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▶▶▶ Webinars

How to Host a
VIRTUAL
FUNDRAISING EVENT

A Step-by-Step Guide for Nonprofits

SPEAKERS

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AGENDA

○ The Benefits of Virtual Fundraising

○ Six Steps to Setup, Promote and Host Your Virtual Event

○ Combining Live with Virtual Fundraising

○ Virtual Event In Action: Birch Family Services

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POLL

What are your plans for virtual fundraising events in 2021?

1. All in, we're only hosting virtual events

2. Virtual in first half, in-person in second half

3. Combo of virtual and in-person

4. Hybrid, our in-persons will have a bit of virtual

5. We're only hosting in-person events

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HOW TO HOST A VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT:
A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR NONPROFITS

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Benefits of Virtual Fundraising Events

Virtual and/or hybrid events enable nonprofits to host successful fundraising events

- Planning is more efficient with lower overhead cost

- Expands reach and donor database

- Provides online registration to track and communicate with attendees

- Continues to show campaign and generate donations before, during and after event

➢ **Did You Know?** NPO's that pivot to virtual fundraising events are **10% more likely to be raising at or above their original goals**

Source: Nonprofit Pro, "The Future is Hybrid: Preparing for the Next Evolution of Fundraising," Jan 2021

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Nonprofits & Virtual Events

Industry Stats

- **70%** nonprofits who held virtual events in 2020 rated them as successful

- **78%** of nonprofits are planning on holding one or more virtual event in 2021

- **42%** of nonprofits plan to hold hybrid in-person / virtual events in 2021

Source: Nonprofit Pro, "The Future is Hybrid: Preparing for the Next Evolution of Fundraising," Jan 2021

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Step **1**

Creating Your Virtual Event

Getting Started

- Get input from community and volunteers, what do they think would be fun?

- Reach out for special guests and celebrities: you never know until you try

- Create a reason to watch "live" - lesson, unveiling, entertainment, share experience together

- Use a host or emcee to maintain an even flow

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Step **1**

Creating Your Virtual Event

Virtual Event Ideas

A few different ways to host a virtual event or campaign:

- Virtual Gala
- Voting Competition
- Party/Performances
- In-Home Activities
- Drive-in Movies
- Day of Giving
- Peer-to-Peer Challenge
- Virtual Charity Run/Walk
- Celebration Days
- NPO TV
- Online Auction

Download our infographic for more ideas >

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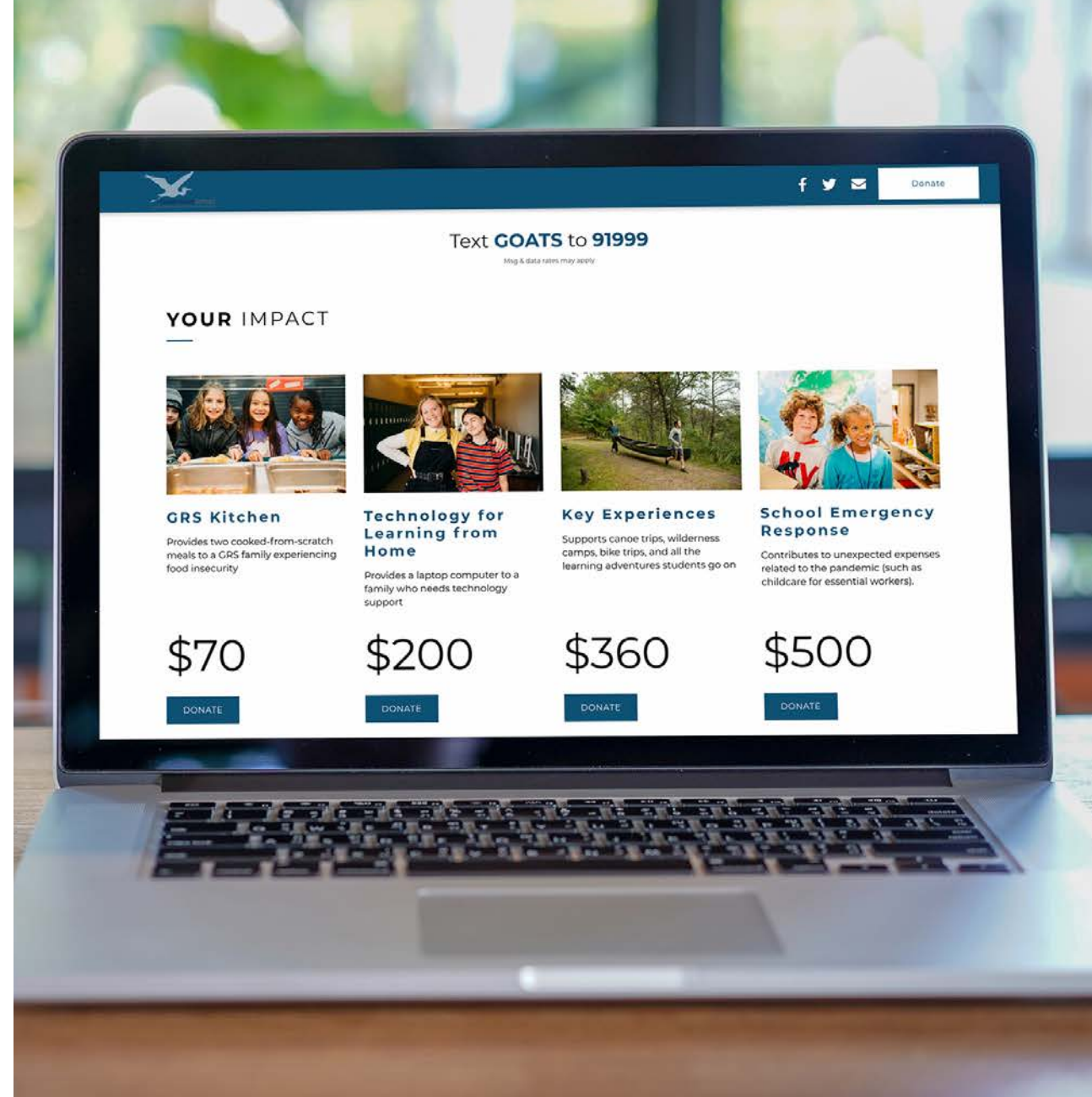
Establish the Tech

Livestream and Videos

- Lead with video or livestream on Event Page to grab attention

- Use livestream for concerts, entertainment and in-the-moment interviews

- Share videos about your campaign, impact, mission or beneficiaries

- Show 'behind the scenes,' 'day in the life,' 'program in action' or 'thank yous'

