



Volunteer Resources:

Tips and Tricks to Maximize Your Collection Drive



Thank you for partnering with Cell Phones for Soldiers, and for committing your time and efforts to helping our troops stay connected! We know that it can be hard to know where to start with your collection drives, and we're here to provide some helpful tips to maximize your efforts!

Recommendations for Promoting Your Cell Phone Collection Initiative:

1. Inform Your Internal Team:

a. This one may seem obvious, but sometimes information can fall through the cracks, especially during busy seasons. We recommend sending an internal email or hosting a meeting to inform your team of the details of your campaign! We have informational fliers available in our resources that you can print and distribute. This way, communication can be clear and concise for your customers and donors.

2. Social Media Campaigns:

a. Utilize platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn to share compelling stories about the impact of Cell Phones for Soldiers, and to highlight your efforts! Create posts, stories, and videos to engage followers.

b. Use relevant hashtags (e.g., #CellPhonesForSoldiers, #SupportOurTroops) to increase visibility

3. Partnerships and Collaborations:

a. Where appropriate for you, consider partnering with other local businesses, community organizations, and schools to host collection drives or bolster more awareness of your campaign

4. Collaborate with influencers or local public figures who can help amplify the message.

a. We recommend reaching out to your Chamber of Commerce, local town officials, and your local Veterans Agents to get their support! Please let your Veterans Agents know they can reach out to Cell Phones for Soldiers to get resources for their clients!

5. Email Newsletters:



a. Use your existing email lists to inform stakeholders, customers, and community members about the initiative and how they can participate or contribute. This can be a great way to increase foot traffic to your location

6. Press Releases and Media Outreach:

a. Send out a press release to local and regional media highlighting the initiative's goals and community benefits. See further information about press releases below!

7. In-Store Promotions and Signage:

a. If you have a physical location, set up prominent collection bins with clear signage to attract donations. We have cling-films and stickers available for you to display on your entryway doors, and flyers you can print and have available for your clients or customers.

b. Use in-store promotions to encourage participation, such as discounts or small incentives for those who donate a phone. For example, we have seen drop-off locations offer a 10% discount on products or services when receiving a donation, or a raffle option where a donor receives a raffle ticket for a later drawing!

8. Community Events:

a. Our organization started as a grass-roots nonprofit hosting car washes and bake sales, and we know how impactful these can be! Host or participate in local events such as fairs, markets, or charity runs to raise awareness and collect phones. Consider organizing special events focused solely on the collection drive.

9. Online Community Engagement:

a. Engage with online communities and forums that focus on charitable initiatives, military support, or electronic recycling to raise awareness and encourage contributions.

10. Promotional Materials:

a. Print our available flyers, or create posters and handouts, to distribute in key locations, such as community centers, libraries, and where applicable, partner businesses.

11. Tracking and Feedback:

a. Implement a system to track donations and share progress updates with your audience to maintain engagement and motivate continued support.



By combining these strategies and tailoring them to your community's needs and preferences, you can effectively promote your Cell Phones for Soldiers collection initiative and maximize contributions!

Strategies to Maximize Fundraising:

1. Set Clear Goals:
 - a. Establish specific, measurable objectives for your campaign. Determine how many phones you aim to collect and the fundraising target, if applicable.
2. Develop a Strong Message:
 - a. Craft a clear and compelling message that explains the purpose of the initiative, what it means for you, and how contributions will make an impact on your community. Highlight personal stories or testimonials from your area if possible.
3. Leverage Multiple Channels:
 - a. Use a mix of online and offline channels to reach a broader audience. This includes social media, emails, local newspapers, and community bulletin boards!
4. Engage with Local Media:
 - a. Contact local radio stations, TV channels, and newspapers to gain coverage for your collection. Offering human-interest stories can successfully attract their attention! See our Press Release How-To and sample for ideas!
5. Use Your Technology:
 - a. Consider setting up an online donation platform for ease of monetary contributions. We have used resources like Square, Venmo, PayPal, and you can consider using others like GoFundMe if that suits your needs. Use tools that allow supporters to share the initiative with their networks easily, allowing your collections and fundraising efforts to spread!
6. Foster Community Partnerships:
 - a. Collaborate with schools, faith-based organizations, veterans groups, and local businesses to create a network of partners that supports the collection efforts.
7. Incentivize Participation:



a. Offer incentives such as small giveaways, recognition on your website, or entry into a raffle for those who contribute phones or funds.

8. Regular Updates:

a. Keep your audience informed with regular updates on progress towards your goals. Share success stories and milestones reached to maintain enthusiasm and motivate continued support! Highlight your team and the efforts of your donors.

9. Recognize Supporters:

a. Publicly acknowledge and thank contributors through social media shout-outs, newsletters, or honorary mentions in local press coverage.

10. Evaluate and Adjust:

a. As the campaign progresses, analyze what strategies are working and which are not. Be prepared to pivot and adjust tactics based on supporter feedback and observed results! No effort is a bad effort – but we want to help you make the most of your time!

