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W E B I N A R



2025 State of *Nonprofit* *Auctions*: Trends, Insights & Data from the Field



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Meet Our Presenters



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Agenda

01

Key Findings

02

Auction Trends

03

How to Use the Data

04

Resources



Let's Put This Debate to Rest...



📌 Events can be a great ACQUISITION strategy.

🚫 They are NOT a great fundraising strategy.

🤔 In fact, I often brainstorm how to write a guide on "Death to Event Fundraising."

? I love [blurred] 's questions here.

In my experience:

🌟 Events often feel less intimidating than "asking for money," and there's a common belief that anyone can pull them off.

🗑️ But the true costs—both hard and soft—along with the opportunity costs, are rarely factored in.

🔄 Even when organizations host events, they often miss the chance to weave in meaningful mission moments, keeping things purely transactional with auctions, raffles, or trivia.

📚 Major gift programs often go unsupported—training is rare, and long-term investment is even rarer—simply because they take time.

⚠️ While events may seem like "fast money," they're often a losing game in the long run.

Names have been blurred to protect the innocent... and the not-so-innocent.

Let's Put This Debate to Rest...



[Name]
[Blurred text]

I very much appreciate this perspective and would offer a respectful “yes, and” to the conversation.

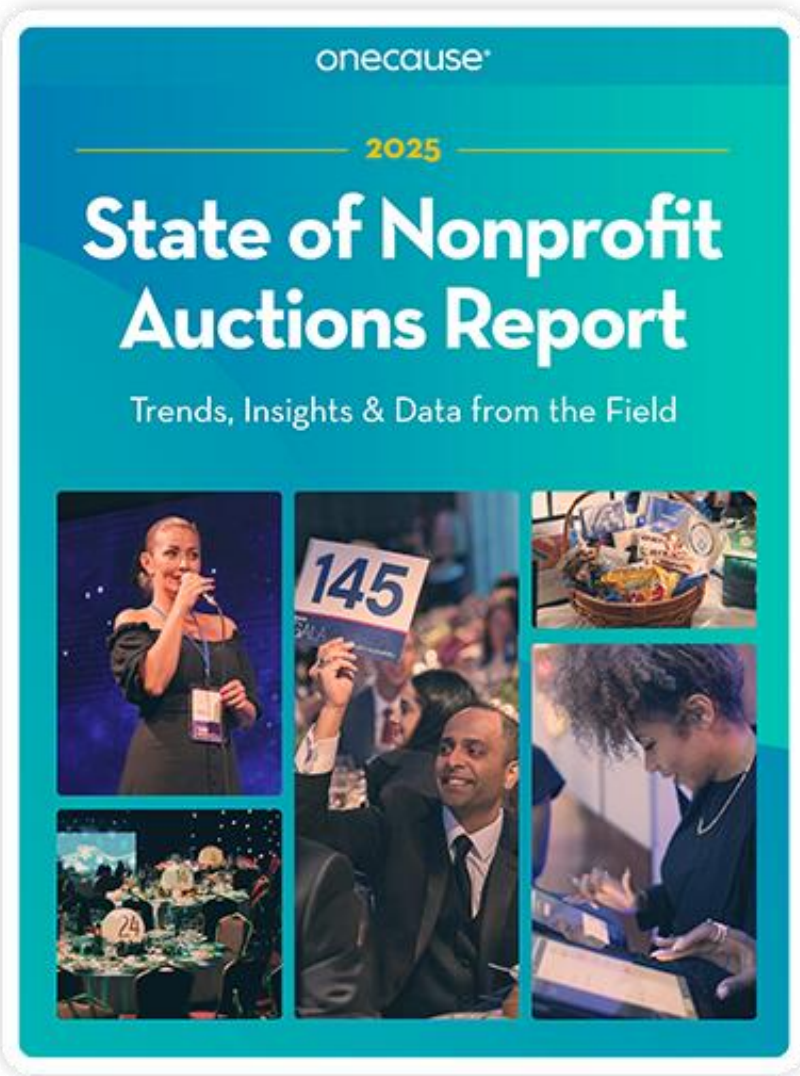
While I agree that events alone shouldn't be the sole fundraising strategy, they can still be incredibly powerful tools for acquisition, retention, and long-term growth—if done right. The key is having the infrastructure to support them, and executing with intention, clarity, and a deep understanding of your audience.

Galas, in particular, remain relevant—not just for revenue generation, but for elevating an organization's profile and cultivating new champions. Success comes when there's a clear financial goal, a disciplined approach to expenses, and thoughtful attention to the guest and donor experience. Fundraising elements like a well-executed “raise the paddle” (especially with pre-committed leadership gifts) can be game-changers in the room, inspiring collective generosity and delivering real impact.

