

# Introduction

It was 7.00am on a Saturday morning and the clock radio was blaring. During the blur of the morning snooze I heard Sydney locals talking on the radio station advertising the community events for that weekend. There was the local classical concert starring the famous Concertmaster and his wife daughter and the first public appearance of his son playing chamber music the Jaguar Drivers Concourse Day featuring thousands of polished cars the garden show the requisite Lions Club fundraiser and sausage sizzle ..... and then the blur stopped.

“Such and such.... Public School would like to thank everyone involved in last week’s fete which raised \$42,000.” The radio announcer blurted out the dollars again with the quip “Well done that’s a lot of money.” I belted my husband who was less than amused, and said; “How did they raise so much money and we could only muster a few thousand at our dinner dance.”

From this wake up call our guide was born.

How did they do it? How could one school only raise \$1,000 from a trivia night when a private school raised \$95,000 from their ball? Although there are differences between richer and poorer communities the private school used a slick, well organised and professionally coached team so they got the most out of their effort, their assets and their attendees.

It is not the amount of money or wealth your community has which dictates the funds you can raise. We discovered less well off communities who were slick fundraising machines and wealthy environments that did nothing. It is all about what fundraising events you choose and how you sell them to the community. Everyone has to buy products, regardless of their budget. Why not buy them for a fundraiser? I love the school that orders Christmas hams in bulk, sells them to the school community at a competitive retail price and pockets the difference for fundraising dollars.

Most people go out. Your task is to identify their going out budget and make the event suit the budget. Trivia nights with a \$15 per head cover charge can raise just as much as a ball with a \$75 cover charge.

How do some schools raise \$10,000 from a simple lamington drive? How do they choose which supplier of chocolates is the best? Do we go for the old fashioned blocks or the brand names? How come we seem to have to put our hands in our pockets every week for something when other schools only have two events a year? Why is it always the same crowd at everything? How can we get more people to participate and therefore share the load?

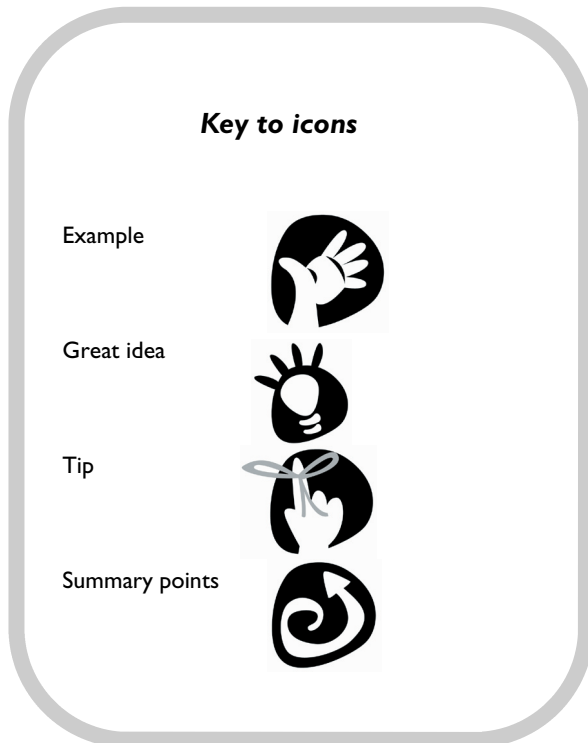
How can we find chiefs to do the organising? Do we have too many Indians?

The list of questions goes on and we hope this guide will help.

Firstly, we are pitching this guide at schools, clubs and community groups. When I went looking for books, magazines or research materials devoted to these groups; there were just no resources. Sure I could buy “How to write successful fundraising letters” and “How to produce fabulous fundraising events” for US\$30.00 plus postage. These books -all American- seemed to be devoted to the professional charity fundraiser with more budget than we had.

Secondly this is a Guide. A simple “how to” with tips, ideas and real examples. This wasn’t an academic exercise and although I have some experience, nothing that compares to the hundreds of experts that we interviewed. We interviewed “coal face” school fundraisers and co-ordinators that have managed the chocolate drive or the dinner dance committee. We spoke to a few top end of town fundraisers for their tips.





Finally we mixed this information in with current practices which lots of companies use to get teams to work better together.

It is not just the idea that makes a good fundraiser; it's also the implementation. Years of experience as a project manager have taught me that when teams of people work effectively together the outcome always exceeds expectations. And to top it off if a team works well together you have fun.

**There are two parts to our guide:**

In Part I, we cover all the practices that make for successful fundraising. From the strategy to the cleaning up we look at the process of fundraising. This is all about implementing the idea; meetings, recruitment of volunteers, managing teams, legal liabilities and permits. What are the tips from the experts on getting the most from our resources?

Part II focuses on all the ideas that we could find and print that could be used. We all know about the fetes and balls but how do we make them interesting and how do we make them exceed our expectations in terms of funds raised. Next year, will you try a medieval fair or a barn dance, an art auction or garden day, fifty cake stalls or a sausage sizzle, trivia nights or chocolate wheels? It's up to you to decide, which one is suitable for your community, but we will give you as much help as we can to make the decision making easier.

And like an investment strategy it often comes down to how much risk you are prepared to take.

Finally like any good fundraiser we would like to thank our sponsors. Please support our sponsors and advertisers who supply goods and services to our sector.

We would all prefer to have our education, sports and community clubs much better provided for. We could lobby government to increase spending, however; the budgets always seem to be squeezed. Several years ago when I was on an assignment at a major hospital, we were asked by government to cut our budget by 25%. That was the equivalent of 200 beds in the hospital. This was an impossible task and the board made an immediate call to the fundraisers to send out a direct mail campaign for bequests. Our public education budget seems the same. We would like it to be different but it isn't. In a recent paper the federal government even acknowledged that Infants and Primary School students were historically under funded. The money to run our schools has to come from somewhere...fundraising.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), latest figures indicate that the non-profit sector contributed the equivalent of \$30 billion or 4.7% to Australia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The non-profit sector or "social economy" contributed more to our National GDP than communications, mining, defence, agriculture, forestry and fishing. It also makes a greater contribution than accommodation, cafes and restaurants and cultural and recreational services. The Education and Research sector is about one third of this and the contribution of schools must be huge. In the USA schools raise on average US\$30 per child. With 3.2 million school age children in Australia that's nearly \$100 million.

Let's hope this guide will help you make raising billions and more much **much** easier.

Good luck team.



Evelyn Moolenburgh