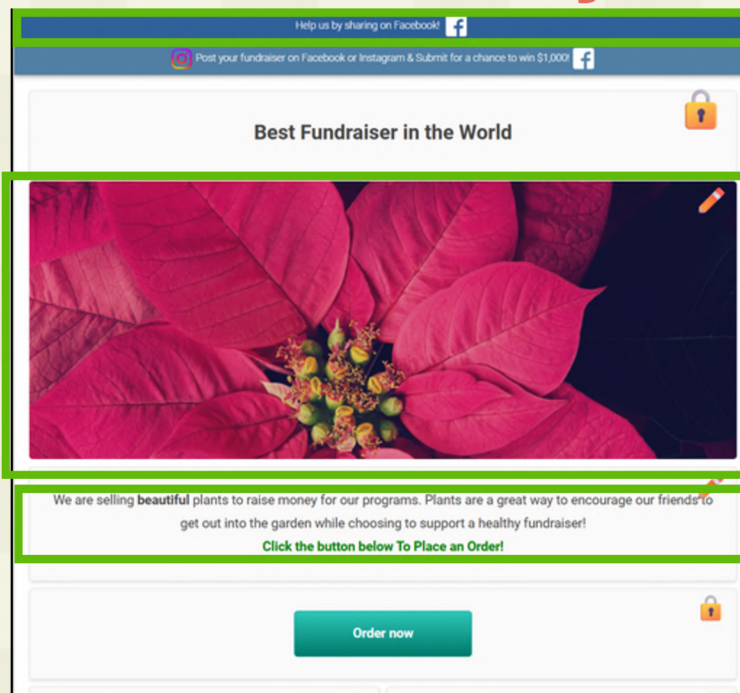
Urges your customer to share your fundraiser's website on Facebook.

Personalize your website by adding an image of your team, school or business.

Share your fundraiser's cause and let supporters know how their plant purchase will make a difference. A simple message goes a long way in inspiring people to support!

Watch a Tutorial Here

Set Referrers & Individual Targets

Left-Hand Menu → Success Tools → Student Referrals
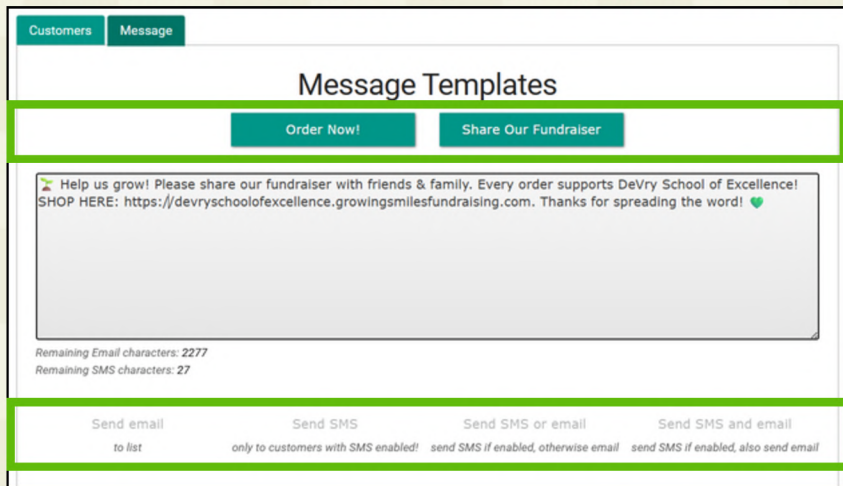

Enable the option for customers to enter a referrer at checkout—this helps track individual sales and motivates team members to promote the fundraiser!

Enter each referrer's name along with their individual plant sales goal. You can also see how many sales they got—this helps track progress and keeps everyone motivated to reach their target!

Add more sellers by clicking "Add row"

Send a Message to Your Supporters

Left-Hand Menu → Success Tools → Messaging Tool → Click "Message"

Customers	Message

Message Templates

Order Now!	Share Our Fundraiser

🌱 Help us grow! Please share our fundraiser with friends & family. Every order supports DeVry School of Excellence! SHOP HERE: https://devryschoolofexcellence.growingsmilesfundraising.com. Thanks for spreading the word! 💚

Remaining Email characters: **2277**
Remaining SMS characters: **27**

Send email	Send SMS	Send SMS or email	Send SMS and email
to list	only to customers with SMS enabled!	send SMS if enabled, otherwise email	send SMS if enabled, also send email

Send messages to past customers and any new or current supporters who've opted in—it's a great way to boost engagement and drive more sales!

