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**How has raffle fundraising performed over the last 12 to 18 months?**

Raffles have generally performed well and reasonably reliably over the last 12 months. As with any fundraising project, there are campaigns that over achieve and others that under achieve – thus the need to make assessments on the annual profit goal rather than the profit for each raffle.

Our experience over the past 18 months has been that each raffle requires the utmost attention to help ensure targets, particularly income targets, are met.

At Communication Direct, while great efforts are made to elicit immediate payments on credit cards when marketing a raffle, most tickets are still ‘placed’, which requires payment at a later date. This is the culture of raffles in Victoria. It means raffles happen as a two-step process – placement then fulfilment.

In the last 12 months, placement of books has been running mostly to plan and we haven’t had any great concerns about this first step. However, it is critical to place the targeted number of books to the best/current supporters. Placement of books to less ‘rusted on’ supporters leads to poorer fulfilment levels, which creates problems reaching income targets.

Fulfilment remains the most crucial element of most raffle campaigns and all opportunities to underpin high levels of fulfilment such as reminder mailings, follow-up phone calls, SMS reminders and different scripts are required for success.

**How do you think raffle fundraising will perform over the coming 12 to 18 months?**

Raffles will continue to perform well in the future provided they are closely managed. While some organisations that in the past have raised funds through raffles are looking at other options, other charities are keen to move into the raffle space as a source of renewable income and possible feeder activity for their regular giving programs.

In relation to raffle profits, clearly income must be maximised and expenses controlled/minimised. As a rule, over this last year we haven’t experienced any great difficulty managing costs. We continue to see, however, profits from raffles bouncing around quite a bit.

A very successful raffle can be followed by a raffle that doesn’t quite achieve budget for reasons that are sometimes difficult to pinpoint. Competition from all the donor programs before and after tax time is the most prominent environmental factor. Interestingly, elections all appear to negatively impact fulfilment levels.

**What is your 'bold prediction' for raffle fundraising in 2017?**

The appeal of raffles as a viable source of sustainable income for charities will continue and, barring any legislative changes impacting negatively on the activity, will be embraced by many/most charities.

The most destructive and dangerous threat to all fundraising that relies upon telephone direct marketing techniques for their success is the groundswell to remove the exemption of charities from the restrictions of the Do Not Call Register. This would be disastrous for Australian charities.

Sources of names from lists purchased from list brokers already impact significantly on the return on investment on acquisition campaigns. List costs in Australia are more than double list costs in the UK, for example.

If charities were forced to use lists all the time and not the *White Pages*:

- the cost of acquisition, particularly in relation to raffles, would rise significantly, leading to a lower return on investment
- the people not on the Do Not Call Register would grow tired of being called more often
- the size of raffles would be impacted due to the vastly decreased prospect pool
- maintaining/building databases would become more difficult, which would ultimately impact the viability of associated programs.