

# + The National Funding Scheme

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## **CASE STUDY NO 3:** Fundraising event proves the power of immediate giving

February 2014



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Mobile offers an effective and easy giving mechanism in a live setting – even where fundraising is not the primary driver for an event
- Web app (representing 68% of actual donations) proves again to be more popular than SMS, generates more revenue and attracts more Gift Aid
- Displaying a live feed of money being raised encourages more giving
- Simple comms tools and consistent messaging helps your cause
- Capturing auction prize pledges immediately ensures donors' pledges are honoured and qualifying Gift Aid is captured

### The context

The National Funding Scheme (NFS) was approached by a charity in the north of England that was seeking to maximise its fundraising opportunities at an awards dinner and auction being held in central London in late 2013. The charity had not previously experimented with digital giving in a live context. The event was an academic awards dinner and the charity's guest list of 100 people was not drawn from its usual supporter base. They therefore set a fundraising target of £500 for the event.

### What NFS did

We offered a £10 text channel, a QR code, dedicated web address and a live screen that would show the total being raised – and number of donations – over the course of the evening. Additionally, we designed a business card that included brief instructions on how to give via SMS, QR code and web app. Every guest found this business card at their place setting and could refer to and use it throughout the dinner. During the event, two volunteers in branded T-shirts and carrying iPads circulated to help capture donations, whilst the event MC reminded guests of the opportunity to make a donation via their own mobile devices.

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### **Adding value to auction pledges**

A small auction at which four prizes were on offer formed part of the event. NFS took advice from HMRC ahead of the event to confirm that the difference between the commercial value of the prizes and the amount raised would qualify for Gift Aid. By subtracting the commercial value of the prize, we were able to capture significant levels of Gift Aid. The screen and live web link showing donations and auction prizes in real time captured the audience's attention at key moments. It also acted as an incentive to encourage donors to help push the total up to the next financial milestone (*see image below*).



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## Outcome

Just under half the guests donated a total of £8,733, when the original target had been set at just £500. Gift Aid accounted for 17% of the final total raised and was added by the majority of donors, of whom 68% gave by web app. Fewer than 25% of text donations included Gift Aid, whilst 66 per cent of web app donors added Gift Aid. After the awards dinner, the NFS kept a live link to its website open so that people could continue to support the cause for several more weeks.

## Insights

The ease of technology, live display of donations and an inspirational speaker during the dinner combined to motivate guests to support the charity despite this not being primarily a fundraising event.

## Learning

- DONATE enables auction pledges to be captured instantly and for incremental Gift Aid to be added
- A screen showing the number of donors and the amounts of money contributed incentivises other people to contribute to the cause
- The human element of asking is important – but technology makes it easier to give and receive
- It is more secure to give at live events via technology (no cash envelopes, collecting boxes or cheques to look after, lose or have stolen)

## KEY WORDS

- **Organisation type:** charity
- **Location/Region:** London
- **Event:** awards dinner

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