

Tips for a Successful #GivingTuesday Social Media Campaign

Today roughly seven-in-ten Americans use social media to connect with each other, share information and entertain themselves, according to Pew Research Center. It is easy to understand why the #GivingTuesday social media initiative has had incredible success since its start in 2012.

2016 was a record year for #GivingTuesday, with roughly \$177 million raised online in a single 24-hour period. 1.64 million online gifts contributed to that fundraising total, further resulting from 2.4 million social media engagements. Your COTA community campaign can benefit from this initiative, as well! Utilizing social media is an effective way to get the word out about your COTA community campaign and raise funds to assist with transplant-related expenses.

Here are some tips for how to create a successful #GivingTuesday social media strategy:

1. **Send a 'save the date' message** to your followers via a social media post and/or email to begin your #GivingTuesday push. Include them in your COTA community campaign plan to raise as much as possible in 24 hours for COTA in honor of your COTA patient.
2. **Create a local hashtag** to combine with the national #GivingTuesday hashtag as well as the #COTAHope hashtag. These will help you track posts related to your campaign, serve as a subtle way for people to connect the initiatives together and, overall, maximize your reach. From #GivingShoesDay to #GivingZooDay to #GivingBlueDay, make the initiative your own. Also, remember to tag COTA in your [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) posts.
3. **Post daily** leading up to #GivingTuesday. Share your COTA patient's transplant journey, COTA facts, any upcoming fundraising event details, and different reasons to give with links to your COTA website and donation page. Facebook is best suited for one or two posts each day while Twitter allows for multiple posts daily. Either way the material must change to keep your followers engaged.
4. **Share visuals**, like pictures or videos, with most of your posts as these typically receive the most engagement. Share photos from fundraising events, video messages from the COTA family and photos of your COTA patient. Posting a COTA fundraising event flyer on social media serves as a good visual while simultaneously promoting your upcoming fundraiser (such as a restaurant night or paper icon fundraiser), which could occur the day of or week of #GivingTuesday.
5. **Write a blog** about your #GivingTuesday campaign and share the blog link on your COTA campaign website and Facebook page. This blog should include photos, videos and links to your COTA campaign website so people can learn more. Make sure to include impact stories. Do not just ask for support, explain why the reader's support matters to your COTA family.

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- 6. Follow trends** to increase social media interactions and overall awareness on #GivingTuesday. Notice a clever meme circling the web? Put a COTA twist on it. Watch a fun 'challenge' video? Join the challenge with your COTA patient, family and/or volunteers. Incorporating popular topics into your posts can increase follower interactions. Also, try incorporating the #UNselfie into your #GivingTuesday campaign. An #UNselfie is an 'unselfish selfie' where you post a picture on social media with a reason why you support an amazing cause.
- 7. Recruit social media ambassadors** from your community and enlist them in peer-to-peer fundraising. These social media ambassadors can mobilize their own networks and help raise awareness for your COTA community campaign.

Here is an email template you can share with your COTA campaign volunteers and others throughout the community who should be encouraged to send it to potential #GivingTuesday contributors:

Have you heard of #GivingTuesday? It is a global day dedicated to giving the Tuesday following Black Friday and Cyber Monday ... a day for everyone, everywhere, to GIVE!

At any given moment, more than 130,000 children and adults are awaiting an organ transplant. More than one third of them will die before a donor can be found. The numbers are overwhelming, but there is a way you can give hope to a transplant-needy family.

As you give today, please consider supporting COTA for **Patient Name**. **Patient First Name** needs/has had a life-saving **type** transplant. Transplant procedure costs range from \$100,000 to more than \$800,000. The **Last Name** family has joined the Children's Organ Transplant Association because COTA helps families who are facing a life-saving transplant by providing fundraising assistance and family support.

Area volunteers are raising an estimated \$**GOAL** for COTA in honor of **Patient Name**. No gift is too small and every dollar matters. Will you give hope to **Patient Name** and **his/her** family on this #GivingTuesday?

Make a life-saving gift to COTA in honor of **Patient Name** and learn more here:
[insert url/link to campaign website and/or Facebook page]

Thank you!

COTA Volunteer/Ambassador's Name

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8. **Go big the day of #GivingTuesday** with updates, challenges and interactions. The usual 'post limit' can be ignored at this time. Set a specific fundraising goal for that day and follow-up throughout the day with updates on milestones met, potentially creating challenges from it. For example, during the lunch hour challenge your followers to donate \$60 in the next 60 minutes before they return to work. You should also interact with your followers throughout the day as well as in the days leading up to November 28th. If someone shares your Facebook post ... like it. When someone comments on a post ... respond. And be sure to share your COTA campaign website and donation page links frequently. Invite your followers to make contributions, to share the link and to 'like' or 'follow' your COTA Facebook page to increase awareness of the campaign.
9. **Express your gratitude** the day after #GivingTuesday on November 29th by announcing your fundraising total from that day and sending thank you messages to anyone who contributed to your #GivingTuesday success. Keep the momentum going through the end of the year by emphasizing people can still donate to your COTA community campaign!

Remember, your COTA community campaign is fundraising to *accomplish* an important goal so make sure to emphasize the *impact* contributors will have. Join us November 28th as we give hope with #GivingTuesday!