

YOUR COMPLIMENTARY FUNDRAISING GUIDE

We appreciate that Fundraising Co-ordinators, P&C Members are volunteers. At Smart Gift Ideas we aim to make your job as easy as possible. We have put together the following information to help you run a successful stall with minimal time and effort. Some of our customers have shared their stall successes with us, so we are now passing some of these tips on to you.

Organise helpers

Appoint an organiser and delegate! The stall organiser is responsible for breaking down all the jobs into smaller tasks and ensures everyone is involved. Decide on what all the tasks involved are and decide on a number of staff required for each task.

Helpers are ALWAYS needed. Supervising children, hanging fliers, checking orders and counting money are just a few of the jobs required to run a successful stall. Try and include the “newbies”. More often than not there will be a team of kindergarten mums dying to help out but too shy to put their hand up.

As a suggestion, if you are struggling to find volunteers try a Volunteer Sign Up Board. List the fundraisers planned. Sometimes new mums won't know who to talk to but want to help. It may only take one person putting their name down to get 20 more names on the board. Ask for a volunteer from each class, or a child and their parent from each class. We all know how excited our children can get when doing a special job with Mum or Dad. Advertise in the school newsletter that volunteers are required.

Communication is probably the most important tip of all. Other than P&C meetings, use a group email to share all information. Facebook is perfect for sharing ideas and a great place to grow your volunteer base.

Allocate the stall date and location

Check what's happening in your school community before planning your stall date. Is there anything likely to clash? Will all students be at school on the day of your stall?

Plan ahead by organising all time frames and try not to leave it to the last minute. Smart Gift Ideas offers Early Bird Specials for both Mothers and Fathers Day orders so if you have your order in by the specified date then not only will you receive a complimentary gift but you will also be super organised.

Timing is everything. Mother's Day is always the second Sunday in May and Father's Day is always the first Sunday in September. Aim to have all your stock supplied and checked and be organised no later than the second Sunday in April for Mother's Day and the first Sunday in August for Father's Day.

Decide how to run your stall

Before placing your order with your chosen supplier you have to decide how to run your stall.

We suggest that the most fun for the children and the easiest to organise is a Stall Day where you set up tables with gifts at different price points for the children to select their preferences. Some schools like to offer a large variety of gifts at different price points whereas others choose to have a limited number of gifts at selected price points.

In our experience, ordering 1.5 gifts per child will generally be enough to get started. After your first stall has been run you will have a better indication of future quantities.

Smart Gift Ideas has a huge selection of gifts that are printed with Mum/Dad, Grandmother/Grandfather, as well as generic gifts that can be used for aunts/uncles, step parents and other family members. We always suggest ordering extra gifts that are generic and displaying these towards the conclusion of your stall. This means that should you have stock left over it is likely to be a generic product that can be sold at any later event. Stagger your classes – if you are a large school the last thing any helper would want is being bombarded by 500+ kids all at once.

Having a stall is similar to the children going to the shops and buying a gift themselves, so it is a great opportunity for our munchkins to learn how to deal with money and have to make a purchasing decision. Best of all the children love buying something special for their parents and loved ones and it is fun!

Hold a stall for parents and community members

Sometimes what the children buy and what the parents might select is completely different. Why not hold a stall for “the oldies”. Some of our customers hold their Mothers/Fathers Day Stall early in the week and then advertise a stall for the parents or other members of the community later in the week if they still have stock. Why not advertise a Mother’s Day Stall targeted at the Dads so that they can purchase. This could be a HUGE revenue raiser. If you want to sell out then consider reducing the price at this time (but never below cost).

Pre-orders

Taking orders from children prior to ordering from your supplier ensures you do not carry the risk of excess stock, however this requires lead-time to get order forms out to families and back to school and inevitably chasing up forms. Unfortunately this can also mean that suppliers can run out of stock of items initially chosen. We do everything in our power to avoid running out of stock, however it is just not possible to forecast exactly what will be the most popular item. This method can be very time-consuming.

Cashless Stall

Take pre-orders of amounts (not the actual gift), i.e. send a form to families asking how many \$2 or \$3 gifts you would like to purchase, or how many \$5 gifts you would like to purchase. This method ensures you do not carry the risk of excess stock. Maybe use a ticketing system where \$5 gifts means the child gets a pink ticket, \$2 yellow ticket etc. Ordering this way eliminates some of the out of stock issues as you simply order something else with the same dollar amount. You can still hold your stall and the child can still choose what product they would like for their Mum or Dad from the respective dollar amount table. This still gives the children an opportunity to “go shopping”.