By implementing a combination of these strategies, you can enhance awareness, boost participation, and ultimately maximize the impact of your fundraising efforts for Cell Phones for Soldiers! Thank you again for your participation and support!



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One major way to gain visibility for your collection drive or fundraiser for Cell Phones for Soldiers is by reaching out to media outlets. Reporters and producers are often looking for feel-good human-interest stories to include in their rotations. We recommend crafting a press release or using our sample press release template to reach out to your area's media!

Crafting a Press Release

- **Headline:** "XYZ Company Partners with Cell Phones for Soldiers as a New Drop-Off Location"
- **Lead Paragraph:** Clearly state that your company is now an official drop-off site for Cell Phones for Soldiers, highlighting the importance of the cause and your commitment to supporting military personnel.
- **Body:** Provide detailed information about the initiative, including how people can participate, the impact of the program, and any events or promotions to encourage donations. Include quotes from company leaders and representatives from Cell Phones for Soldiers.
- **Boilerplate and Contact Information:** Briefly provide background information on your company and Cell Phones for Soldiers. Include contact details for further questions.

Target Audience

1. **Journalists and Editors:** Focus on those covering philanthropy, military affairs, and technology recycling. Identify contacts at national and local newspapers, magazines, and online publications.
2. **Influencers and Bloggers:** Reach out to those in your area who write about charitable initiatives, military support, or technology recycling. Their platforms can help raise awareness and encourage donations.
3. **Industry Analysts and Experts:** Engage analysts who cover corporate social responsibility or nonprofit collaborations. Their insights can lend credibility and encourage further discussion.
4. **Press Release Distribution Services:** Use platforms like PR Newswire or Business Wire to ensure wide distribution among relevant media outlets and journalists.



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5. **Company Stakeholders:** Inform your internal team, partners, and investors. This can help generate internal support and lead to greater outreach efforts.
6. **Local Media Outlets:** Since this initiative will have an impact on your specific community, contact local newspapers, TV stations, and radio programs to cover the story. Many local media outlets love to include feel-good stories in their programs!

Personalized Outreach

- Tailor your message to emphasize the local impact and community benefits when reaching out to local media.

Tracking and Follow-Up

- After distribution, track media coverage and gather metrics on engagement.
- Consider a polite follow-up with key contacts to encourage coverage or answer additional questions.

By targeting these specific groups and personalizing your outreach, you can maximize the impact of your press release and bolster support for the Cell Phones for Soldiers initiative.



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Please feel free to use the following template for your Cell Phones for Soldier's press release!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Date]

[Your Organization/Company Name] Announces New Drop-Off Location for Cell Phones for Soldiers

[Your City, State] — [Organization/Company Name] is pleased to announce that it has partnered with Cell Phones for Soldiers to serve as an official drop-off location for used cell phones and accessories. This initiative is part of a nationwide effort to provide cost-free communication services to active-duty military members and veterans.

Starting [start date], individuals in the [City/Neighborhood/Community Name] area can donate their old cell phones and accessories at [Organization/Company Name and Address] during regular business hours. The donated devices are either recycled or repurposed, with proceeds used to provide calling cards and other methods of communication for troops and veterans.

"We are proud to support Cell Phones for Soldiers in their mission to keep service members connected with their loved ones," said [Spokesperson Name, Title] of [Organization/Company Name]. "By simply donating old cell phones, our community can make a significant impact on the lives of those who serve."

Since its inception in 2004, Cell Phones for Soldiers has made a notable impact on military families. Here are some statistics highlighting the effects of its initiatives:

- More than 3500 veterans are currently receiving free entry level smart phones and cell phone service through Cell Phones for Soldiers' mobile program, with a goal of connecting 10,000 veterans by the end of 2025
- Over 8 million calling cards have been distributed to military personnel and veterans, enabling more than 450 million minutes of free calls home.
- The organization has recycled more than 25 million phones, providing financial resources to support its communication programs.

These efforts significantly alleviate the financial burden of long-distance communication for service members and their families, fostering vital connections and emotional support during deployment and beyond.



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For more information about how to donate or to learn more about the specific needs of Cell Phones for Soldiers, please visit www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com.

About [Your Organization/Company Name]:

[Provide a brief, neutral description of the organization or company's mission, history, and community involvement.]

About Cell Phones for Soldiers:

Founded in 2004 by teenagers Robbie and Brittany Bergquist, Cell Phones for Soldiers is a national non-profit organization dedicated to providing cost-free communication services to active-duty military members and veterans. Through the donation and recycling of cellular phones, the organization provides a vital link between troops and their loved ones.

Media Contact [at your organization]:

[Name]

[Title]

[Organization/Company Name]

[Phone Number]

[Email Address]

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This press release emphasizes the positive impact of Cell Phones for Soldiers on military members and their families, encouraging community participation in supporting this important initiative.



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