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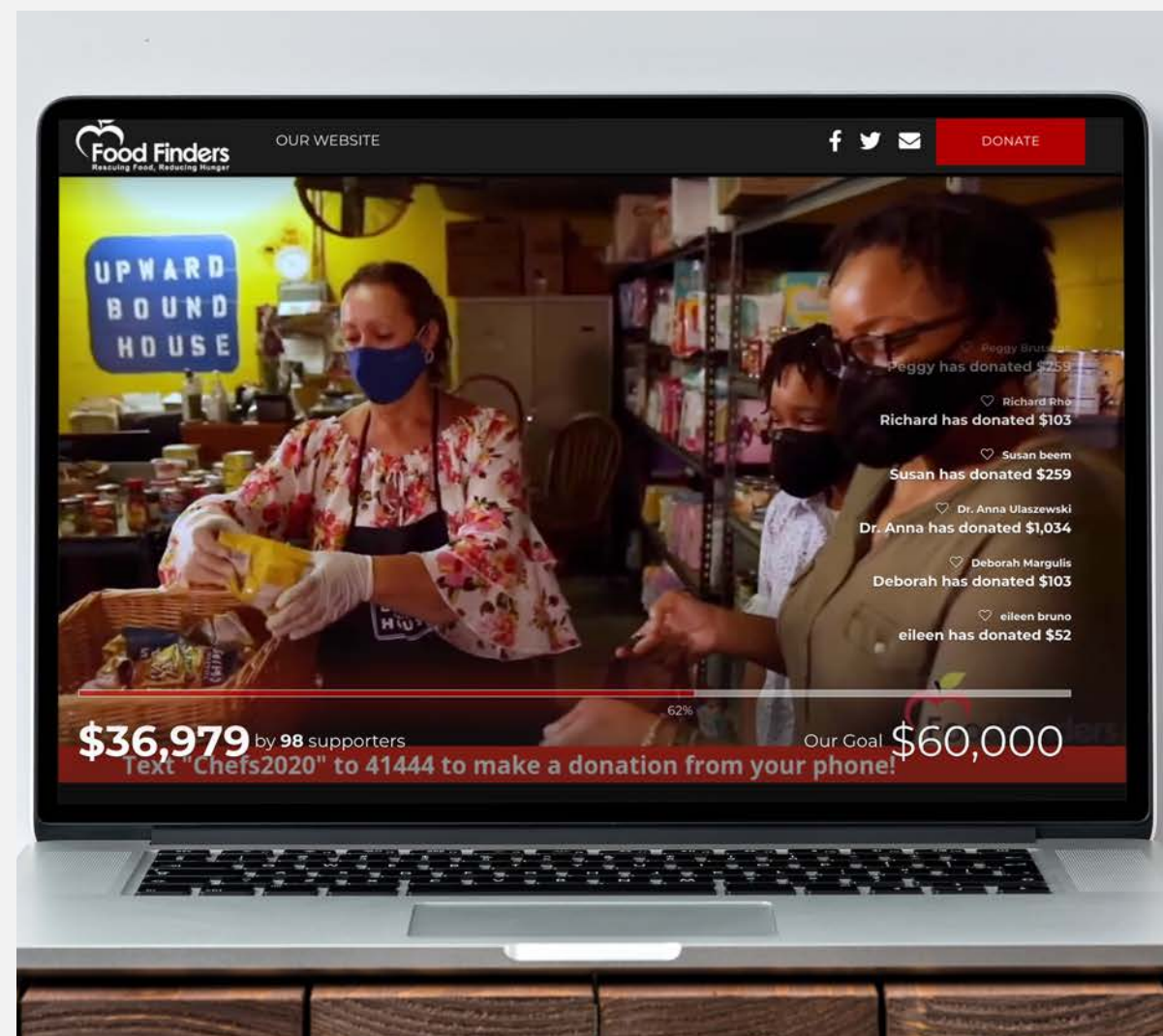
Establish the Tech

Streaming Options

Virtual events utilize livestreams, pre-recorded videos or a hybrid of both

Livestreaming
- Pros: in-the-moment, interact with audience, provide fundraising updates
- Cons: Less control over presentation and glitches

Pre-recorded
- Pros: more control over all elements, can unveil to appear "live"
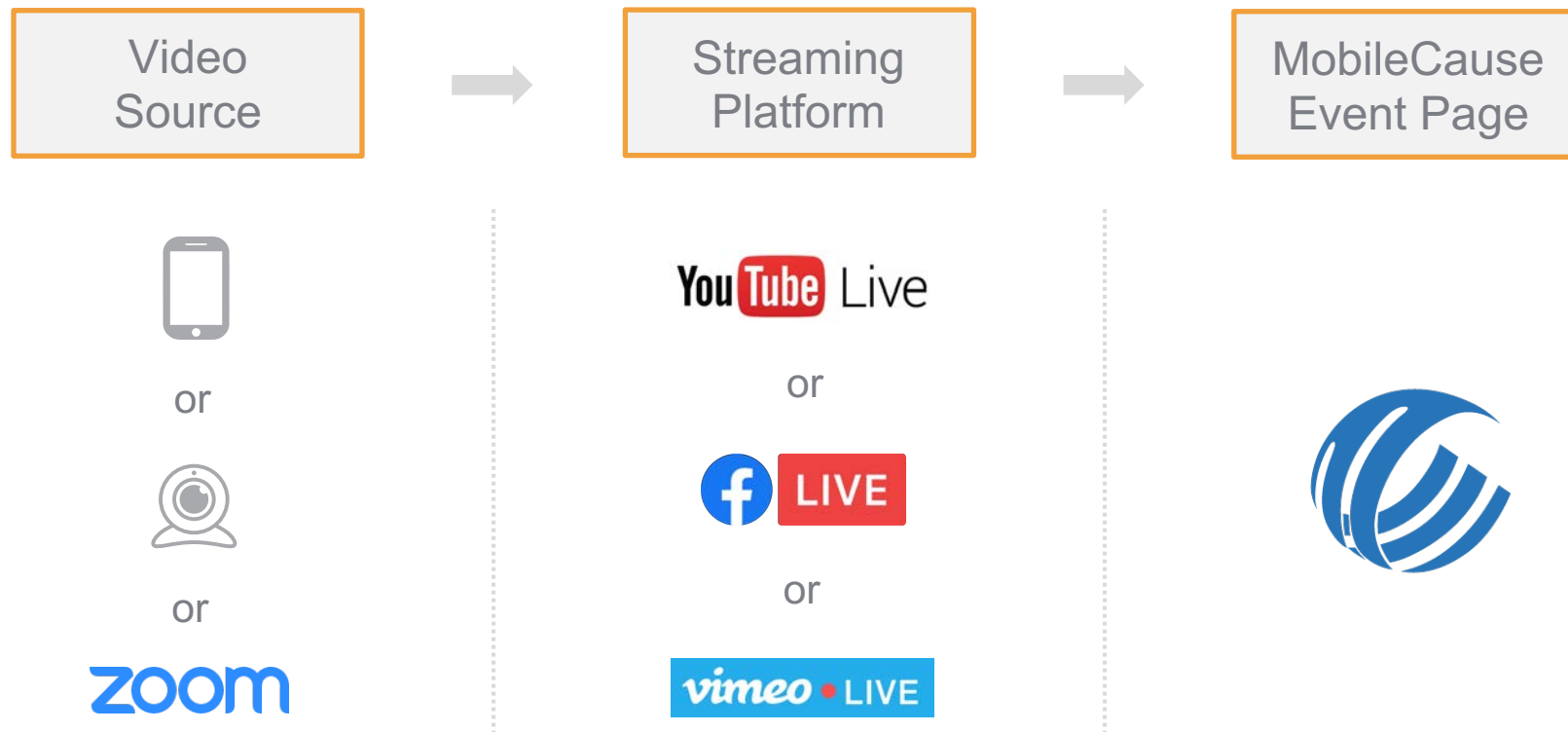- Cons: more effort upfront, can't provide real-time updates/shoutouts

