



# Email Recipes to Promote Your Online Fundraising Event



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# About the Author



## Hi, I'm Jason North.

You could say I know a few things about marketing. I've been in marketing for about 10 years now, not including the yo-yo business I started when I was 11.

After doing some work for companies and agencies in Dallas, I wanted to use my marketing skills for a bigger purpose - helping nonprofits change the world.



# 78% of online events have 50 or fewer attendees.

🙄 **A major reason is poor promotion.**

Many organizations don't realize that email is the biggest driver of online fundraiser success. Why? Because email is one of the only marketing channels where you have a list of people who intentionally chose to stay up to date on everything your organization does.

Social media, your website, advertising...those are all important aspects of growing your nonprofit. But with email, there's no algorithms filtering out your content. Your emails go into your subscribers' inboxes, with no middle man.

Here's the data: Email drives 57% of event signups, nearly four times that of any other channel. So, it's important that your emails are "on fleek", as the kids say.

The key to a great email: Keep your emails short. It gives fewer points to drop off or lose your readers' attention. And, short emails with simple copy tend to convert better than lengthier ones. We will be using [CoMoGives](#) in the following recipes, which is a yearly fundraiser we run in Columbia, Missouri that raises close to \$1M every year for over 100 local nonprofits.

CoMoGives runs a month-long fundraiser, but you can tweak the recipes to apply to your 5K, gala, trivia night, or other event. The biggest thing to remember when adapting these recipes to your event: Remember why you do what you do. Why is your work important? What's your story? What gets you excited about your work? If you can translate that passion for your cause into your emails, you will succeed.



## Pro Tip

Use real life photos of your organization in action, in your emails. A picture really is worth...well, you know the rest. 😊



## Side Note

Occasionally you'll see **[First Name]** in the recipes. Most email providers like Mailchimp have the ability to add name tags within your emails.

This takes the first name of each of your subscribers, and inserts it automatically into your emails. Pretty handy. It will not only make your emails feel much more personal, but it generally produces 27% higher open rates!

# When to Send Your Event Emails

- **Save the Date:** 3 weeks before event sign-up opens
- **Sign Up:** 2 weeks before event
- **Event Reminder:** 1 week before event
- **Last Chance to Sign Up:** 1 day before event
- **Autoresponder Email:** Immediately after registrant signs up
- **Event Reminder for Registrants:**
  - 1 week before event
  - 1 day before event
  - 1 hour before event
- **Follow up / Thank You to Attendees (with Survey):** 1 day after event



# Type of Email: Save the Date

**Send 3-6 weeks before event sign-up opens.**

It's your first email for your big fundraising event!

It's always nerve-wracking to hit 'send' to all your loyal subscribers. But if you nail this first email, that gives a great first impression for all other emails in your sequence. The most important part of this email is to keep it simple.

## **Include:**

- A compelling subject line
- Date and time of your event
- A few short sentences or paragraphs of what the event is, and why it's important

And that's it!

# Type of Email: Save the Date

**SUBJECT:** [First Name], here's your chance to help your community in a BIG way...

**ALT SUBJECT:** Save the Date [First Name], it's almost time for [Event].

## Example Email

Hey John Smith,

We know you care about our community just as much as we do.

Every day, our city has people living in poverty, animals that need rescued, children that need mentored, and arts that can enrich.

With your help, CoMoGives is able to transform our community in all these areas (and many more).

In 3 weeks, we're hosting a month-long fundraiser to benefit 100+ local nonprofits.

Sign-up isn't open yet, but save the date! We will let you know when it's time to register.

Event details:

CoMoGives Online Fundraiser

December 1st - 31st, 2020

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

Hey [subscriber first name],

We know you care about our community just as much as we do.

Every day, our city has [problem that your organization solves].

With your help, [Your Organization Name] is able [explain your positive impact].

In 3 weeks, we're hosting a [insert your event type here - 5k, gala, etc] to benefit [insert who or what your nonprofit benefits].

Sign-up isn't open yet, but save the date! We will let you know when it's time to register.

Event details:

[the name of your fundraiser]

[date and time]



# Type of Email: Sign Up Invitation

**Send 2-6 weeks before the actual event.**

This will be the first email where you're actually trying to drive sign-ups for your event.

2 weeks before your event is a great time to start, you can certainly start earlier, just know urgency is key to motivate people to sign up. I don't know about you, but if I get an email about an event 3 months away, I will probably procrastinate. 😊 So a short sign-up window creates urgency, but you can create urgency in other ways, too. Like a limited number of tables or a lower cost for early signups.

Here we'll start talking more about your mission, why it matters, and how your subscribers can help. A great way to do this effectively is using a statistic of some kind. If you provide clean water overseas, talk about how many people don't have access to clean drinking water. You get the picture!

There are few more powerful ways to communicate why your mission is so important.

# Type of Email: Sign Up Invitation

**SUBJECT:** [First Name], you can help 100+ local nonprofits transform our community.

**ALT SUBJECT:** Help us stop [problem your organization solves] in our community.

## Example Email

Hey John Smith,

81% of nonprofits say funding is their biggest challenge. The numbers are even worse for smaller, local nonprofits who don't get the publicity of big national organizations.