It's not about whether we do events—but how we do them that matters most.

Names have been blurred to protect the innocent... and the not-so-innocent.

Key Findings



- 01 Auction Attendees Have Strong Potential to Become Long-term Donors
- 02 Revenue from Nonprofit Auctions Indicates Significant Opportunity for Growth
- 03 The Right Auction Items Lead to Higher Engagement and Bidding Activity
- 04 Auction Technology is Crucial to Increasing Engagement – Especially with Younger Donors



Auction Donors: An Overview



of social donors report participating in nonprofit auctions

On average these donors participated in

1.91 live auctions

1.72 silent auctions

in the last 12 months



49%

of auction donors gave more last year

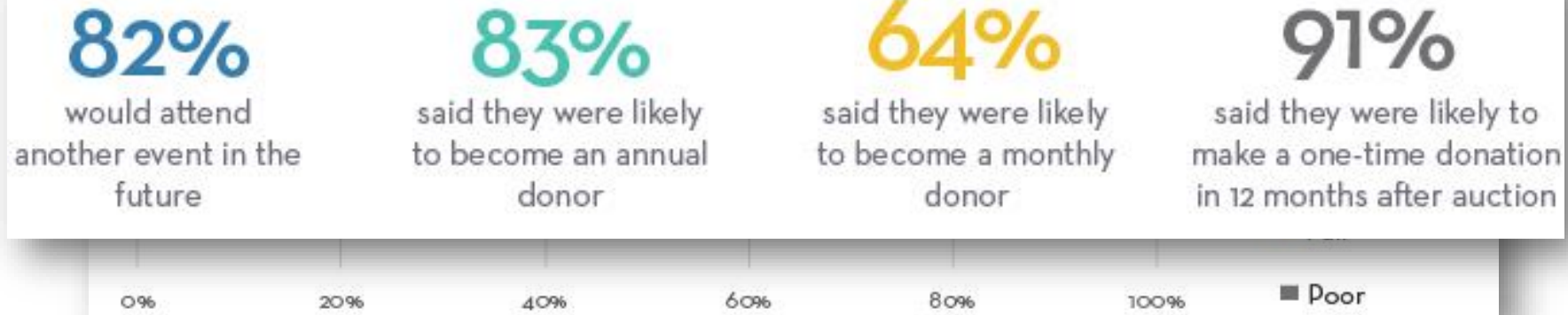


\$529

average donation from auction donors

Lifelong Donors, Not One-Time Bidders

Auction Attendee Satisfaction with Last Auction



Make it Easy, Make it Engaging

Attendees versus Nonprofit Professionals		
	Nonprofit professionals who said they think this is very easy for their attendees	Attendee ratings of "very easy"
Make a donation during the event	76%	Indicate how you want to receive or
Set a max bid on an item	66%	57%
Add and save your payment information	65%	
Place another bid after receiving an outbid notification	68%	
View a list of items you bid on	63%	
Place another bid after receiving an outbid notification	59%	
		to view in a way you prefer

How easy was it to do each of the following?
Percent rated as "very easy."

Make it Easy, Make it Engaging

<i>Testimonials from people benefiting from the organization's work</i>	63%
The silent auction	61%
The live auction	59%
The speakers	58%
Ability to socialize with other guests	58%
Hearing about the impact of your donation	54%
Live donation match opportunity	52%
Interactive activity or lessons	52%
The theme of the event	51%
Live entertainment (comedy, music, etc.)	51%
Viewing live results of a competition	50%
Ability to track the organization's progress towards fundraising goal	50%

Online posts leading up to the event	48%
Raffles	46%
Live comment/message feed	46%
Instant live recognition of donors	45%
Live viewing of a relevant documentary or film	45%
Interactive challenges or contests to join	44%
Happy hour	44%
A custom hashtag you could share in reference to the event	42%
Pre-recorded content/videos	39%
Casino-style games or games of chance	33%

How engaging was each of the following?
Percent rated as "very engaging."

