



## Reasonable Cost Guidelines for Solicitation Activities

Solicitation Activity	Reasonable Cost Guidelines
Direct mail (acquisition)	\$1.25 to \$1.50 per \$1.00 raised
Direct mail (renewal)	\$0.20 to \$0.25 per \$1.00 raised
Membership associations	\$0.20 to \$0.30 per \$1.00 raised
Activities, benefits, and special events	\$0.50 per \$1.00 raised (gross revenue and direct costs only)*
Donor clubs and support group organizations	\$0.20 to \$0.30 per \$1.00 raised
Volunteer-led personal solicitation	\$0.10 to \$0.20 per \$1.00 raised
Corporations	\$0.20 per \$1.00 raised
Foundations	\$0.20 per \$1.00 raised
Special projects	\$0.10 to \$0.20 per \$1.00 raised
Capital campaigns	\$0.10 to \$0.20 per \$1.00 raised
Planned Giving	\$0.20 to \$0.30 per \$1.00 raised

Sources: For direct mail guidelines – Direct Mail Marketing Association. For planned giving – Norman S. Fink and Howard C. Metzler, *The Costs and Benefits of Deferred Giving* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982). For capital campaigns – American Association of Fund Raising Counsel, New York. The balance are derived from the author’s direct experience, research, and publications.

\*Benefit event cost allocations: to calculate bottom-line total costs and net proceeds from a benefit event, calculate and add the indirect and overhead support expenses to direct costs incurred and subtract from gross revenue.

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