But you can help!

In 2 weeks, we are running our big annual fundraiser to help nonprofits keep doing their important work for the community.

Last year, we raised over \$950,000 (almost a million!) for local nonprofits, making a direct impact on homelessness, hunger, the arts, underprivileged children, and much, much more.

Register today and help us make this our biggest fundraiser to date!

[SIGN UP NOW BUTTON with link to registration page]

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

Hey [first name],

[Insert powerful story or statistic of the specific problem your organization solves].

But you can help!

In [time until event], we are running our [your fundraiser type] to help [who or what your nonprofit helps].

[tell a story of how your organization has solved the problem first mentioned]

Register today and help us make this our biggest fundraiser to date!

[REGISTER NOW BUTTON with link to registration page]



# Type of Email: Sign-Up Reminder

**Send 1 week before event or 1 week before you close registration.**

Okay, only 1 week before your big event, and your excitement is probably palpable by now.

If you can communicate that excitement and urgency in your emails, you'll get better open rates and more event sign-ups.

I've also included what's called social proof in the subject line, by saying "Join the movement". If people know that others are already taking action, that gives them a nudge that this might be important enough for them to take action, too.

# Type of Email: Sign Up Reminder

**SUBJECT:** [First Name], there's only 1 week left to join the movement...

**ALT SUBJECT:** [Event Name] is only 1 week away — do you have your tickets, [First Name]?

## Example Email

Hey John,

Our big annual fundraiser is only 1 week away! 😊

Not only will this be a fun way for everyone to get involved, but your donations will directly support over 100 amazing local nonprofits.

And with 2020 being, well...2020, this will be a critical way for us to keep doing our work in the community.

Will you help? Consider signing up today!

[SIGN-UP BUTTON]

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

Hey [first name],

Our [insert the name of your fundraiser] is only 1 week away!



Not only will this be a fun way for everyone to get involved, but your donations will directly support [insert who or what is impacted by your work].

[tell them why you need their participation and donations]

Will you help? Consider signing up today!

[SIGN-UP BUTTON]



# Type of Email: Last Chance to Sign Up

**Send 1 day before event or 1 day before you close registration.**

There are two marketing tools we'll use in this email - **urgency and social proof.**

This is a great time to utilize urgency, because there is really not much time left for your donors to sign up.

And by this time, you probably have a decent number of people who have already signed up, so you can use that number in your subject line, too!

# Type of Email: Last Chance to Sign Up

**SUBJECT:** Hey [First Name], last chance to join over [Number of People] getting involved...

**ALT SUBJECT:** Spots are filling fast, but we reserved one just for you, [First Name].

## Example Email

Whoa **John**, tomorrow is our **big annual fundraiser!**

We know you've got a lot to do (because, you know...life is crazy), but we'd love to see you there.

This is going to be a great way to **help local nonprofits raise money, get grants, and keep doing their important work.**

And what other chance will you get to show off your **mouse-clicking skills?**

Sign up today!

[SIGN UP BUTTON]

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

Whoa **[first name]**, tomorrow is our **[insert the name of your fundraiser!]**

We know you've got a lot to do (because, you know...life is crazy), but we'd love to see you there.

This is going to be a great way to directly impact **[insert your organization's cause]** .

And what other chance will you get to show off your **[trivia skills, graceful running technique, stay-at-home gala attire, etc]?**

Sign up today!

[SIGN UP BUTTON]



# Type of Email: Auto-Reply Thank You

**Send immediately after registrant signs up.**

Now we start talking to the people who opened your email, went to the sign up page, and then actually signed up!

That's a big commitment, and now we get to show them our appreciation.

As usual, less is more with this email. Thank them for registering, remind them of how important they are (because they really are!), and include all details they need to attend your event.

As you probably noticed, this is an Auto-Reply email. If you're not familiar, that's the email you receive a minute or so after you buy or sign up for something online.

Most event platforms have this feature built in, but you can also send them manually to each new event signup.

# Type of Email: Auto-Reply Thank You

**SUBJECT:** [First Name], thank you for signing up! Here are some details...

**ALT SUBJECT:** You're officially signed up for our [Event Name], [First Name]!

## Example Email

Hi John,

Thank you for signing up for CoMoGives!

Without people like you, we couldn't help local nonprofits transform our community.

Here's a few details for the event, so you can put it on your calendar if you'd like:

CoMoGives  
December 1st, 2020  
comogives.com

See you there!

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

Hi [first name],

Thank you for signing up for [your event name]!

Without people like you, we couldn't [insert your mission].

Here's a few details for the event, so you can put it on your calendar if you'd like:

[event name]  
[event date and time]  
[link]

See you there!



# Type of Email: Event Reminders

**Send a reminder email 1 week before the event, 1 day before the event, and an hour before the event.**

Humans can be a forgetful bunch. So it's a good idea to send your registrants a few emails reminding them about your event.