Make it Appealing

87%

of nonprofits included live donation appeals during their auctions



65%

of auction pros said last appeal met or exceeded goal



62%

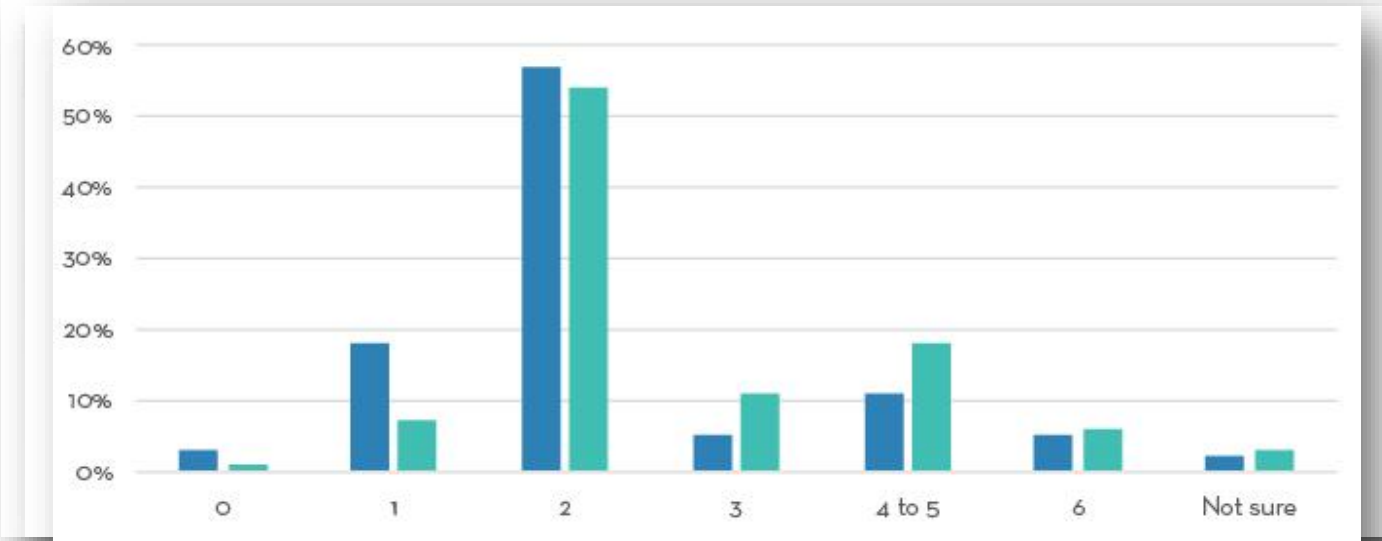
of auction attendees responded to a live appeal





Revenue Insights

- ✓ Engaging
- ✓ Consistent
- ✓ Dependable



In the last 12 months, has your org's revenue increased, decreased, or remained the same?
 How many live auctions/ silent auctions has your org sponsored in the last 12 months?
 In the NEXT 12 months, do you think your org's revenue will increase, decrease, or remain the same?

