



Promo

“Don't be afraid to throw your PledgeMe page out there...at anyone. You have nothing to lose by telling people about it and you'd be surprised at the amount and variety of people that are interested and will contribute.”

What matters in crowdfunding is your ability to convince your crowd to pledge. OK. We know that sounds obvious, but it truly is half the battle. We all have crowds. We have friends, family and fans who can pledge. The challenge is how you convince your crowd to pledge. The wrong way is to send the same copy/paste generic message to all your Facebook contacts.

The right way is to post human, engaging and quirky updates about our progress on your Facebook profile. That's just one example. Don't do the “hard sell”, but invite your crowd to participate. Here are some ways to get your crowd involved:

Directly

- 1. Pledge Drive:** This is when your crowdfunding team comes together for a limited time in the same room with the goal of raising enough money to reach (all of or part of) your funding goal. Think it like a good ol' fashioned telethon. Only your team is using a plethora of 21st century communication tools. Make sure they have plenty of food, water and wifi! We believe the combination of a limited timeframe, close proximity and funding goal is an excellent motivator. And fun! It motivates your team to perform better than if they worked independently.
- 2. Email:** The power of your words – Email 20-30 close friends and family. Be personal. We recommend that you send the emails to 20-30 people separately. It must be personalized to them. It cannot be the same generic copy/paste email message. Ask them to support you by pledging whatever they can afford. Teach them how to share your project. Telling a neighbour about your project is just as good as a share on Facebook, if Facebook isn't their thing.
- 3. Phone:** The power of your voice - Ring 20-30 close friends and family. The phone is powerful because it's hard to say no on the phone, especially the person knows you and your phone manner is polite, warm and friendly. Don't apply any pressure. Be light and breezy. Don't ask “How's life?” “What have you been up to?” And then awkwardly segue into your pitch. You will be “that guy” who only asks when he wants something. Be honest about why you're calling up front.
- 4. Skype & Google Hangouts:** A video chat is twice as powerful because they can hear your voice and see your face. Skype is powerful given its popularity, Google Hangouts is powerful, too. Its screenshare features allows you to demonstrate how to pledge. And you can record the video as a tutorial to send to those friends and family members who are not tech savvy.
- 5. Text & IM:** Urgency - Text and IMs should be used sparingly. Remember that to receive a text or IM often results in an alert on the recipient's phone. This can be invasive. The recipient may look forward to receiving a text from you, but then get disappointed when they discover you're trying to “sell” something. You could choose to use text or IM as follow up to a phone conversation. When a friend or family member promised to pledge, send a text or IM as a reminder - but make it personal.
- 6. Networking:** Attend events. Set up coffee dates. Go to parties. Whatever gets you in front of your crowd. Use the opportunity to tell people about your campaign. We find that the appropriate time to pitch is when somebody asks you “What have you been up to?” “What are you working on?” Keep your reply short and sweet. Don't bore them. Raise their curiosity enough so that they ask questions about your campaign. It's better to be asked about your campaign than to “sell” it.

Social Media

The purpose of using social media is to tell the story of your campaign. Tell the story of how you went from “WOA” to “GO”! However, to tell your story effectively using social media, we recommend that you create highly engaging content perfectly adapted to specific social media platforms. That is content tailor made for Facebook, Twitter and many more. Listed below are the many more possibilities. Some obvious possibilities. Some we hope to introduce to you. You don't need to use everything. Be strategic, but tell your story. Make it a journey. Don't spam.

1. **Facebook:** 80% of New Zealand's online population visit Facebook. New Zealand the highest proportion of the online population who visit Facebook compared to Australia (74%), the USA (69%) and the UK (68%). So, it makes sense to leverage New Zealand's most popular social network to promote your campaign. We believe that your personal profile is more valuable to your campaign than a dedicated Facebook page. Send personalized Facebook messages to your friends. Post updates to your campaign, post a link to your campaign from your Facebook profile.

2. **Twitter:** Due to the real time nature of Twitter, it's a powerful tool for creating urgency. Use it wisely at the start and end of your campaign. For example, at the start of your campaign, you can create buzz by tweeting/anticipating the launch of your campaign. The goal is to arouse enough curiosity about what you're launching and why you're launching it. Near the end of your campaign, remind your Twitter followers how much you still need to raise and how much time you have left. The feeling of “time is running out” may just convince that apathetic person to pledge at last minute.
3. **LinkedIn:** Post a link to your campaign from your LinkedIn profile in the same way you would on Facebook. The difference with LinkedIn is its professional community. So, you may emphasize how this campaign could move the needle on your career or emphasize why your campaign is attractive to entrepreneurs and business people. You could also target your campaign to specialized LinkedIn groups or particular companies. A fleshed out LinkedIn profile will quickly establish credibility and inspire those people who are not sure about you, to pledge.

4. **Instagram:** Gorgeous Instagram photos and videos are a great way of updating your crowd on your progress or showing your gratitude. Find a visual way of saying “Thanks!” Post a photo to your Instagram profile and says thanks to a group of pledgers. Or, post a photo via Instagram Direct, and say thanks to an individual pledger. Incorporate Instagram Direct into a high level reward. Or, use Instagram video to tell a story about how your idea will make a difference.
5. **Snapchat:** Snapchat gets laughed off as the “sexting” app, but it's the only app that almost guarantees attention. Because the recipient has mere seconds to view the photo or image, the recipient can't help but take a look. And Snapchat tells you if the recipient has opened the snap or not. Add text, filters or doodle on your snaps. Snaps are only temporary so this an opportunity to be silly or quirky. Or, use Snapchat stories to give your crowd exclusive updates.
6. **Tumblr:** You could use Tumblr as a campaign blog. Post little pieces of content that tell the story of your campaign. Post funny animated .gifs. Post interviews with your team mates. Post links to media mentions. Post amusing anecdotes. Open up your ask box to start a dialogue with pledgers.
7. **Pinterest:** Pin your pitch video. Pin your rewards. Include link backs to your campaign to drive traffic from Pinterest to your campaign. Pin images that inspire you to do what you do best.
8. **Vine:** The six second loop videos you can post on Vine are the perfect way of creating and sharing anything from stop motion animation to short skits about your campaign.

Media

1. **Press Releases:** Your goal is to gain media attention and pick up from print, television and web outlets. For example, your local newspaper or ONE news runs a story on your campaign. The exposure from this media attention can increase your likelihood of gaining new pledges. Think of media as a giant lever. If you have a small crowd or you've successfully leveraged your crowd already, then you need to find a media outlet with a bigger crowd than you, and successfully leverage that. A good strategy is to send targeted press releases to media outlets drawing attention to the parts of your campaign that would be interesting to that media outlet's target audience.
2. **Blogs:** Make friends with bloggers. You should consider creating an electronic press kit containing all the materials (high res images, great quotes and statistics) that make it easy for a blogger to blog about you. You want them to include a link to your campaign and/or embed your pitch video. A mention or shoutout on a blog is great, but the objective should be to drive more traffic and attention to the campaign, where people can pledge of course.