Hybrid
- Pros: control over presentations while benefiting from live elements
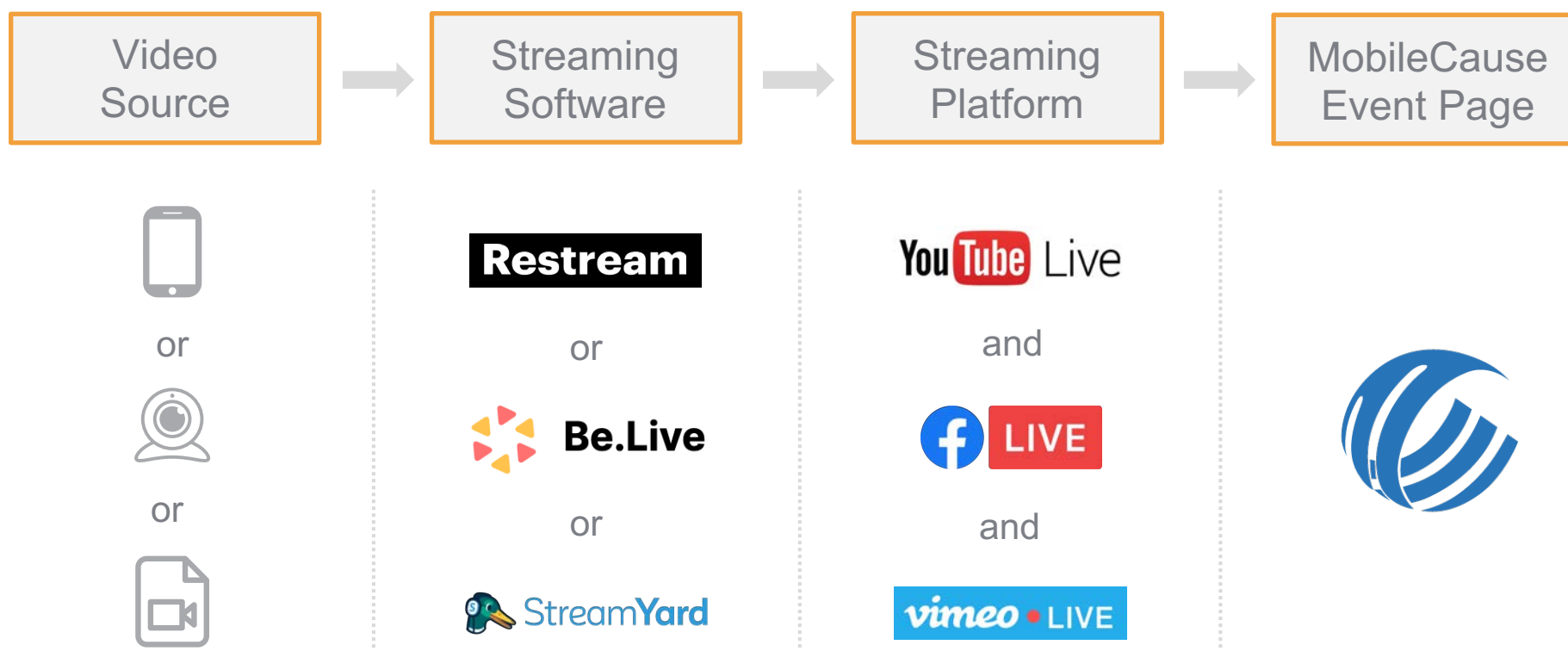- Cons: more moving parts to manage

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The Tech Setup

Setup Options for Streaming: One Source, One Platform

| Video Source | → | Streaming Platform | → | MobileCause Event Page |

Video Source

📱

or

📷

or

zoom

Streaming Platform

YouTube Live

or

Facebook LIVE

or

vimeo LIVE

MobileCause Event Page

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The Tech Setup

Setup Options for Streaming: One Source, Multiple Platforms

| Video Source | → | Streaming Software | → | Streaming Platform | → | MobileCause Event Page |

Restream

or

Be.Live

or

StreamYard

You Tube Live

and

LIVE

and

vimeo • LIVE

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Promote the Event

Event Page

All your important event details in one convenient place: information, giving and experiencing your event

- Can use one link in all of your communications

- Supports all your forms and CTAs

- Optimized for livestream or embedded video

- Promotes "replay" and repeat viewing

- Showcases fundraising progress and donor wall
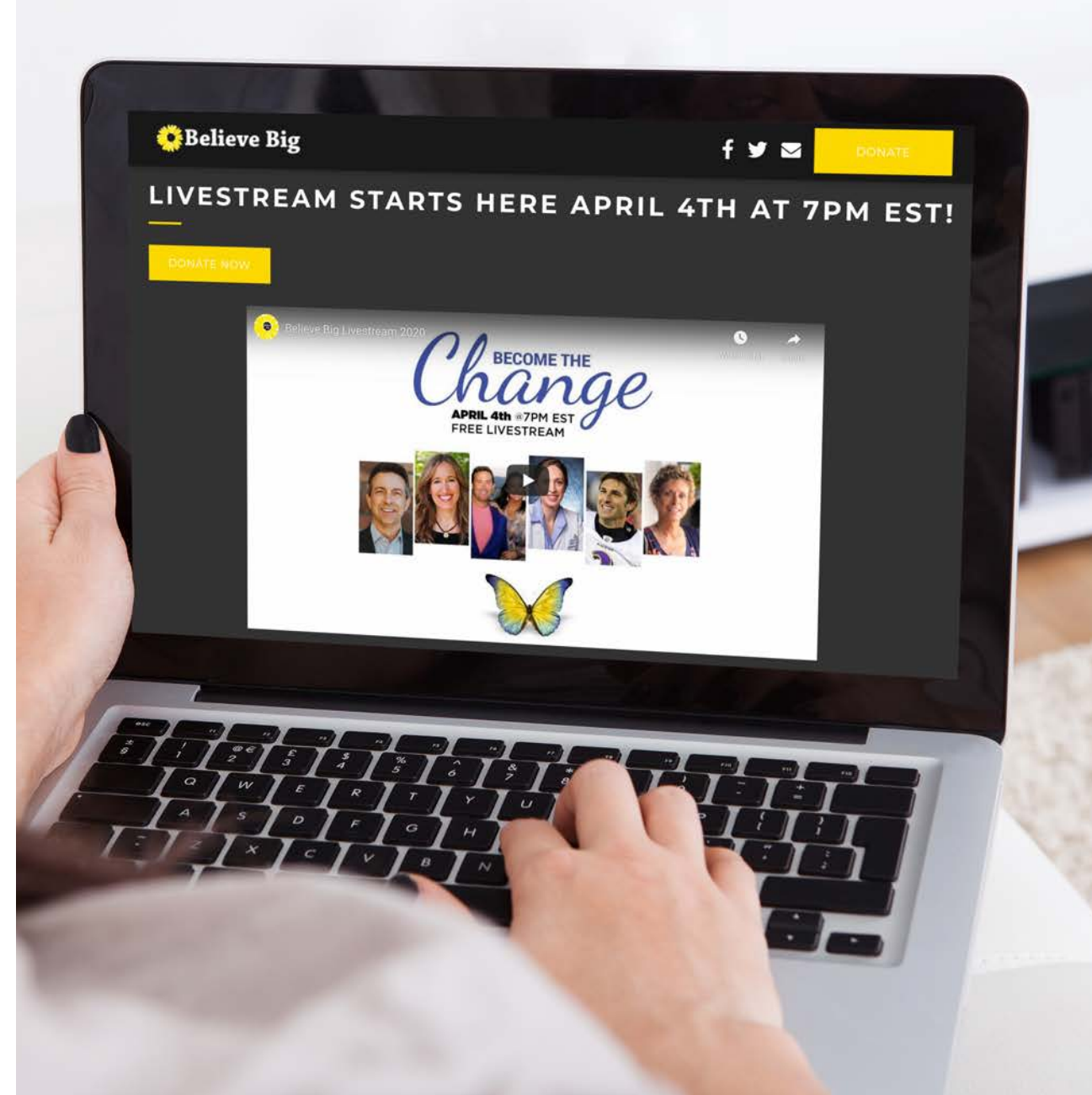
Promote the Event