Bidding & Item Insights



90%

bid on items



46%

bid and won items

67



46.35

average number of
items in auction



5.36

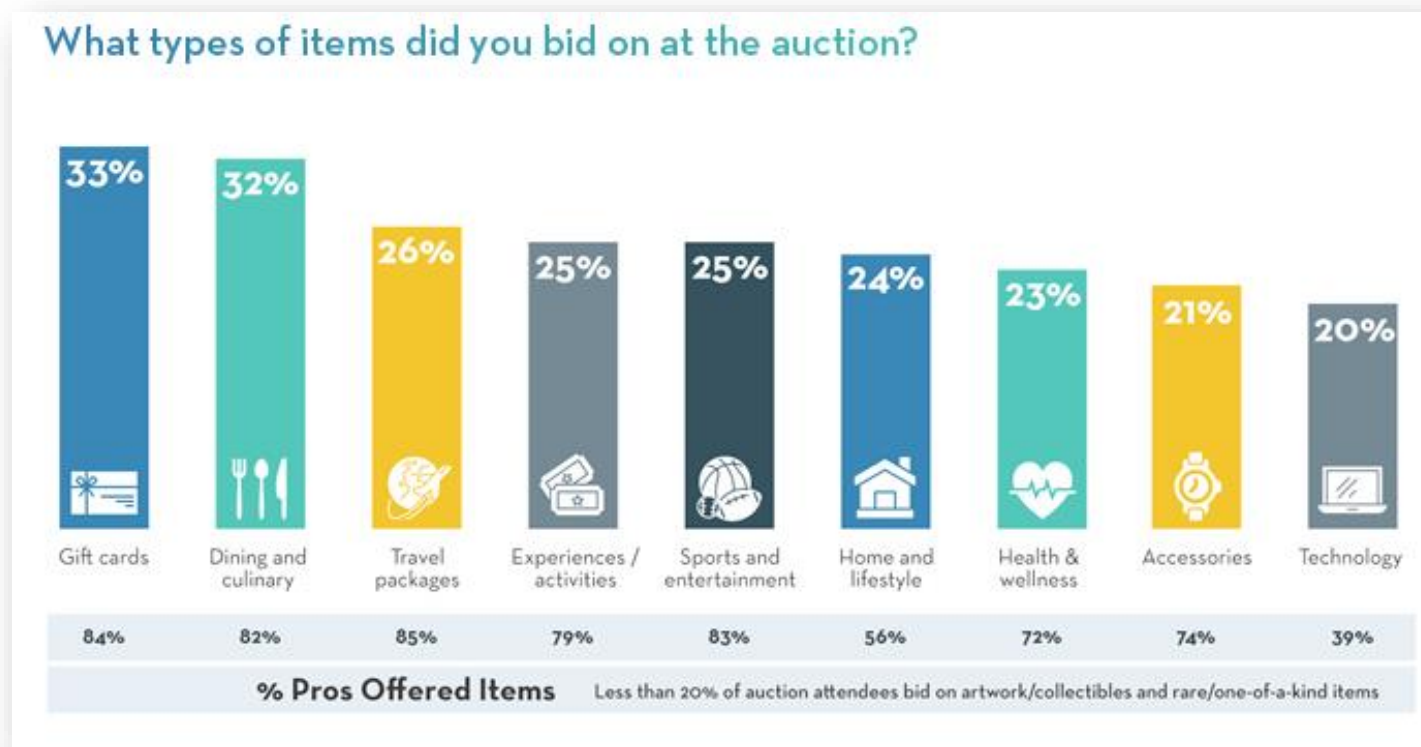
average bids per item



134.5%

% raised to item
value average

Bidding & Item Insights



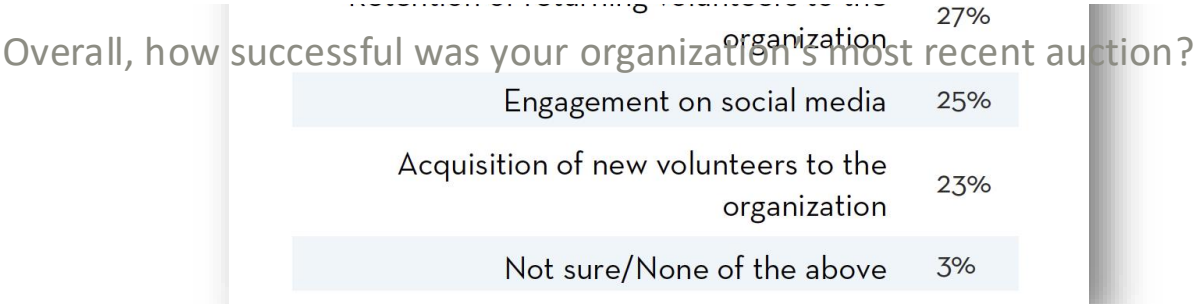
PRO TIP!


6 in 10 auction goers said it was important to be able to preview items before the auction/bidding opens.