Note: You can only contact customers who purchase through your site, since they provide their phone and email at checkout.

You can message customers by text or email—perfect for sharing updates, pick-up reminders, or a quick thank you!

Watch a Tutorial Here
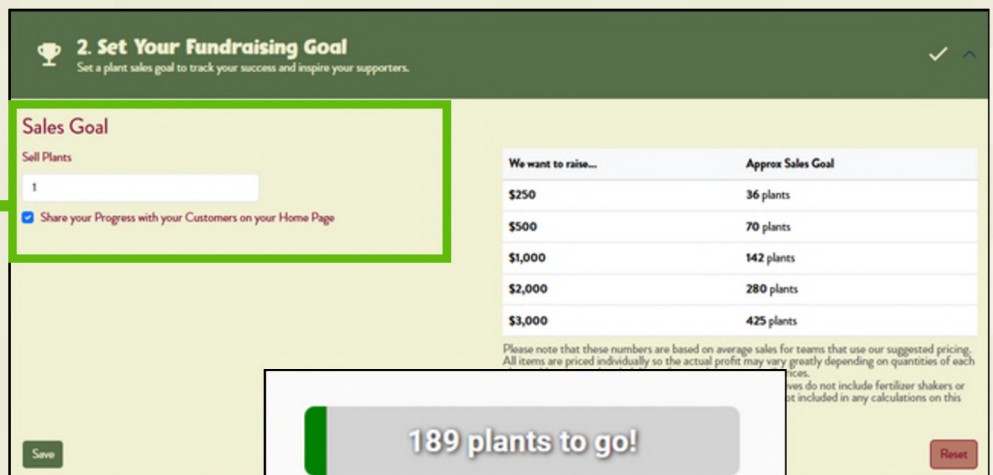
Setup the Goal Thermometer

Left-Hand Menu→ Website Setup → Goal Setup

Set a plant goal for your team that aligns with your overall sales target to keep everyone focused and motivated.

Select the "Checkbox" to enable the Goal Thermometer, which will appear on your homepage to track progress and motivate your team.

Watch a Tutorial Here

🏆 **2. Set Your Fundraising Goal**
Set a plant sales goal to track your success and inspire your supporters.

Sales Goal
Sell Plants
1
☑ Share your Progress with your Customers on your Home Page

We want to raise...	Approx Sales Goal
$250	36 plants
$500	70 plants
$1,000	142 plants
$2,000	280 plants
$3,000	425 plants

Please note that these numbers are based on average sales for teams that use our suggested pricing. All items are priced individually so the actual profit may vary greatly depending on quantities of each... prices. ...ves do not include fertilizer shakers or ...ot included in any calculations on this

Save   Reset

189 plants to go!

11 plants sold of our 200 plant goal!

(Example of the Goal Thermometer as it appears on your website)

Select an Image/Text for Facebook

Left-Hand Menu → Other Tools → Facebook Image

Facebook Share

Drag & drop or tap to select a new image (Recommended size: 1200 × 628 px)
This image will appear when your site is shared on Facebook.

Sharing Description
Please support our fundraiser by ordering plants from the website!
This short text is displayed below the image when the link is shared.

Save Share Settings

Choose the image you want displayed when sharing your website on Facebook to make your fundraiser stand out.

Upload your team's image here and add a personalized message that will show when your website is shared on Facebook.

Click "Save Share Settings" to finish

Set Your Payment Option
Left-Hand Menu→ Website Setup → Payment Method

Select Credit Card payments as your accepted method—there are no extra fees. This option lets you track orders online, and an Excel report is automatically generated for you.

Learn more about Payment Options

4. Select Payment Method
Select the payment method that works best for your fundraiser.

Payment Methods
☑ Credit Card ☐ E-Transfer ☐ Cash ☐ Cheque
Select all payment methods you'll offer. You must choose at least one.

Credit Card

Customers can pay for their order immediately with their credit card at no extra cost to them or you. Payments are made directly to Growing Smiles, who covers all the processing fees!

Any amount collected will be applied to your invoice to reduce the total owed for the cost of the plants (sort of like a pre-payment on your account). If you collect more credit card payments than the invoice total, then we will send you a cheque at the end of the fundraiser.

No additional fields required.