Registration

Request guests to get a ticket or register for your virtual event

- Paid tickets boost fundraising and create exclusivity

- "Free" tickets help track registrants

- Offer free swag with tickets/registration

- Add option to donate on your ticket form

- Automate receipt with virtual event details

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Promote the Event

Sponsorships

Businesses support your event and the community and benefit from your promotion

- Present opportunities and accept sponsor sign up on Event Page

- Promote sponsors in all event materials

- Include logos and links to their site in emails and on website and Event Page

- Shout out sponsors during your virtual event

➤ **90% of businesses** indicate that **partnering** with reputable nonprofits enhances their brand

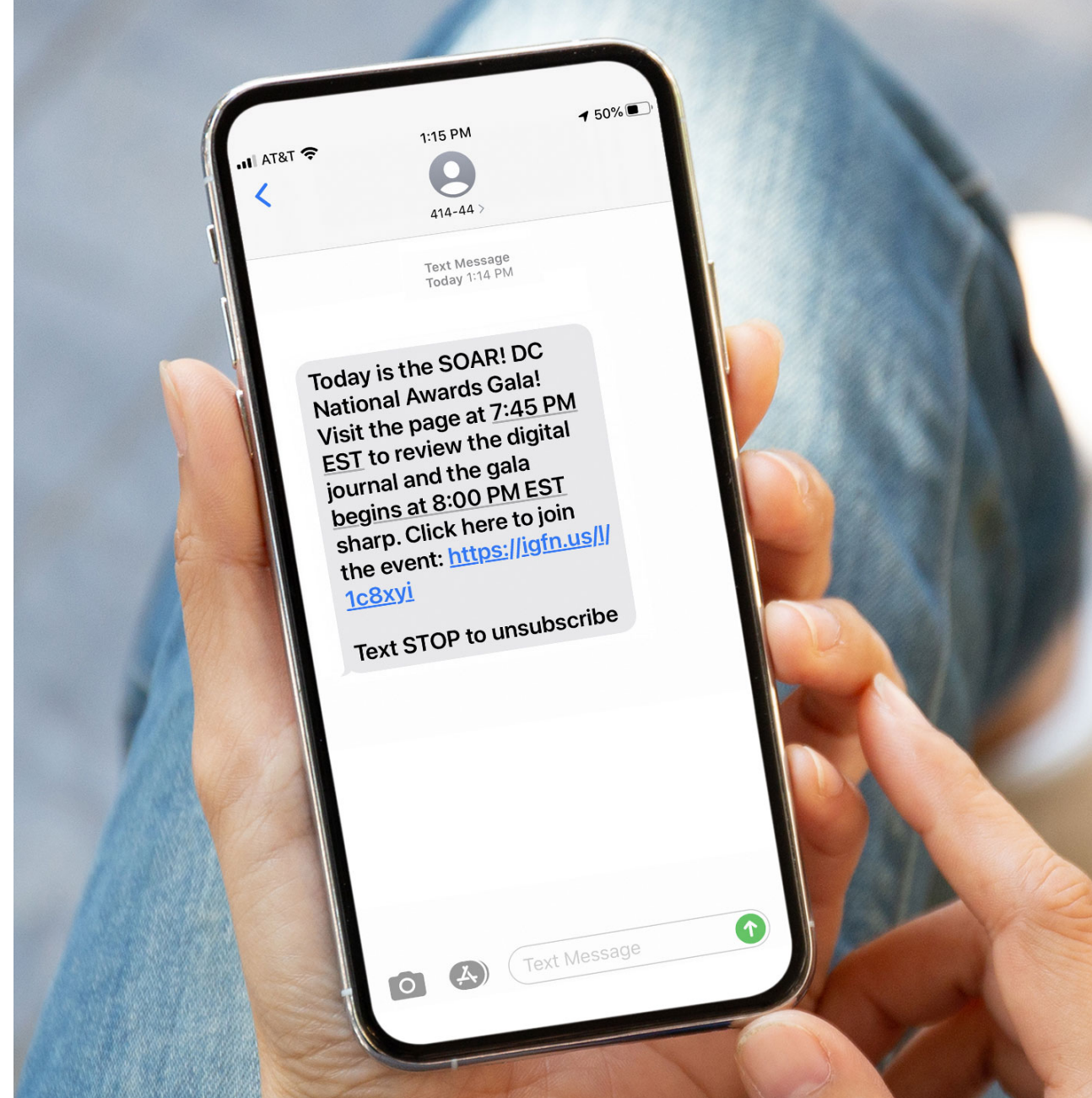Source: Nonprofits Source. (2018) Corporate Giving Trends.

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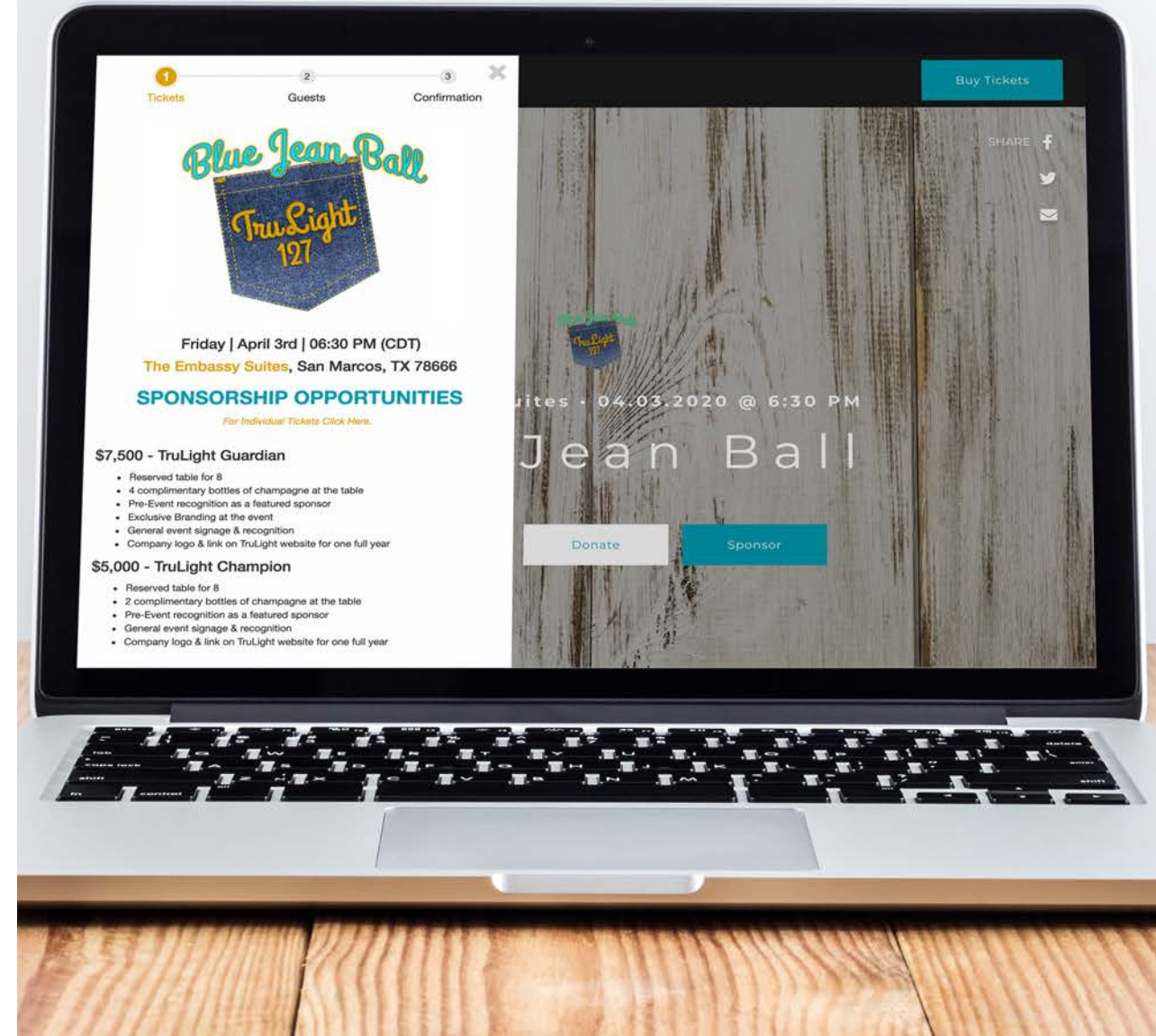
Step **3**