Measuring Success



43% very successful

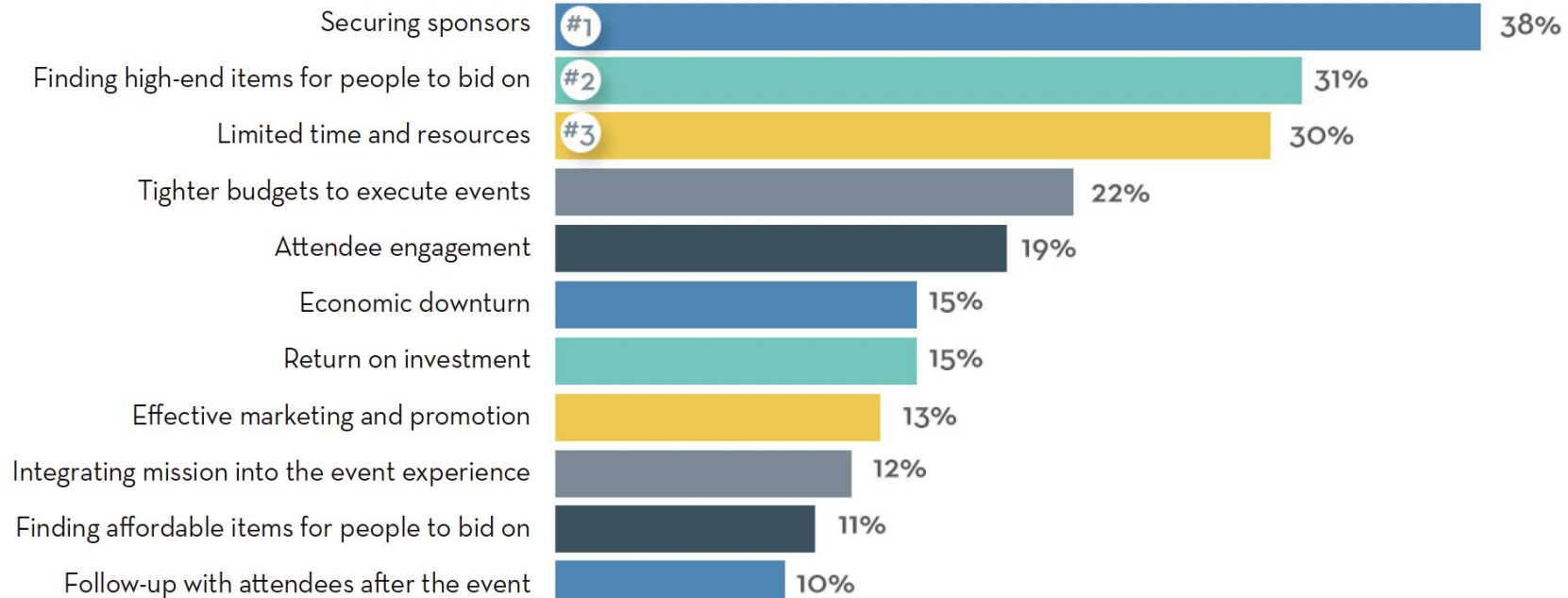


 **PRO TIP!**

Only 50% of nonprofits reported collecting feedback from attendees and donors, but 74% said positive feedback was viewed as part of auction success. Don't wait for donors to give you feedback - send out a post-event survey to learn what went well and what you can improve next time!

Challenges

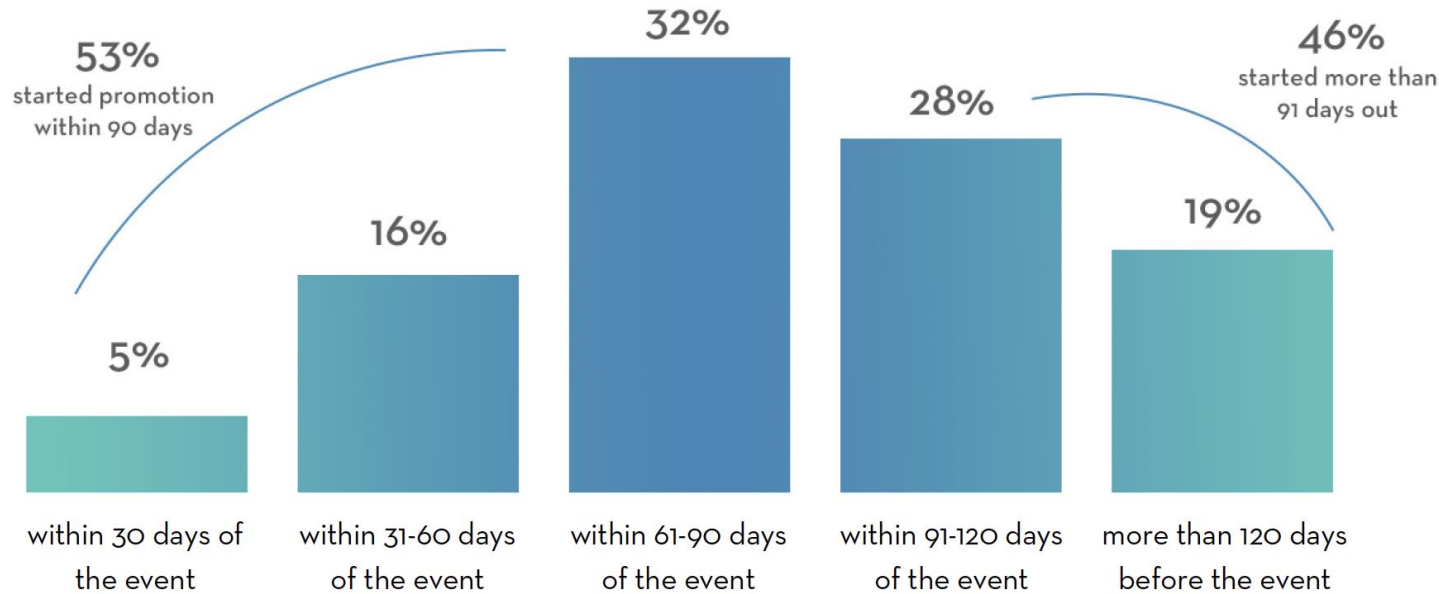
Auction Challenges



Which of the following, if any, are the biggest challenges to achieving your organization's goals related to events where there are auctions? Pick up to 3.

