



Community Impact Bucks

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Fundraising Information Sheet - Running a Tombola

Introduction

Running a tombola is one of the most traditional ways of fund-raising and one of the most popular. And they are extremely effective at making money. Unlike a raffle, where you might need to have at least one high-value quality prize, sell tickets in advance and build an element of suspense, the lure of the tombola is instant.

Planning and Preparation

A tombola is not a stand-alone attraction – they are usually part of a larger fete or fair that somebody else has organised. So the first step is to find if there are any suitable events taking place in your area.

A general tombola can include anything. And they're fun as you might win a bottle of wine or a tin of beans – or nothing.

Themed tombolas are popular but make sure that you match the type of prize to the type of people who will be at the event.

Examples:

Bottles to include alcohol – for adults only.

Food – jars of jam, packets of biscuits, tins of soup (make sure everything is in date and in undamaged containers.)

A children's tombola – toys, books, etc

Chocolate and sweets.

Cosmetics

You will need to recruit people to run the tombola. Two to each tombola should be enough – one to sell the tickets, the other to help winners retrieve their prizes, and replenish the display. If it's a long event, organise a rota.

Make sure you get all the items to the venue in good time. Ideally, you should have collected all the prizes the day before so you have time to fix the tickets to them.

What you need to know

Tombolas use the same kind of tickets as raffles, where each has a counterfoil or twin ticket. Unlike a raffle, not all the tickets are potential winners, usually just ones ending in a 5 or 0. These tickets are fixed to the prizes, then their counterfoils plus all the remaining unused tickets are rolled in a tombola barrel or shaken in a bag or box.

You don't need a licence to run a tombola but they are classed as small scale lotteries and there are certain rules that apply. However, the restrictions (e.g. the total prize fund cannot exceed £500 and you cannot spend more than £100 on prizes) are unlikely to apply to most tombolas.

There are no age restrictions although children can't buy tickets if the prizes include alcohol.

Make sure your chosen charity or whoever runs the venue is happy for you to fundraise in a way that involves gambling.

Advertising

The tombola will be advertised as part of the larger event but you will need to make sure that whoever is doing the advertising includes all the details of the tombola.

Ask your members to spread the word to friends and family.

Planning the display

You will need tables on which to display the prizes. Try and get hold of a brightly-coloured cloth, banner or drape to attract attention.

Have notices telling people the price of the tickets.

Place your items in the numerical order of the tickets – it will help you find the prizes more quickly.

You will need a float and some money bags.

Raffle tickets.

A tombola barrel or other containers to put the raffle tickets in.

Set your Price

Don't charge too much a go – to encourage people to have several goes.

Decide the ratio of winning to non-winning tickets.

On the Day

Ask helpers to arrive in plenty of time so that everything is ready before your customers arrive.

Make sure everyone knows what is expected of them.

Have some brochures available to tell people about the organisation you're raising money for.

Afterwards

Make sure you have enough helpers to count the money – it's best practice to have at least two. Hand all proceeds to your charity as soon as possible.

Have enough helpers to clear up.

Make sure you thank everyone who has contributed to the event, and leave the venue tidy.

When you know how much has been raised, be sure to let anyone who donated prizes know too.

Useful References

The legislation regulating gambling in the UK is the Gambling Act 2005. This came fully into force in 2007. To check that what you are intending to do complies with the Act, see the Gambling Commission's website: www.gambling.commission.gov.uk

Books

Tried and Tested Ideas for local fundraising events, by Sarah Passingham ISBN 1 903991 37 4

Need to know? Fundraising, by Michael Norton ISBN 978 0 00 724665 6

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