Promote the Event

Broadening Your Reach

Virtual events allow donors from around the world to attend

- Promote broadly and strategically across channels

- Tag supporters and sponsors on social media

- Encourage your network to share event widely

- Share text-to-donate details in posts and communications

- Increase engagement with photos, impact stats and hashtags on social media

➢ **Fun Fact:** because of early and wide promotion, many virtual events raise a majority of their total **prior to the start of "going live"**

Today is the SOAR! DC National Awards Gala! Visit the page at 7:45 PM EST to review the digital journal and the gala begins at 8:00 PM EST sharp. Click here to join the event: https://igfn.us/l/1c8xyi

Text STOP to unsubscribe

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Create a Dynamic Virtual Event Program

- Use a host or emcee to keep an even flow

- Share short videos about your campaign, impact, mission or beneficiaries

- Go to live remote speakers to create emotion, passion and connection

- Make appeals throughout and share your text-to-donate keyword and shortcode

- Give live shout outs to donors as names appear on donor wall

- If you have a fundraising goal, reinforce how much is needed to achieve it

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Step **4**

Create a Dynamic Virtual Event Program

Have a Program Outline

Using an outline vs. a script means less reading and more speaking from the heart. Be sure to include:

- A warm welcome

- Intro to your mission and campaign

- Intro to what's to come: guests, speakers, videos, etc.

- Intro to giving methods: donate links, text-to-donate, online auction

- Acknowledgement of sponsors, volunteers, donors and staff/committee members

Text: BELIEVE   To: 80888

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5

Make a Powerful Ask

- Make first appeal not too early or too late in program

- Make multiple appeals throughout the virtual event

- Display text-to-donate keyword and shortcode

- Make primary asks after showcasing impact and stories

- Ask throughout the program

President's Message 3-20

0:14 / 1:15

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Follow Up with Timely Thank Yous

- Prompt thank yous sent let donors know their gift was received and appreciated

- Automate immediate emails with tax receipt to begin cultivation

- Continue to tag and thank donors individually on social media

➤ **93% of donors** would **give again after a prompt and personal thank you**, followed up later with a meaningful report on their gift at work

Source: Cygnus Applied Research

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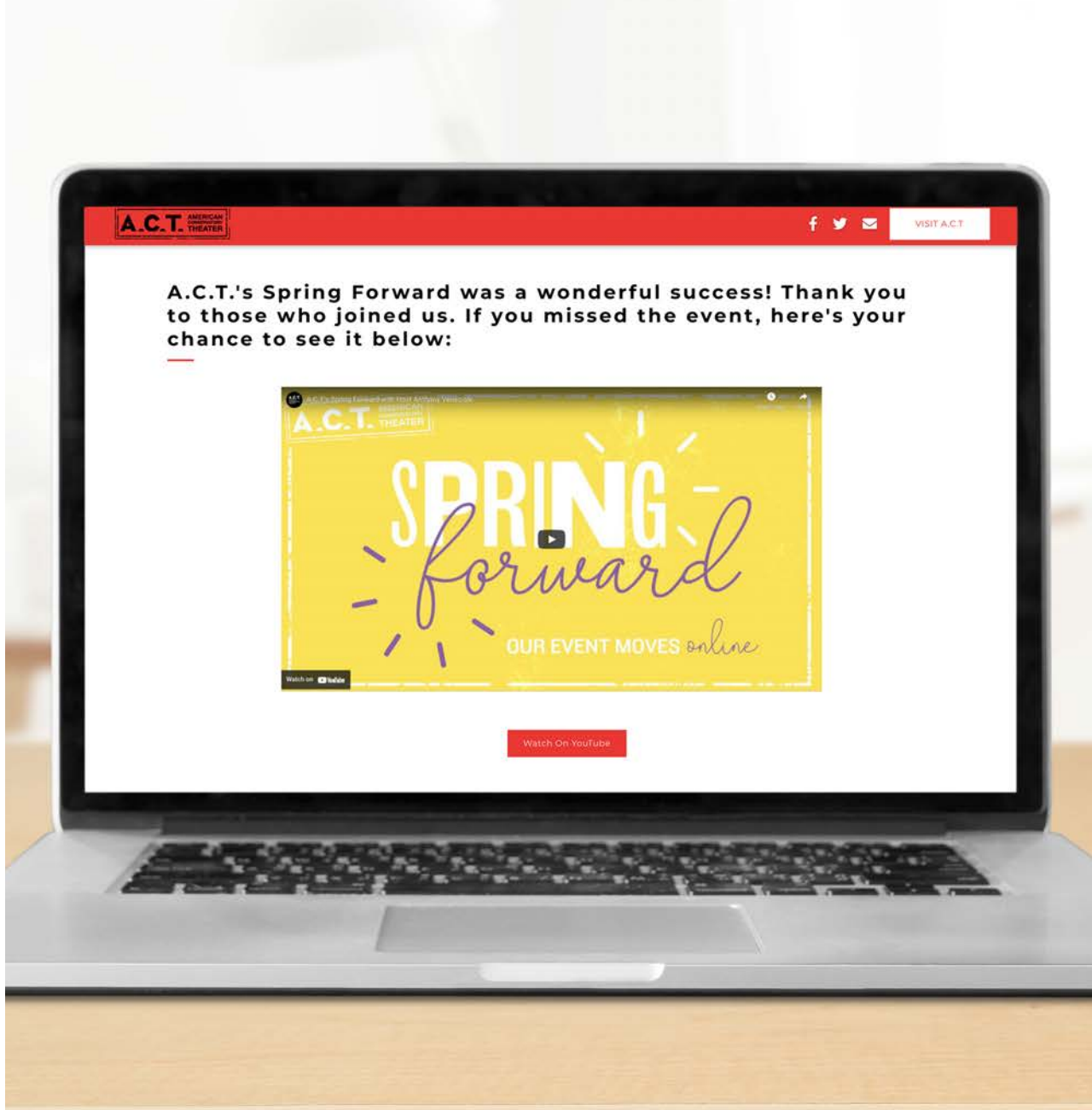
Going Forward:

Combining Virtual with Live Events

- Add virtual components to future in-person fundraisers

- Helps increase reach beyond your immediate community

- Enables those who can't attend to participate

- Livestream your in-person program with presenters and live event thermometer

- Get creative with virtual-only components – pre-show entertainment, behind the scenes prep, pre-event games and challenges
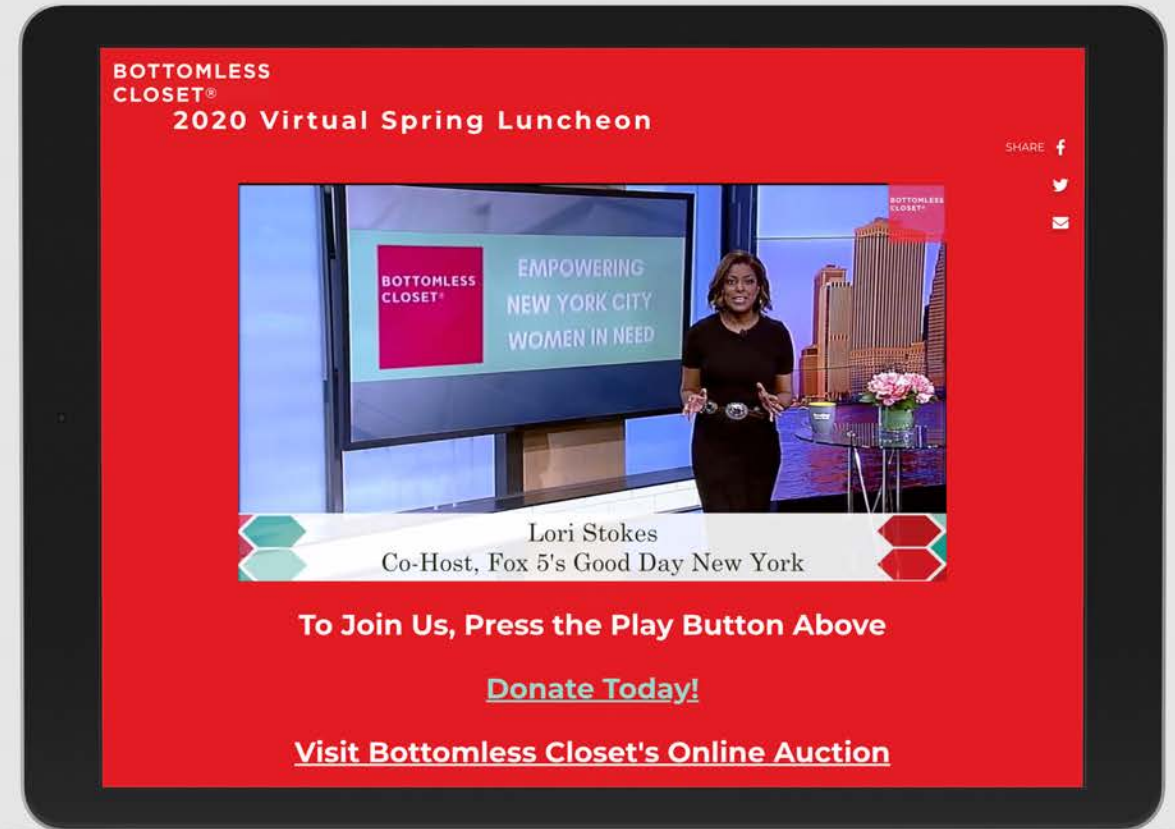
Now that we've seen the **steps needed to create a successful virtual fundraiser**, let's see how a nonprofit like yours, hosted their own virtual event.

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VIRTUAL EVENT IN ACTION: BIRCH FAMILY SERVICES

Jack Costello
Development Manager
**Birch Family Services**

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About Birch Family Services

Birch Family Services empowers individuals with autism and developmental disabilities to lead fulfilling lives. We are committed to offering:

- Individualized and Person-centered education, from early childhood through age 21

- Customized employment, internships, job training, and placement

- Life skills training, community connections, family education, and other support

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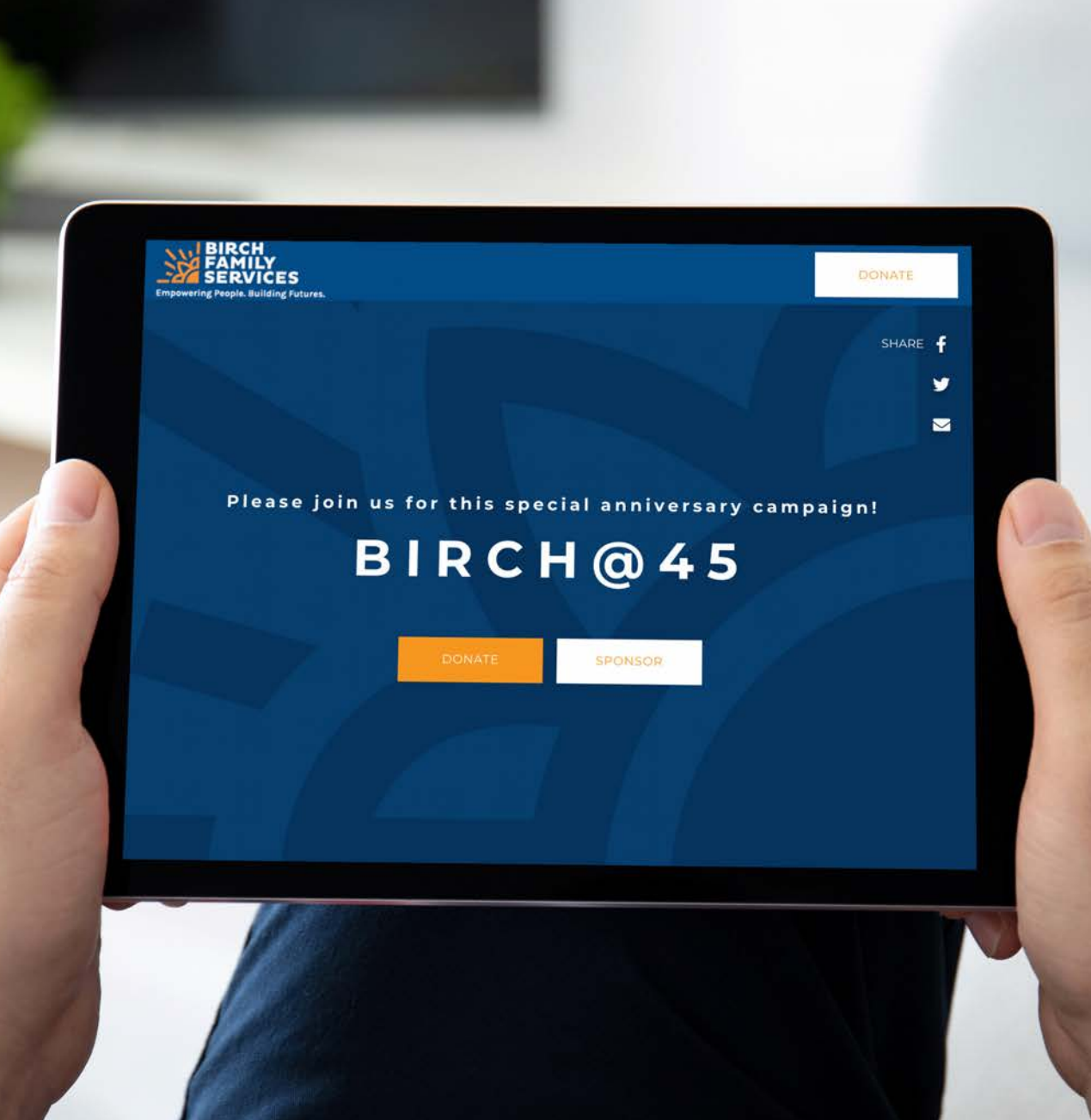
Anniversary Campaign

Fall of 2020, 45 days of activities to celebrate 45 years of service.

