

Qgiv Auction Case Study: Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County Exceeds \$20,000 Virtual Auction Goal

CHALLENGE:

The Monroe County, Michigan chapter of Habitat for Humanity supports the many hardworking families of their community realize their dream of owning a home. Their support offers families and neighborhoods strength and stability.

Like many nonprofit organizations, the team at Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County wears many hats and doesn't have extra funds to spend, necessitating close examination of every expense and vendor relationship for savings and value. Value, savings, and a great relationship are what ultimately led them to Qgiv for their online fundraising.

Habitat for Humanity
of Monroe County's
First-Ever Hybrid
Virtual Event

More than
\$20,000
raised

Processing fees
offset using
GiftAssist:
22%



When the COVID-19 pandemic impacted 2020 event planning, Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County had some big decisions to make about their annual event for Women's Leadership Initiative for Habitat Humanity (WLI). Should they move the event or cancel it? Neither! They created a hybrid virtual event, "Trunk or Treat Yo Self Auction", taking the best of an in-person event and combining it with a virtual auction while keeping it safe and successful!

"We had reservations about going virtual, and were nervous about our audience being receptive to technology. But nowadays, everybody has a smartphone. We wanted to make sure our event software was intuitive and easy enough for our donors to figure out. Qgiv is one of my favorite platforms to use and was super easy for our guests."

*Jennifer Hockenberger, Director of Fundraising and Media Relations,
Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County*

SOLUTION:

The Monroe County team recognized that Qgiv's flexible pricing was exactly what they needed for their event. They were able to use the auction platform tools when they needed them without getting locked in a long-term contract or spending more than necessary.

"What we do is sign up for a couple of months, which allows us to have online auctions for the period of time that we're having our event. When we're done with our event, we remove the Auctions package from our plan and continue our year-round



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fundraising with the Start package. We love being able to say, 'Okay, we're going to put that feature on pause for now until we need it again.'"

By turning their annual WLI event into the "Trunk or Treat Yo Self Auction" hybrid event, Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County catered to every part of their audience. The format offered a way for donors at home to participate virtually, while others congregated around their cars outside the venue and tailgated in costume. They also offered an in-person component, as they had a viewing area, hosted bar, and conducted a live auction in addition to their silent auction.

"People had the opportunity to preview auction items on their mobile device or look at the items and go back to their tailgate. It was like a socially-distanced town meeting, but with raffles and drink tickets for a bloody mary bar, mimosa bar, or a spiked coffee bar."

They replaced their traditional method of selling raffle tickets, which involved volunteers walking around asking participants to purchase an arm's-length of tickets, with virtual raffle tickets sold through Qgiv's Givi app. This approach kept all transactions online, streamlining the evening and eliminating the need for physical collection of cash.

They further utilized the powerful tools in Qgiv's auction platform by adding a fund-a-need appeal and a live auction component.

"The viewer could see the items, like airline tickets, ski trips, or purses, and review them before the event. We

sent out push notifications letting them know the live auction was going to start in 15 minutes, then 10 minutes, and then they received a message saying to get ready, the live auction is starting."

They offered registration assistance ahead of their event, as well as before and during. Prior to the event, they sent out personal emails and text messages with instructions, links for downloads, and offered to walk guests through the registration process. The night of, they recognized participants who had successfully downloaded the Givi app and completed registration as VIPs, congratulating them and fast tracking those in-person guests to pick up their programs and glow sticks with bidding number in an express line. Those who needed additional day-of event assistance to register were helped by volunteers who utilized the Virtual Terminal to get them set up.



"When we started, we were using PayPal. The fees were an issue, along with the inability to be creative. There wasn't any real connectivity with PayPal. Now we use Qgiv for everything. The biggest advantage is the support. I have people responding to my inquiries the very same day I ask a question. I get a response immediately! There are people I know, like Molly, helping me."

Jennifer Hockenberger, Director of Fundraising and Media Relations, Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County



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RESULTS:

Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County exceeded their fundraising goal of \$20,000 and raised \$21,305.25! "Qgiv solved our online fundraising challenge of interacting with our donors. The biggest challenge of fundraising, especially during a pandemic, is trying to figure out a way to stay engaged and keep the funds coming in. Qgiv's technology is flexible while being easy and fun. You really are helping!"

By offering GiftAssist as an option for donors, they offset approximately 22% of their processing fees. "My favorite feature is GiftAssist; I love that donors can fully fund and support us, as opposed to portions of the funding going to processing fees."

Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County will likely keep the hybrid format for future auction events after seeing how much their guests enjoyed the mobile bidding experience.

"Post-pandemic, it's going to be important for people to be able to view items online and not wait in lines. They'll want to sip their drinks and be entertained without having to go back into another room to see if somebody outbid them on an item. Sending out text alerts is a really sweet feature that we had never considered when we first started planning."



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