

Cheat Sheet

When to Cancel, Postpone, or Take My Fundraising Event Online

Who Attends My Events?

Mission engaged volunteers, board members, or those who have benefited from my services	More likely to donate or participate in an online auction
Invited by family/friend	More likely to donate or participate in an online auction
Fun party seekers	Less likely to donate or participate in an online auction
Corporate sponsored table guests	Less likely to donate or participate in an online auction

Things to Consider for an Online Auction

Pre-event communications will need to be strong to still build hype and community

Do you want to sell tickets to attend or have a public auction?

If your plan is to still sell tickets (or not refund those already sold), what will your programming be? You may need to bring on a speaker or partner with other organizations to build excitement and a sense of community rallying around your mission

If you have a lot of experience based silent auction items, you'll want to be sure they have expiration dates far in the future. If they don't, you will definitely want to go back and make this request.

Software! Software often takes some onboarding and training. You'll want to be well-versed in your platform of choice before taking your event online.

Critical Evaluations

Are ticket sales a significant amount of your profit or do they just cover the cost to have someone attend the event?

- If yes, you likely need to postpone.
- If no, this won't have a significant impact on taking your event virtual.

Have you already put down deposits that cannot be recouped?

- If yes, postpone.
- If no, there's no effect.

Do you already have enough items for a silent auction?

- Right now is a tough time to solicit. If you do not already have a solid silent auction item line up, you may want to consider turning your event into an annual appeal.

Do you already have corporate sponsors secured?

- If yes, you may want to postpone to maintain these relationships and funding.
- You can also ask corporate sponsors to turn their sponsorship into a donation if you decide to turn your event into an annual appeal.

Can you make the same profit margin you did last year if you turn your event into an annual appeal?

- This will largely depend on your "who and why" segmentation.

Is this a signature event that will hurt your brand or severely disappoint your "who and why" by canceling?

- Overall, you should expect lower attendance. If you choose to postpone, consider how you can cut back on "nice to haves" in your contracts to accommodate.

