



How to make a successful fundraising cookbook

How put your cookbook together depends on how much control you feel you need as you work on it. Some groups have asked one person or a small group to do the inputting, others have asked the whole community. Here are a couple of ways you might organize the project:

Announcing The Project

Tell people what you are going to do, what the time frame is and how they can help you. If it is a school, make sure the children feel involved and that the cookbook project is something they are helping to make. They will be proud of it and eager to have their family and friends buy some. It's a general fundraising truth that the more people are involved in a project the more cookbooks you will sell.

Entering The Recipes

OPTION 1

You can form a small team of six people. Two would be in charge of

collecting the recipes, stories and photos and three would be in charge of entering the material. The last person can proof the book once it is ready.

OPTION 2

OR you invite families to help you make the cookbook by filling in the different categories in the cookbook on a first come first served basis. Don't forget to ask "please don't add a second recipe for the same thing" (to avoid multiple entries of chocolate cake)".

OPTION 3

OR You ask every family for three to five recipes telling them that you will use two of the recipes but would like to have a choice so that you can make sure you have recipes from each category of food. Choose the recipes you would like each family to submit and then sign the families up as contributors to the site so they can help by submitting their recipes.

You Have Asked For Recipes But Not Enough Have Come In

This happens when people feel overwhelmed and don't feel able to choose which recipe to give you. I have found that if you ask people for specific categories — starting with an easy category — they feel that you are asking them for something easier and they respond more quickly. Once you start to get recipes you can send out a note telling the community what you have and then asking for a particular recipe or category that is missing. I think you will see that this works because they feel that the project is well under way and they don't want to miss out.

How Many Pages Should We Have?

An ideal size is about 150 – 180 pages. Remember that the book has a max of two recipes per page so that it looks professional and not crowded. The number of recipes and art work or photos will depend on the size of your community. If it starts to get too large you can always make another one the next year, just remember to put a date on the cookbook as you may find that they are such fun that you will want to do one every year.

Remember also that our pricing is based on page count, so while you may be tempted to put together a 400 page book, you will be paying so much more for that book, and that is going to dig into your profits. My experience is that there isn't a perceived increased in value for a thicker book, but the price tag goes up!

Photos, Children's Drawings Etc.

When working with a large group of people these are best collected, scanned and submitted by the editing team so that the quality is the same for all the images.

The amount of control that you would need over the process would depend on your particular community — how large it is and how well they respond to a group project.

If you have too many photos and the cost is getting too high, consider making a grid as the divider page, or having a few photo pages within a section or as its own section, where you can have grids of photos.

Can I have advertising pages?

Yes, you can put anything you want on your pages. If you are able to sell add pages to your book, that's more money of your organization! We have several photo layouts that you can use to sell full page ads, half page ads, quarter page etc... Just get the art from the advertiser and plop it into a photo page at the back (or anywhere) or your book.

Final Proofreading

I strongly suggest you print your cookbook file to check for typos and spacing errors, which are often difficult to see on a computer screen. Just before you are ready to proof the cookbook you send out an email to everyone involved telling them that the cut-off date is such and such. When the day arrives you change all the contributor's passwords so that no one but the editor in chief can make any changes. You can also remove them as contributors. Print out your cookbook by clicking on PREVIEW BOOK and printing the downloaded file.

What Price Should We Charge?

Most fundraisers add about 100% to the cost price of the cookbook except if it is a very thick one in which case they add about 60%. This is a good reason not to publish a big book of 350 pages, but keep it to between 150 – 180 pages.

I sometimes think it's a good idea to start with the price you want to charge, and work backwards from there to figure out how big a book you can afford to make. You can play around with the price calculator to see what the variables are.

Taking Orders- online and in person.

A very good way to judge how many books you will be able to sell is to first order a small quantity — say, 5 or 10 so that the team can show them and take orders. Or even just a single book you can use at an event to take order. When you are ready you place your order. If you need still more books at a later date you can reorder any time.

If you are selling online, [email me](#) for a mini PDF of your book that you can use as a teaser- I can put together a PDF of your cover, table of contents and two or three pages of the book. There is no charge do to this!

Note that orders of more than 200 books automatically get a proof copy prior to printing the bulk, just to double triple quadruple check!

Selling To Your Community

THE PRESS

If you live in a small to mid-size community you will find that the local press will be eager to write about you very special cookbook. Blogs and forums are also a great way to get the word out, especially if you are selling online as you can provide a selling link.

LOCAL TALK RADIO

Local radio is a great way to get the word out, and they are often looking for stories and causes to promote and talk about!

WHO DO YOU KNOW?

When you put a group of people in a room and ask them to list places where the cookbook could be sold, you will be surprised at how many outlets you will find. The local bank, drugstore, grocery store and many others. Even the bookstore may agree to carry them if you give them a % of the mark-up.

LIBRARY

I have a soft spot for libraries and I would like to suggest that you give your local library a copy of your cookbook for their cookbook collection. They might even sell some if you donated part of the proceeds to the library.

HISTORIC SOCIETY

This isn't really selling — but it would be nice to give a copy of your cookbook to the local historic society because, after all, you are making history.

Advice from our members

What to do when hardly any recipes come in

So, what I did..... I had been asking since last may for recipes.....finally decided to print out a recipe "card" in a large page format. I sent one home with each child. By the next day (!) I had about 50 and by the end of the week I had more. It blew me away. Really taught me a lesson; If you give too many choices.....nada; you give 1 choice "BAM"! It really worked. This week I am sending home an "illustration" sheet for artwork.

Hope it works!

– Kate Blasingame, White Elementary PTO