Save | Reset

Click "Save" after enabling the method of payment

Set an Exclusive Coupon
Left-Hand Menu → Success Tools → Coupon Setup

New Coupon

Coupon Code: *
The code that users will need to enter to use this coupon.
THANKYOU10

Description: *
A description of this coupon so you know what it's for.
10% off your first order!

Redemption Limit: *
The number of times this coupon can be used.
Once Per User

Authorized Users:
Comma separated list of emails that can use this coupon. Leave blank for all users.
joe@example.com,sally@example.com

Discount Type: *
Should a percentage be taken off, or a dollar amount?
%

Discount Amount: *
Enter a percentage between 0 and 100, or a dollar value.
10

Active Date:
Time after which this coupon is allowed to be used (defaults to now).
2025-11-01 00:00

Expiry Date:
Time after which this coupon will not be usable (defaults to never).
2025-11-30 00:00

Conditions:

Cancel | Save

Offer businesses 10% off orders of 8+ plants. Enter the code name, add a brief description, and choose a redemption limit from the dropdown menu.

Select the discount type (%, $) and the maximum redemption amount. Then, choose the coupon's start and expiry dates.

Save to launch the coupon.

Read the FULL Website Guide HERE

Learn how your website works and get step-by-step guidance to set up your fundraiser's site

Set a **Goal** & Share

Planning is key! Set a plant goal, share it with your community, and show how each supporter's contribution helps your cause succeed.

Set Your Goal

1. **Set a SMART Fundraising Plant Goal:** Set <u>**SMART**</u> goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) for your team.
   - "I want to raise $1,000 by selling 200 plants by December 15 to support new classroom supplies.".
2. **Set Individual Plant Goals (If applicable):** Each Student or Seller should have an individual plant goal set - this can also be set on your team website (See Page 3).
   - Example: 200 plant goal ÷ 20 students = 10 plants per student.
   - Motivate with small rewards like donuts, coffee cards, or shout-outs.

We want to raise….	Approx Sales Goal
$1000	142 Plants
$2000	280 Plants
$3000	425 Plants

NOTE: These numbers are based on average sales for teams that use our suggested pricing. All items are priced individually so the actual profit may vary greatly depending on quantities of each plant sold, extras ordered, delivery fees, and your set retail prices.

Share Your Cause & Goal

- **Hook Supporters with Your Story: Share your plant goals** on social media, by word-of-mouth, and in emails. Highlight what you want to accomplish through customer's support, and how it greatly **impacts your cause**. Post images of your team, cause, and school to personalize the message.
  - For example, "Because of the support of generous people like you, 45 shelter dogs will have a warm, safe place to sleep tonight." or "Thanks to your support, every student in our grade will have supplies for science class this fall!".
- **Utilize the Resources Page:** Access exclusive, free marketing materials, helpful documents, and informative video tutorials. If you're unsure how to place your team's final order, how delivery works, or how to use the team website, we highly recommend taking the time to explore the Resources page.

Advertise & Sell!

The key to a successful fundraiser is **starting early** and using every possible method to spread the word. The earlier you start selling, the more time you have to reach your goal.

Hook Supporters with Your Story

We understand that fundraising is hard work, especially when you have a million things to juggle in your everyday personal and work life. That being said, it's crucial to clearly explain **why** you are fundraising, and the **impact** your community's support can make for your cause. Research shows that the **3-Act story structure is an effective way** to engage donors and supporters—and inspire greater giving. Emphasize your cause using a 3-Act Story by following these steps:

1	2	3
Set the Scene/Introduce the Problem:	**Describe the Challenge & How you will Overcome it:**	**Call for Action & an Resolution:**
Share the issue, who it impacts, and why you need support— whether for volunteers, students, athletes, your team, or your community.	Explain why you're fundraising, how the funds will help, and the positive impact each purchase makes.	Show donors the impact they can make, **stress your deadline**, and urge them to share your site and buy a plant.

Start Early

Begin advertising your fundraiser **at least 4–6 weeks** before the delivery date. This gives your community time to learn about your fundraiser, consider their purchases, and place orders. For example, if your delivery date is December 5th, **work backwards** and start selling on October 24th. It is important to **share your website link** each time you communicate with your supporters and community.