Spreading the Word

Auction Promotion Timing

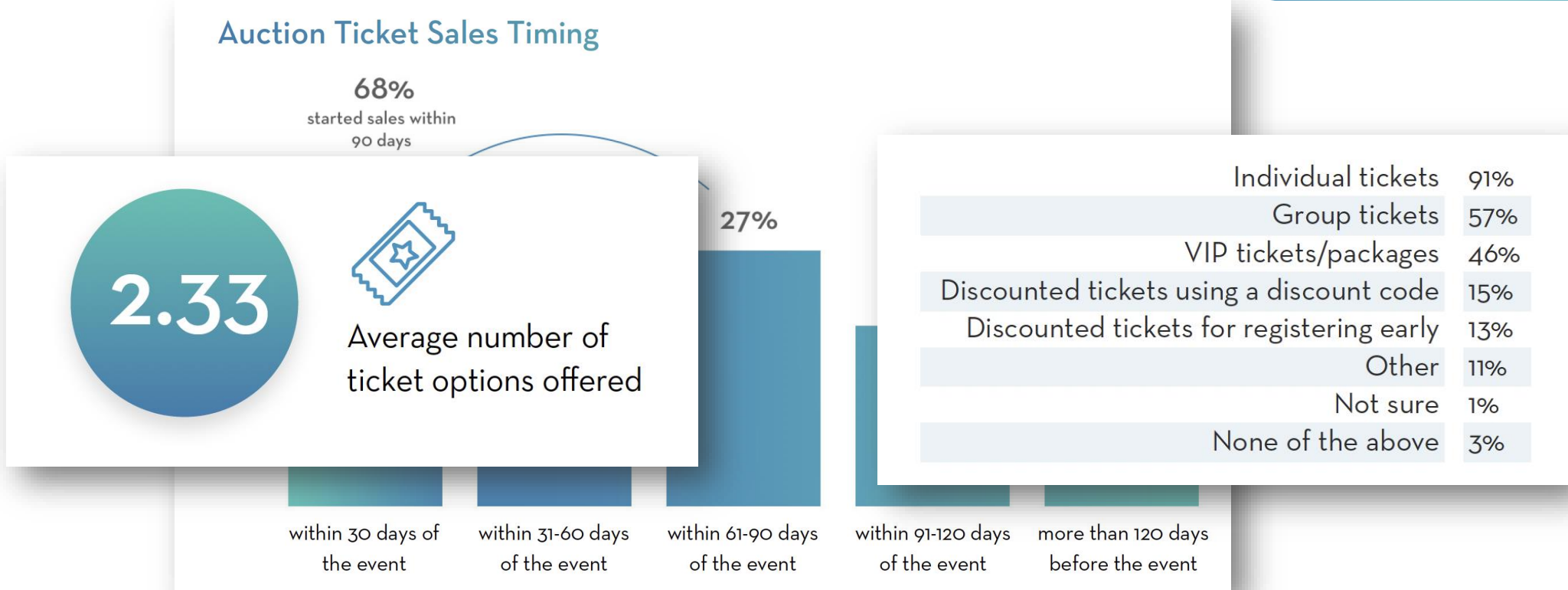


Most Effective Promotion Channels

Email	84%
Organic social media	56%
Auction site	54%
Printed mailer	43%
Text message	37%
Paid social media	23%
Press releases	18%
Digital ads	18%
Videos	15%
Print ads	9%
Influencer marketing	4%

Get Your Tickets!

Start ticket sales early to test ticket types & promos!



Thinking of your most recent auction, when did your organization start selling tickets?

