

BHcare Foundation Overcomes the Challenges of Switching to a Virtual Event and Sees Highest Fundraising Numbers to Date

CHALLENGE:

BHcare Foundation's annual A Chance to Shine bike and walk event format needed to be changed from a single-day, in-person event to a two-week virtual event. Due to COVID-19 safety concerns, they had to decide if they would cancel the event or build a new one from scratch. Their challenge extended beyond just reimagining the event; they needed to engage and maintain donors, participants, and sponsors.

Their biggest challenge was what to offer sponsors and supporters. They needed to make the event fun, without bringing people together in person. They needed to give value to their sponsors, who wouldn't receive traditional location signage and exposure. And they needed to make a first-time virtual event successful and raise a significant amount of money.

BHcare's
First-Ever Virtual
Peer-to-Peer
Event

Utilized
Facebook and
DonorPerfect
Integrations

Raised
\$104,995



BHcare Foundation provides a comprehensive and integrated system of care for adults, children and families who are struggling with mental health issues, substance use issues, or domestic violence.

"Our supporters know that what they do is vital and their contributions make a real difference. We adjusted to the times because we couldn't be together in person. We still wanted people to have a place to interact in a safe but fun way, and we tried to create a format that allowed for a little competition. The beauty about this new format was you set the goal, you set the pace."

Danielle DeLong, Development Coordinator, BHcare Foundation

SOLUTION:

The team at BHcare Foundation focused on rebuilding from the bottom up. Instead of trying to emulate what they had done in years prior, they started from the beginning. They realized very quickly that everything from their website, social media, donation forms, and artwork to their email and advertising messaging were geared towards in-person events and needed major updates.

As they overhauled their event format, they reached out to the Qgiv Customer Experience team for examples of successful virtual events and donation forms from other nonprofits, as well as for virtual event best practice advice. They incorporated the areas they liked, using the best of the best to build out their event.

They leveraged the Qgiv peer-to-peer system to keep participants engaged and clearly communicate with their supporters that even though the event had changed, their support was still important to raise vital funds for their mission.



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Communication was the focus of everything they did. To keep everyone engaged, they put together a strategy leading up to the kickoff of their event that included touching base regularly through the Qgiv platform via email and social media. They utilized Qgiv's direct integration with Facebook Fundraisers and synced their event page thermometer with activities driven on Facebook.

They shared simple instructions on registering and donating, acknowledgements of sponsors, reminders to finish registration, prompts on goal setting and tips on challenging friends and family to participate. They kept the messaging fun and positive, and they scheduled and sent everything through Qgiv's peer-to-peer email campaigns tool.

They embedded RideWithGPS on their event page, suggesting various scenic routes to participants. Through this widget and the participant highlights, they created a sense of community. Participants felt connected to other riders and walkers. And is it really a peer-to-peer event without a little friendly competition? Using the Qgiv recent activity widget, BHcare was able to spotlight their donors and participants automatically as new contributions and signups rolled in.

They hosted a virtual finish line at the end of the two-week event to highlight videos and images of runners and riders completing their journeys. They also included a message from staff so everyone felt like they were walking or riding together even though they were apart.

Additionally, BHcare used the Qgiv integration with DonorPerfect, their donor management system.

"With the click of a button, we sent over information from Qgiv to DonorPerfect. The migration of information with donor profiles and their giving history saved a lot of time and data entry. We were able to easily segment our donors and participants and follow up with them. We will be able to cultivate those relationships further, based on their participation in the event. The integration makes it very easy."

Danielle DeLong, Development Coordinator, BHcare Foundation

RESULTS:

With a little reimagination, BHcare was able to challenge their supporters in a new way and raise their highest fundraising dollars to date!

When transitioning to the virtual event. The BHcare team was focused on providing a space to interact in a safe but fun way that encouraged competition. Through the Qgiv and DonorPerfect integration, they were able to challenge their supporters in a new way while they participated at their own pace.

At the end of the event, BHcare raised \$104,995.00, almost 5% more than the live event the year before. Expenses were significantly lower without event signage and materials, and individual fundraising was better because people were engaged for



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a longer timeframe. Therefore, less of the money raised went toward overhead and instead went directly toward their cause.

“A pandemic changes our process, but never changes our mission.”

With such a success under their belt, BHcare plans to keep this new way of fundraising in a virtual world in their future event plans.

“My advice to those organizations considering switching to a virtual event... first, reach out to resources. Qgiv is a great one. Lean on them! If you have a team, delegate tasks. Get out of your comfort zone.”



[Watch Danielle DeLong speak at a recent DonorPerfect Virtual Conference and share visuals of the “A Chance to Shine” event.](#)

“The most important thing was to build an event that worked under the current environment. We didn’t approach it believing we needed to do exactly what we always do. We knew that a week or two-week timeframe would really afford people an opportunity to participate. It also really helped for early participants to encourage later arrivals through their accomplishments. It was especially nice that we really didn’t have to hope and pray for nice weather!”

Danielle DeLong, Development Coordinator, BHcare Foundation

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