Promote Your Fundraiser

- Share your fundraiser's website on **Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.**
- Create a **QR code** for your website and include it on posters, cards, and flyers.
- Strategically place posters in **high-traffic areas** (busy storefronts, community bulletin boards, bus stations).
- **Ask your supporters** to share your link on their personal social media pages.
- Email **school** newsletters, local newspaper outlets, radio stations, or **community** bulletins.
- Contact a **local "Hero"** in your community who can advocate for and promote your fundraiser.
- Sell to **local businesses** in the community; they typically will order in bulk.
- Post your fundraiser campaign and any **updates** professionally.
- Send curated **emails** and **SMS** through the Messaging tool.
- **Host** or **attend** a local community event or auction for the plants.

Additional Sales Tips for Smaller Groups

Emphasize the **quality** of the plants, grown proudly Canadian! 🇨🇦

Offer **coupons** on your website to drive sales.

Contact the GSF team to book a **coaching call**.

Research shows fundraiser campaigns that use **video marketing raise 4x more sales** than those without.

Follow the **Rule of 7** by reaching out to donors at least seven times a year to build awareness and increase sales.

Know your **target audience**—who they are, what they like, how they communicate, and how they've engaged with your fundraiser.

Engage & Incentivize

Whether you're just launching your fundraiser or facing a mid-campaign slump, keeping spirits high and sales momentum strong is a challenge. But with the right approach, it can be exciting, rewarding, and even fun.

Know What Motivates Your Group

You know your team the best and every team is unique. Before choosing strategies, ask yourself:
- Are they competitive?
- Do they thrive on teamwork?
- Are they motivated by recognition or rewards?
- Do they care deeply about the cause or goal?

Set Micro Goals (and Celebrate Them)

Break your plant target into **smaller**, practical, and attainable micro-goals:
- Break goals down by **week or seller.**
- Make **progress visible** by using tools like the goal thermometer feature, a physical chart at school, or a team "leaderboard" to track sales.
- Celebrate milestones (e.g. "Halfway there! Pizza party!").

Keep Energy Public and Positive

Communicating and updating your community is crucial to keep your fundraiser going:
- Consistently share **why** your team is fundraising and the **impact** of your community's support.
- Post or share daily or weekly **sales updates** to keep your team and community engaged and motivated.
- Get creative with **social media**: post videos, shout out top sellers, countdown the days left to purchase, and encourage customers who've supported your fundraiser to share your website link.

Layer in Creative Incentives

Incentives don't have to cost a lot. Use rewards that match your group's interests and available resources:

Tangible Incentives:
- Top seller prizes (gift cards, treats, event tickets).
- Small weekly rewards (candy, stickers, coffee cards).
- Milestone prizes (hit $100 in sales = free hoodie, etc).

Intangible Incentives:
- Public recognition (emails, school posters, announcements).
- "Plant Seller of the Week" spotlight.

Reset the Energy (Especially in the Final Weeks)

If your team seems tired, discouraged, or sales have stalled - shake things ups:
- **Flash Sales Target**: 'Sell 10 more plants, win an $50 gift card".
- **Reverse Leaderboard:** Celebrate and reward the member whose sales progress substantially improved.
- Use **GSF sales tools** or personalize your own.
- **Readjust** your sales strategy.

Track Sales Progress

Tracking your fundraiser's progress throughout the campaign helps you plan effectively, adjust your strategy, and rally your team together.

Why Should You Track?

Humans are wired to seek closure, and seeing visible progress in your fundraiser feeds that drive. Behavioral research suggests people work harder and faster when they get closer to completing a goal, it's called the **Goal Gradient Effect**. When supporters see you're close to your goal—like 200 of 300 plants—they're more likely to help you reach it. **Visible progress boosts engagement** and community investment.

Remember the Story behind the Numbers

Fundraising isn't just about numbers or sales—it's about **what those numbers represent.** When updating your community or team on your sales progress, instead of saying "We have raised $500 so far," say "We have raised enough to fund 20 backpacks for our students." **People remember the impact of their contribution.**

Be Creative with How You Track

Earlier, we mentioned setting your plant goal using the **Goal Thermometer** feature on your team website. However, if your team prefers a simpler approach, there are several creative ways to **track your progress:**
- Create a **fun challenge** for students (e.g., plant a seed for every 10 plants sold).
- Create a physical **goal thermometer** (place it in classrooms, hallways, the school office, etc).
- **Gamification:** Turn fundraising into a game with points, leaderboards, or challenges.
- **Visual trackers:** pie charts, puzzles, countdown clocks, etc.