Tech Matters



of auction attendees placed bids via mobile devices

Figure 23

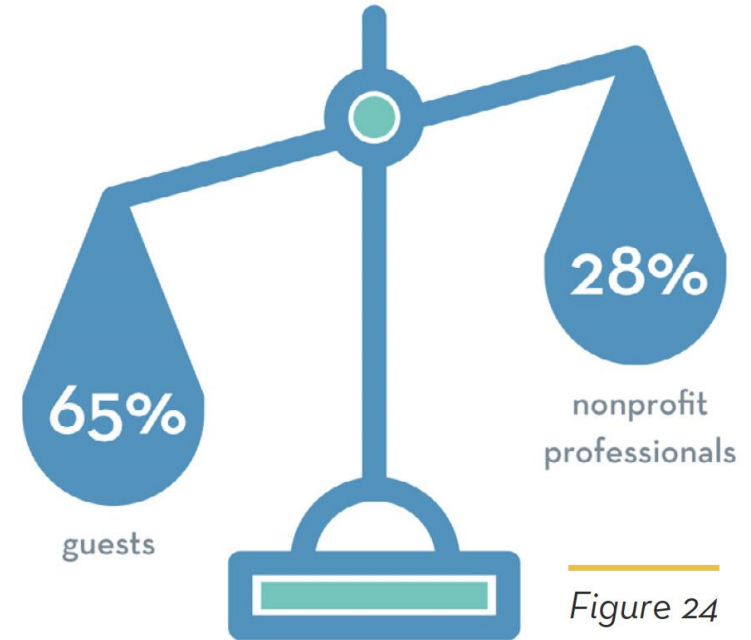


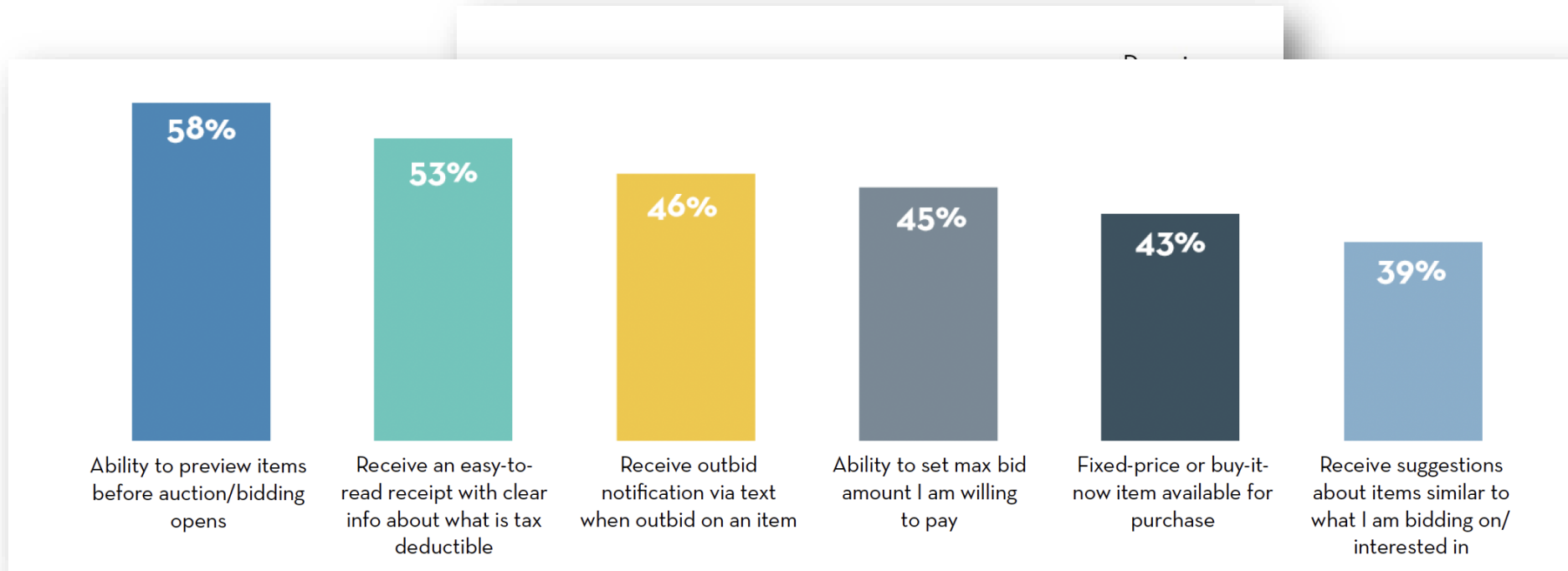
Figure 24

Percent of auction guests versus percent of pros who said downloading an app to bid was required at their auction.

PRO TIP!

Select an auction software that makes it easy to place bids on a mobile device without the confusion or hassle of having to download an auction app.

Feature Focus : By Generation



Auction features are highly rated as “very important,” by generation.