- Included Virtual 5K and Gala

- 5K held at the halfway mark

- Participation in 5K provided entry to Gala

- Past 7 years 5K was in-person

Virtual Event:
Promotion

- Started planning 1 month prior to event

- Well thought-out social media and email campaigns

- Outreach, meetings and getting word out

- Provided support on why events were important

- Encouraged people to leverage their personal networks

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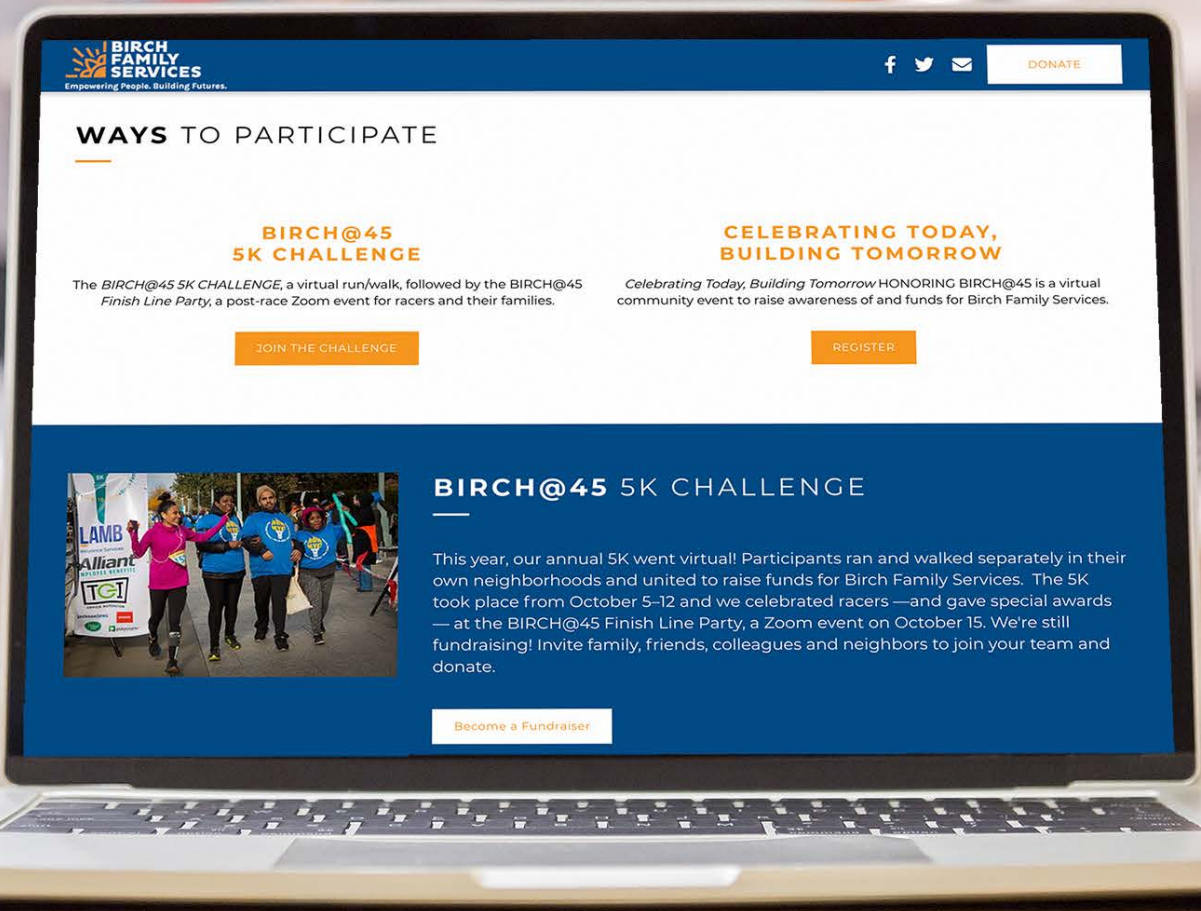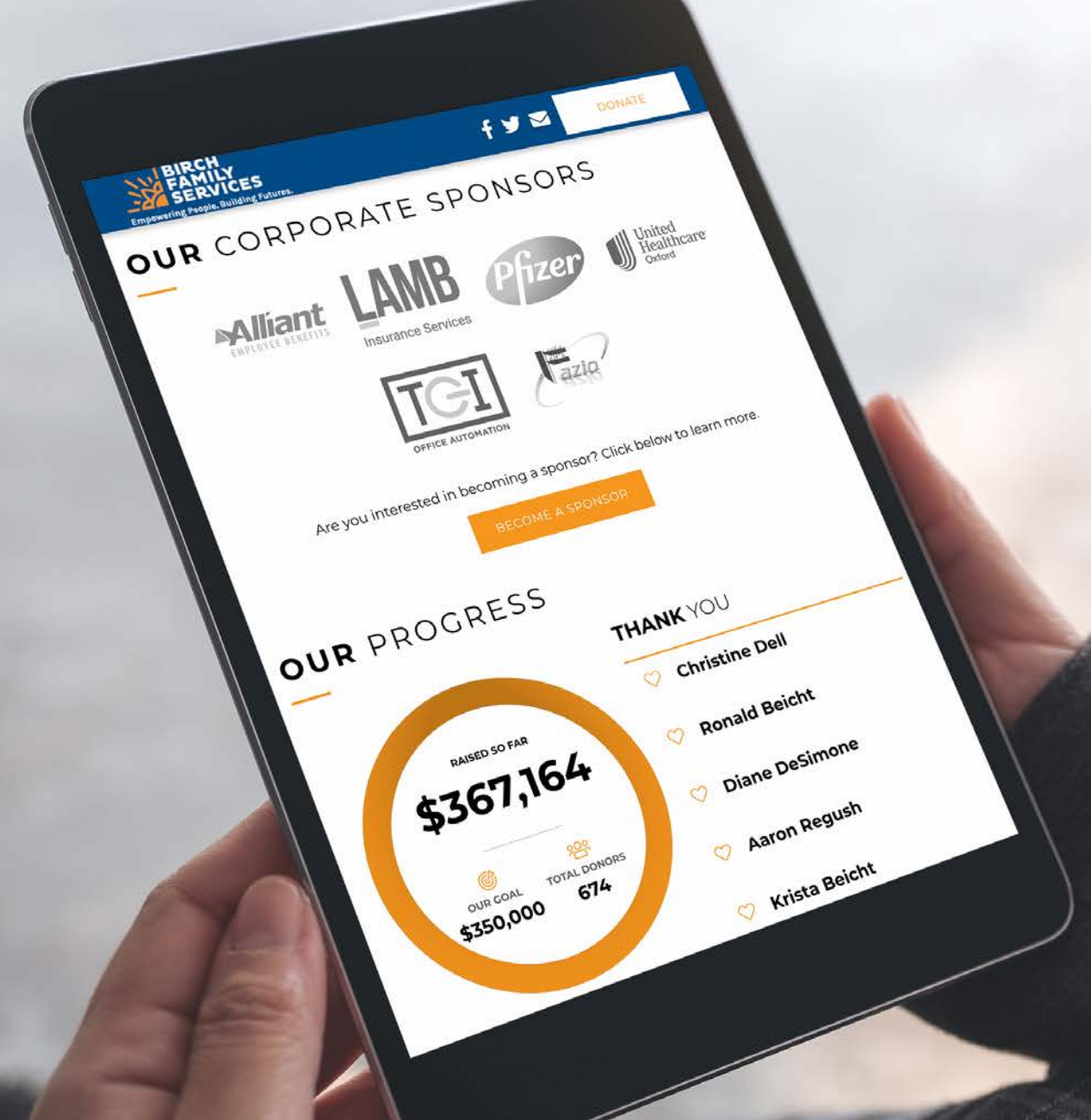
Virtual Gala:
Landing Page

- Used for campaign details, registration and promotion

- Sponsor pages with separate ticket options

- One link to send to all fundraisers, donors and sponsors

- Used creative design elements to boost engagement

- Presentation: videos sharing program information, experiences, and why support the mission

