



Adoptive Families
Discover a Unique
Fundraiser to Help
Them Raise Funds



Table of Contents

Introduction

How Fortunate We Are

• 3 •

Chapter One

The Winding Path of Mother and Her Family to Adopt

• 5 •

Chapter Two

The Story of an Adoptive Family and a Champion Volunteer

• 8 •

Chapter Three

What Can an Adoption Fundraiser Mean for You?

• 11 •

Chapter Four

5 Steps to Hiring the Best Shoe Drive Fundraising Company

• 14 •

Chapter Five

6 Steps to a Successful Shoe Drive Fundraiser

• 16 •



Introduction

How Fortunate We Are



Years ago after the Indian Ocean tsunami, my life took an unexpected turn. I remember being in my home watching the television and seeing the devastation with millions around the world. I was overwhelmed. The tragedy was soul piercing.

At the time I was the president of an international shoe manufacturing company. I had been in the shoe business since I was a 15-year-old kid. Then an image on the television screen appeared that I would say began the transformation. I saw a shoe wash ashore on the beach

in one of the Pacific countries. That visual haunted me. A few days passed, and the life of the person who had owned the shoe consumed my thoughts. Had that person lived or died?

And then one day I remember thinking to myself that if I didn't do something I was a fool. I wouldn't be able to live with myself. As the president of a shoe company, I was able to marshal all the resources I could and get others to join me. In the weeks and months that followed, we coordinated the shipment of hundreds of thousands of shoes to Asia.

The people in the affected countries had lost everything. They were in need of everything. We may take it for granted, but shoes are necessary. They protect our feet from diseases. And, I knew that as communities began to rebuild, school children would need shoes to go back to school and adults would need them to get back to work and living.

In the following years, the world also suffered the humanitarian tragedies with Hurricane Katrina and the earthquake in Haiti. I repeated what I had done after the quake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean. In all, I helped lead efforts to ship over 17 million pairs of shoes to people affected by humanitarian disasters.

As I learned more and more about the need for organizations and people to raise money and about the lives of individuals living in developing nations, I came to the realization that I had to figure out a way to create some social good. In time I established [Funds2Orgs](#), which is the leading social enterprise in North America for [shoe drive](#) fundraising. The company helps people raise money with a creative fundraiser, supports the micro-enterprise (small business) work of countless people around the world, and the environment by preventing shoes from ending up in landfills.

However, in the process of building this business, I've had the pleasure along with my team of partnering with great people. That includes families who are looking for a unique way to raise money to defray the cost of adoption. In this guidebook, you'll learn about two families and their respective journeys to adopt their children. You'll also see how they incorporated [shoe drive](#) fundraising into their efforts. But most important, parents who are trying to make a difference in the lives of children who need families will inspire you.

I hope you'll enjoy learning about Ian and Amy, and Mish and her family as much as we enjoyed partnering with them.



Chapter One

The Winding Path of a Mother
and Her Family to Adopt



One day Mish was home and making dinner in the kitchen. She overheard her two young daughters talking about adoption with their father. Mish recalled a few weeks earlier she had what she calls a “random vision of our spare room as a little boys’ room.” Their journey toward adoption had begun. Over dinner, the parents and their two daughters made a pact. If at any time during the process anyone wanted to back out, the family would do so. There would be no questions asked.

Soon the family was going through their background checks, recommendations, home studies, and classes. It took them six months to complete the proceedings. They were excited to begin the new adventure to find a child or children to adopt.

In the United States, there’s no central database for children in need of adoption. That means the family had to view profiles of children county by county across the country. There are over 400,000 children in foster care, and a child enters foster care every two minutes.

As Mish said, the family wanted to adopt an older child who was out of the “cute, squishy baby phase.” Month after month the family sent inquiries and asked for information regarding 60 children. Each time there was no match, and slowly it began to take an emotional toll. However, they kept focused on the best interest of any child awaiting adoption. Mish explained, “It was emotionally tough. We had to find somewhere to put our energy.”



It was during this time the family came to learn the reality of children in foster care. Many children change homes an average of five times. When the kids are changing homes, they’re usually transferring their belongings in trash bags. That fact resonated with the family. And an idea began to formulate in their minds.

“It’s just too convenient to grab a trash bag. The foster organizations do an amazing job, but funds are very, very tight. We became determined to help ensure our local foster kids stopped moving with trash bags,” Mish said.



Soon after, Mish spoke to her pastor, Kevin. They decided to make a positive difference in the lives of foster care kids. They decided to raise money to give every child in the area foster care system a duffle bag. Mish, her family, and Kevin hoped this gesture would help foster care children in even a small way.

As Kevin and Mish deliberated about how to fundraise with others, a fellow member of the church told them about Funds2Orgs. After a little research, Mish loved the idea of collecting gently worn, used and new shoes to raise money. And, this is where my team entered the story.

There was no need to ask anyone for money. Families had plenty of shoes they didn’t want or need. (Most families have about 10-15 pairs of shoes they no longer use.) Mish said, “We would not only be helping our local foster kids, but kids around the world plus generations to come as we kept the old shoes out of landfills.”



For our shoe drive partners, we typically give out the collection material. But for this unique fundraiser volunteers handed out big black trash bags. They wanted to emphasize the point that those bags symbolized how foster children carried their possessions from home to home. It worked. People were moved to help.

As Mish explained, "For months before the church service, members would leave the full trash bags by their cars and volunteers would go around and pick them up. We rented a storage unit and watched it fill up. Not only was the fundraiser working, but also awareness and education about foster kids were naturally occurring."