Example - Classroom Fundraising Race

Example - Physical Goal Thermometer

Example - Friendly Gamification
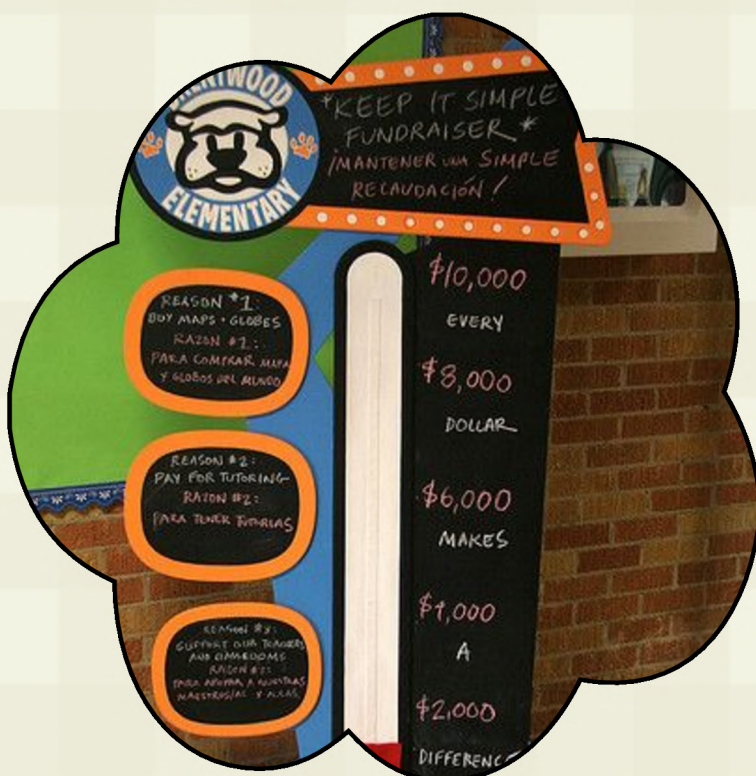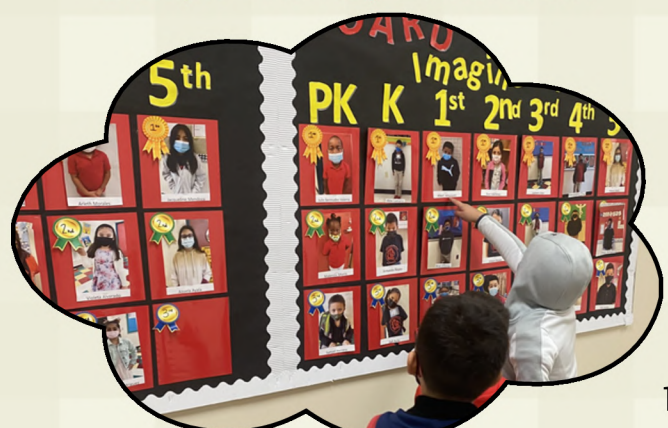
Success Stories

Learn from small fundraising teams like yours who have overcome challenges and found effective strategies. Their **tips can help you boost sales**, engage your community, and reach your goals.

Word-of-Mouth & Personal Selling

"Word of mouth can be a powerful tool. For example, 20 choir members participated in the fundraiser, and successfully sold to friends and family. The key was targeting the older generations through personal connections, such as door-to-door sales and community gatherings. We also printed out the order forms, and shared that with our community. Furthermore, the quality of the plants speak for itself, which made it very easy to sell!".

- Timbrel Choir

Use Community Events for Increased Sales Opportunities

"One effective strategy is to turn community events, like fairs, into your order pickup spot. This not only provides a convenient location but also gives you a chance to engage with customers and potential buyers. Displaying orders in an open area, such as a trailer or outside, can draw attention and encourage additional purchases. By offering extra plants, either by the flat or in single pots, you may find that customers are more likely to buy once they see the products in person. To streamline the process, it's best to have a single coordinator manage all aspects—advertising, answering inquiries, collecting payments, and placing orders —making it easier for customers and ensuring everything runs smoothly".

- Tatla Lake School PAC

Advertising & Sharing our Sales Target

"We set a specific plant goal and shared it everywhere—on social media, in our community, and even with local businesses. We also used the goal thermometer on the website to track our progress in real time. Seeing the numbers go up motivated our supporters to keep sharing and purchasing. Businesses even jumped in to help us reach the finish line! The more we talked about our goal, the more people wanted to help us achieve it, and we ended up surpassing what we thought was possible!".

- Hungry for Life (Haiti)