Remember children’s views are fresh and honest. Involving children in organising your fundraiser gives them a chance to learn some great life skills. It also teaches them community spirit and can help boost their self-confidence. Some schools like to ask some children their thoughts on which products to purchase. Perhaps form a committee involving children of various ages or utilise your student representative from each class and ask them to select the products that most appeal to them. Get the older children to help on stall day.

Know your community. Every community is different. We have some schools who tell us that they have children come with \$50 to spend while other schools struggle with kids who bring in no money. Vary your price points always ensuring you have items to suit all budgets. Also try to have a plan for the children who want to participate but their parents have not been prepared – perhaps some of the free gifts from Smart Gift Ideas can assist in this situation. Or alternatively some schools order a small quantity of very low priced gifts for these children.

Budget

Discuss with your P&C or P&F Committee the budget and expectations for this event. Is there a certain amount that can be spent? You need to have a very clear understanding of the expectations and what you are permitted to organise on behalf of the school. Most schools have a kitty reserved for the stall purchasing. If you are a new school or this is the first time offered and funds are low we can make the following suggestions:

- Hold a mini fundraiser prior to the stall day to raise initial funds and therefore all money taken at your stall can be PURE PROFIT
- 5¢ Fridays - for one month all students bring in their collection of 5¢ pieces
- Cup Cake Day
- Disco
- Breakfast
- Raffle – prize could be a Mothers/Fathers Day hamper using your “free gifts” received from Smart Gift Ideas for ordering early
- Mufti Day for a gold coin donation
- Ask your supplier to extend their payment terms for this initial order.

Sourcing gifts

Once you have determined what type of stall you will be organising and the number of gifts you need to purchase then you need to decide where you will source the gifts. Remember the more suppliers you use the more freight you will have to pay.

Look for a supplier/s that makes ordering as straight forward as possible. It will always be far more cost-effective and time saving to use a reputable supplier other than shopping from retail outlets. We suggest sourcing all gifts from a supplier/s rather than asking for donations from families as this causes disparity in gifts that can lead to disgruntled parents.

By offering unique well-priced gifts, which have a higher perceived retail value your parents will come to rely on the stall days which will lead to you raising more funds with each consecutive stall.

When comparing suppliers, check who offers you the most benefits, service, value for money and is most reliable. Look for the following:

- A good range of gifts at cost-effective pricing which allows for a good profit margin to be made.
- Ensure your supplier is reputable and reliable and gives good customer service. Suppliers are here to assist you, they are the experts so ask them for any help you need.
- Is pricing inclusive of GST? Check catalogues carefully as this can be an extra cost.
- Are there any minimum quantities?
- What are the freight charges?
- Do they offer any complimentary gifts you can use for raffles, prizes etc?
- Any other incentive or offers.

Please remember when selecting gifts that they need to be gifts that children love to give and the parents will be delighted to receive. Although your personal preference will have influence, you need to select gifts that are appealing to the general community.

Advertise the stall day

Publicise the fundraiser and advertise your fundraising goals. Use your school’s website, social media, display posters, and advertise in the school newsletters or email! Let your school community know what the funds raised from your stall are going towards, e.g. a new shade cloth, smart board etc. This can provide motivation for volunteers as well as motivate the community to become involved

and generate some excitement. Your school community will be happy to donate as it benefits the children and makes life easier for them not having to source gifts to donate.

After the stall day

Once your stall is complete ensure you keep the records about your event. This will make any future stall so much easier to organise. Make a Mothers/Fathers Day binder and keep records of suppliers, contacts, helpers and all outcomes.

Take note of what were the most popular items sold, the least, how many gifts were purchased from suppliers and how many sold etc. This will help for future stall day purchasing decisions.

Most importantly when handing over to a new committee or new organiser give them all the information they need. Also advise of the service you received from your supplier/s and any other relevant information so the next person is confident with your newly-acquired knowledge.

Advertise the Results

After your stall day advertise the outcome in the school newsletter and remember to always say THANK YOU. Thank the school community as well as all the volunteers, whether you have a Mum volunteering for an hour or a Nana who seems to be helping at every fundraising event – it all counts! You want the whole experience to be rewarding for all and it will make organising the next fundraiser all the more enjoyable with more cooperation. At some schools they use their school assembly as a great time to have the whole school recognise the efforts of all helpers.

Lastly, try to enjoy the experience and don't become overwhelmed. It should be fun and an experience that can be organised effectively with little effort.

We are here to help you in any way we can so if you are unsure please phone our friendly team on 1300 803 310 as we are only too happy to assist.

Smart Gift Ideas has over 10 years of experience and by using our services we can help you fundraise the smart and fun way!