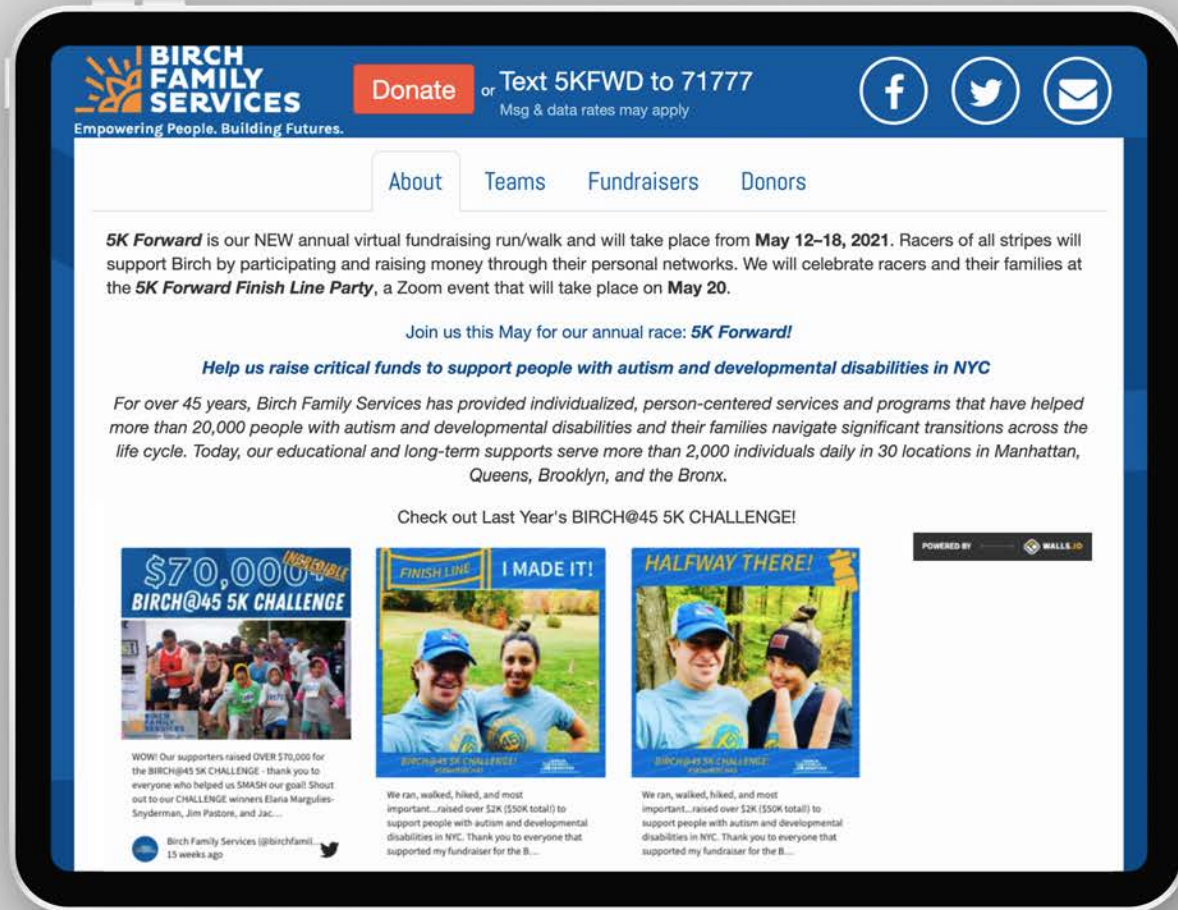MobileCause

Virtual 5K Fall 2020:

Peer-to-Peer Fundraising

- Ramped up P2P with the 5K held virtually
- Used participant images and videos in gala presentation

Results:

➢ **$83,000 raised** for P2P 5K (original goal $25,000)

➢ **87 fundraisers** who were more engaged and challenged themselves more

➢ **Enabled new participants and donors** across U.S.

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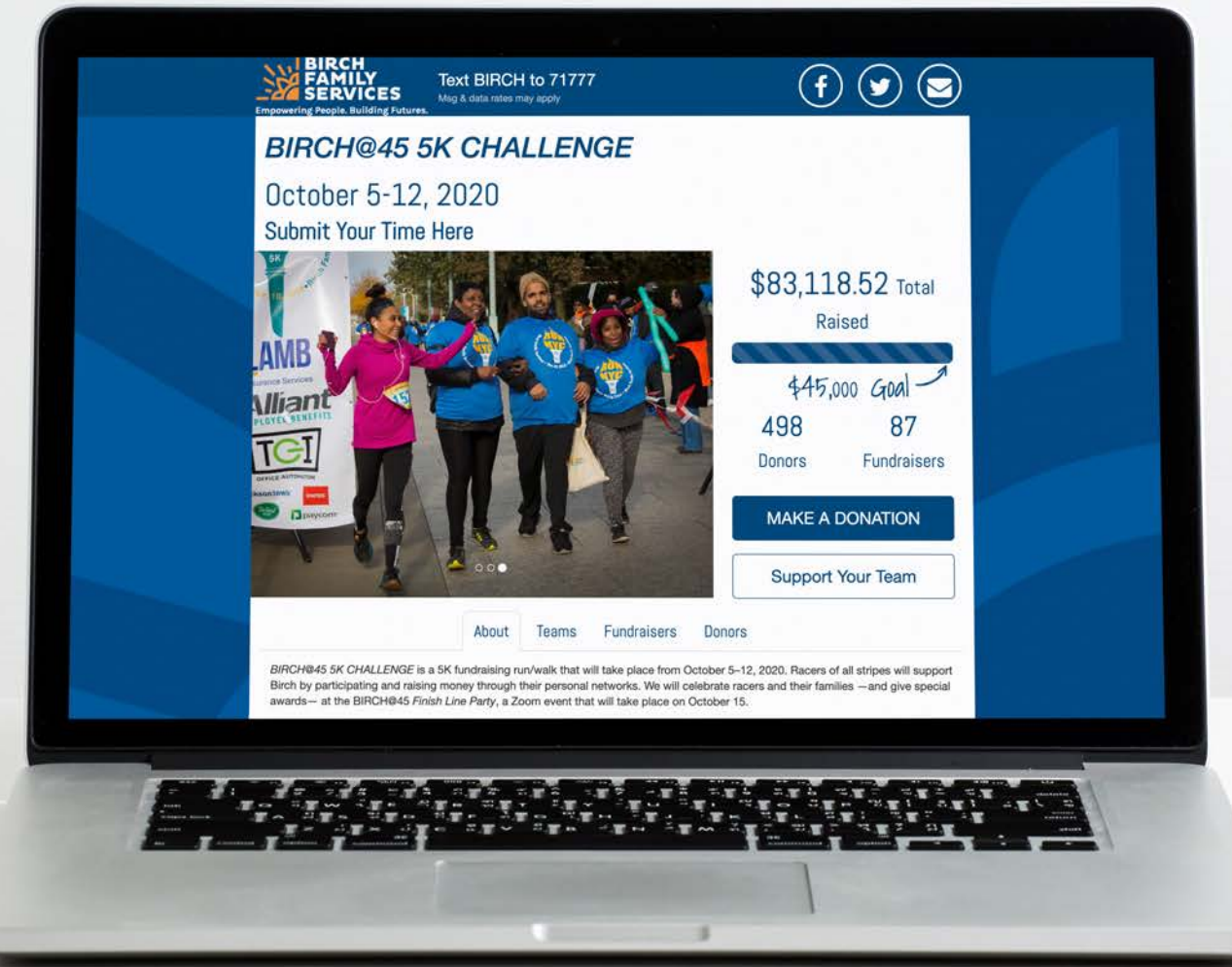
Virtual 5K Spring 2021:

Changes Going Forward

- Starting earlier - 3 months out

- Using text messaging to engage donors, encourage sharing

- Getting sponsors in early

- Sharing posts from 2020 virtual 5K when registering

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No matter what type of virtual fundraiser you have in mind, **these strategies and tools** will allow you to easily **host a successful event**, create connections and continue fighting for your cause.

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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Work on your campaign with our Digital Fundraising Strategy team: http://mobilecause.me/dfsinfo

training@mobilecause.com

Customer Support Team: support@mobilecause.com