Recommendations

01

Offer a Wide Variety of Items at Price Points Everyone Can Afford

02

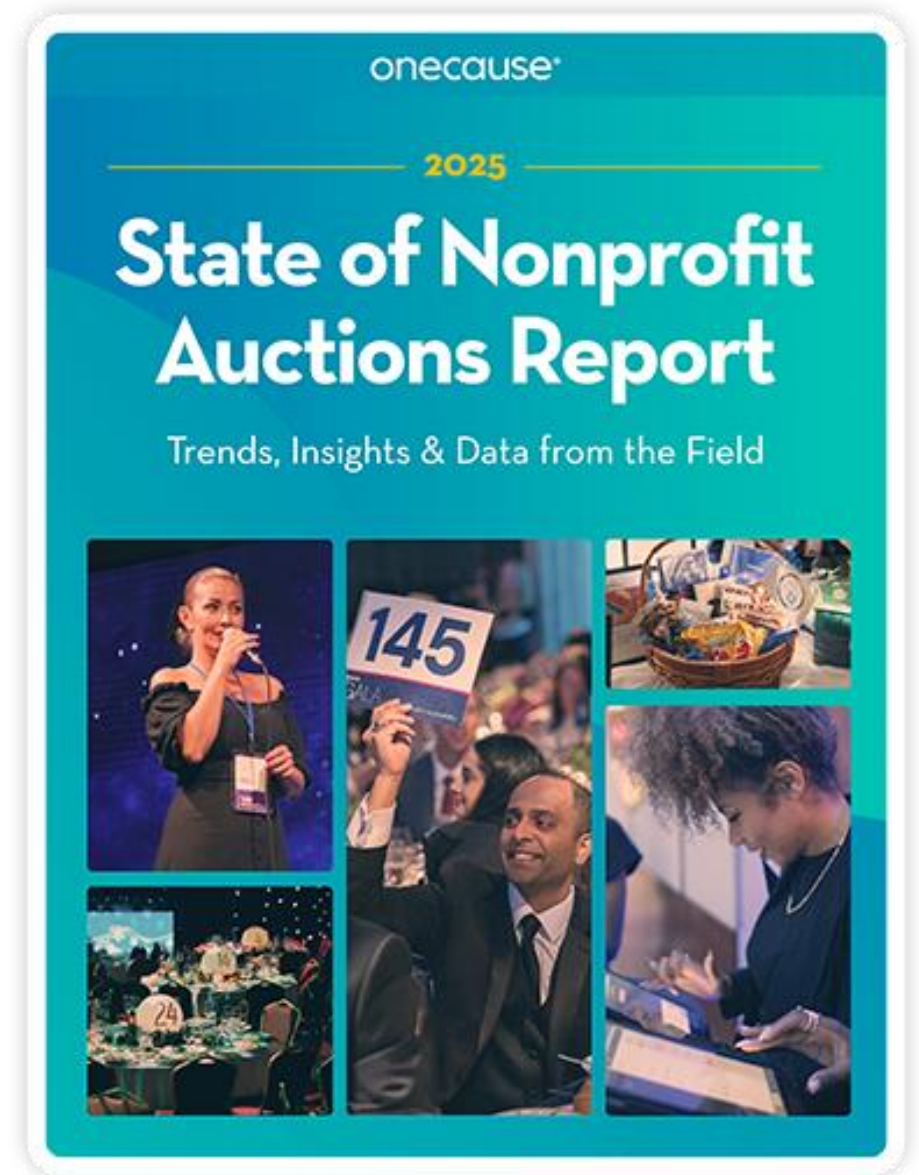
Streamline Logistics with Seamless Check-In and Checkout

03

Highlight Digital Tools to Attract and Engage Younger Generations

04

Close the Gap Between Perception and Reality



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2025

State of Nonprofit Auctions Report

Trends, Insights & Data from the Field



Recommendations

05

Leverage Testimonials to Deepen Engagement

06

Implement Early Engagement Tactics

07

Leverage Fixed-Price or Buy-it-Now Items for Immediate Participation

08

Utilize AI to Simplify Auction Preparation and Execution

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DATA NUGGETS



- ▶ 82% of auction donors would attend another event, 83% are likely to become annual donors, 64% are likely to become monthly donors.
- ▶ 49% of auction donors gave more last year & average donation was \$529
- ▶ 40% of nonprofits said auctions make up 10% or more of their revenue.
- ▶ 77% of nonprofits reported consistent or increased auction revenue in last year.
- ▶ Over a third of attendees placed bids via mobile devices.
- ▶ Average of 67 items per auction with 5.36 bids per item; items sold at 134.5% of item value.
- ▶ 6 in 10 guests want the ability to preview items.
- ▶ Younger generations want outbid notifications (65%), fixed-price & buy-it-now items (61%), and automatic item recommendations (59%).

Access to Full Findings



DOWNLOAD
2025 STATE OF NONPROFIT AUCTIONS

<https://www.onecause.com/ebook/2025-state-of-nonprofit-auctions-report/>



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