# Type of Email: Event Reminder (1 week before)

**SUBJECT:** Just a friendly reminder about [Event Name]

**ALT SUBJECT:** [First Name], don't forget! [Event Name] is ["next week"/date of event]!

## Example Email

Hi John,

Thank you for signing up for CoMoGives!

Without people like you, we couldn't help local nonprofits transform our community.

Here's a few details for the event, so you can put it on your calendar if you'd like:

CoMoGives  
December 1st, 2020  
comogives.com

See you there!

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

Hi [first name],

Thank you for signing up for [your event name]!

Without people like you, we couldn't [insert your mission].

Here's a few details for the event, so you can put it on your calendar if you'd like:

[event name]  
[event date and time]  
[link]

See you there!

# Type of Email: Event Reminder (1 day before)

**SUBJECT:** [First Name], only 1,440 minutes until [Event Name] (but who's counting? 😊)

**ALT SUBJECT:** [First Name], tomorrow is the big day! [Event Name] starts at [time of event].

## Example Email

Hey John,

Hope you've been working out your mouse-clicking muscles, because CoMoGives starts tomorrow!

That means tomorrow, you get to make a direct impact on homelessness, hunger, the arts, helping underprivileged children, and dozens of other important causes in our community.

We're excited (if you couldn't tell), and we hope you are too.

See you there!

CoMoGives  
December 1st, 2020  
comogives.com

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

Hey [first name],

Hope you've been working out your mouse-clicking muscles, because [insert your event name] starts tomorrow!

That means tomorrow, you get to make a direct impact on [insert the problem your organization directly helps].

We're excited (if you couldn't tell), and we hope you are too.

See you there!

[event name]  
[event date and time]  
[event link]  
[any other event details]

# Type of Email: Event Reminder (1 hour before)

**SUBJECT:** [First Name], [Event Name] is starting in 1 hour!

**ALT SUBJECT:** [First Name], it's almost time for [Event Name] to begin! Are you ready?

## Example Email

John,

With your help, this is going to be the biggest CoMoGives ever – and it starts in only one hour!

We're excited to see you there (virtually, of course 😊).

[event link]

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

[first name],

With your help, this is going to be the biggest [insert your event] ever – and it starts in only one hour!

We're excited to see you there (virtually, of course 😊).

[event link]



# Type of Email: Follow-Up / Thank You for Attending (with survey)

**Send 1 day after event.**

This is your final email! Here we will, you know...thank them. But also include stories or numbers of the impact their donations had. You worked hard, so breathe a sigh of relief and take a nap, or three.

This is a “Thank You” email, and it will thank people who attended the event. These follow-up emails are suuuuper important, and many people forget them. “Thank you” emails have an average engagement rate of 62%, and are a powerful way to nurture relationships with donors.

End with a closing from your team, or even the name of your organization’s leader (with their signature, if you want to get fancy). You can also include other stats about how many people you help every year, or what your upcoming plans are.

**Help people know their investment will pay off.**

# Type of Email: Follow up / Thank You for Attending (with survey)

**SUBJECT:** [First Name] – thank you, thank you, thank you!

**ALT SUBJECT:** We couldn't have done it without you, [First Name].

## Example Email

Hi John,

You helped make this year's CoMoGives was our biggest and best ever - \$1 million raised, over 5,000 donors, 139 local nonprofits impacted.

Wow. 😊

We literally could not have done it without you. So, we wanted to drop a line and say a big THANK YOU.

-The CoMoGives Team

## Take-and-Bake Recipe

Hi [first name],

You helped make this year's [insert your event name] our biggest and best ever - [insert stats of how well your event did].

Wow. 😊

We literally could not have done it without you. So, we wanted to drop a line and say a big THANK YOU.

-The [insert your organization name] Team

# Keep the ball rolling.

## Downloadable Resources



### Nonprofit Marketing Plan Template

Create your marketing plan with confidence.

Learn the Whats, Whens, Wheres, Whys and Hows you'll need to confidently map out your organization's marketing plan.

[DOWNLOAD NOW](#)



### Intro to Facebook for Nonprofits

Reap the benefits of using social networks to build awareness for your organization

Learn how Facebook can help you meet your social media goals with this free 45-page beginner's guide.

[DOWNLOAD NOW](#)

# Keep in touch!



[VIEW EPISODES](#)

## Marketing with Purpose

The Official Podcast of MayeCreate Design

This team of creatives, lead by your host and founder of MayeCreate, Monica Pitts, shares tools, tips, tricks and quips to help make your marketing not suck.

- How to effectively plan and execute your marketing without compromising your sanity
- Ways to grow your business online using assets you didn't know you didn't even know you had
- Steps for reviewing your marketing so you can make well-informed decisions
- Weekly reviews of tools, apps, extensions and other goodies we can't live without



## Contact us.

Contact us for a free initial consultation to talk about how you can use digital marketing to grow your organization.

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</email> [info@mayecreate.com](mailto:info@mayecreate.com)