When the shoe drive finished, Funds2Orgs issued a check based on the total weight of the shoes gathered. They had collected enough shoes to purchase 460 extra-large duffel bags to distribute to local foster children. Every child in the foster care system in four surrounding counties would receive a duffel bag. And, each duffel bag had the following message, "You are loved more than you will ever know!"

The months gave way to nearly a year. The family began to believe that perhaps they were not meant to adopt any children and what the divine plan had been was perhaps to do what they just did with foster children. They had helped raise awareness about foster children and their lives. They had mobilized a community to help them.

December 3, 2013, was the birthday of Mish's oldest daughter who was turning 10 at the time. On that day, a friend of Mish's tagged her in a Facebook post. An adoption agency had two little boys who were in need of a home. Mish explained, "I instantly felt that they were ours. Exactly seven days later, we were matched, and we spent the next several months transitioning the boys into our home." The family inquired about the possibility of adoption. There was a match.

Winter passed with the family adjusting to having four children in the home. When spring came, foster children in Central Florida received customized duffel bags.

"God tapped us on the shoulder and placed adoption in our hearts. After we were emotionally drained, God led us to help the foster kids in another way. The same month we finished the fundraiser, we crossed paths with our boys. Then, just a few months after our boys moved in, we found out that our boys' foster family received the duffel bags for their other foster children. God always had a plan."

Mish's story is one that inspires us because she and her family not only adopted two boys but in the process positively impacted the lives of 460 children in foster care. Doing for others is a value we believe in as a team, and this story is just one of thousands we have to share.





Chapter Two

The Story of an Adoptive Family
and a Champion Volunteer



When Ian and Amy got married, they spent time traveling. But as Ian explained, “We reached a point in our marriage where we were enjoying traveling, but God seemed to halt a big trip we were planning to Ireland. At the same time, God started to speak to us about adopting. We knew the money for that trip was to go toward an adoption. That started things for our first adoption with Landon. Going to Ethiopia was life changing for us, and set us on a course to adopt as many children as possible.”

Ethiopia is a developing nation in the Horn of Africa. It has a long history, but most of it has been wrought by war, drought and famine. In Ethiopia, 56 percent of children awaiting adoption are under the age of 2. After their travels, Ian and Amy had fallen in love with the warmth and kindness of the people. They adopted their first child, Landon.

Of the generosity of the Ethiopians, Amy said, “One person, in particular, was a driver we hired for a day to take us around Adis Ababa, his name was Solomon. Although he was very poor, he took us to his home to meet his family. They lived in a one-room shack with dirt floors. They welcomed us into their home and served us Ethiopian coffee and performed a traditional coffee ceremony for us complete with popcorn. It was such a humbling experience and one of the most meaningful events in our lives.”



Regulations regarding international adoptions changed in Ethiopia after Ian and Amy adopted Landon. They were not able to adopt another child, so Ian and Amy decided to adopt their second child in the United States. Avarie, their daughter, was born to a birth mother in Florida.

“At this time, we decided to start a domestic adoption while we waited for Ethiopia. We signed on with Christian Adoption Consultants in February 2014 and we were chosen by a birth mother in Florida who would be having a baby girl. She chose us on May 9th and our daughter Avarie was born May 22nd. This process was only three

months. We drove from Pennsylvania to Florida and we were able to hold her when she was only a few hours old. Two days later we were made her legal parents,” Amy said.

“After coming home as a family of four, we learned that our international agency would be closing all Ethiopian adoptions. Our hearts were broken over a country that we fell in love with. The door was closed for international adoption for us, at least at this time...We still desire to have more children and soon we signed on with Christian Adoption Consultants to help us bring our third child home,” Amy said.

Adoptions can cost as much as \$40,000. Ian and Amy learned about Fund2Orgs from a family who had worked with us in the past for their adoption fundraiser. The young couple set a goal of collecting 300 bags of gently worn, used and new shoes.

Throughout their shoe drive fundraiser, they were always creative. As a way to promote their fundraiser, they even used a billboard. Ian said, “We got the idea for the billboard after talking to a friend. A friend of ours told us



about the people running the billboard, and how they were Christians. I didn't realize it at the time of contacting them, but their children go to the school where I teach. I even have one of their kids in a math class I teach." They also set up an account with Adopt Together.

One of the most important things they did was to promote on social media. That's how they came across, Jen. As Jen explained, "When Ian posted the shoe drive and the request for shoe donations on Facebook, it peaked my curiosity. I found it interesting that it was possible to raise funds—for the adoption—through a shoe collection drive and in turn, provide a means of income and/or footwear for people in developing countries."

With her family, Jen set out to clean out the shoe bins in her home. They donated all of the gently worn, used and new shoes they had at the house. With modesty, Jen told us that this was involvement on a "very small scale." But then Jen wondered what else she could do to help make the shoe drive successful for Ian and Amy.

It was one Sunday in late August that the answer came to Jen. She was at church listening to her pastor speak. He challenged the congregation to do more in the broader community. The pastor asked the church members to help the church become an active presence. And just like that, Jen knew what she had to do next.

She explained, "I immediately thought of their shoe drive. Ian is the visionary and director of the Refuge in downtown Sunbury. Several years ago, he saw a need in Sunbury where young people could spend time off the streets, playing games, getting tutored with schoolwork, and learning life skills...Why couldn't we—as a church—support a local family who has given so much to the community, who in turn, will be giving shoes to developing countries?"

After speaking to the pastor, Jen shared Ian and Amy's shoe drive with her church, and it was "received enthusiastically." The church hosts a football and cheerleading program between the months of September and November. And, over 1,000 people attend the football games. Jen shared the thought of helping Amy and Ian with the coordinators of the football program, and they got on board.

Jen reflected, "If every person brings ONE pair of shoes, we can donate 1,000 pairs of shoes to the shoe drive. Shoes immediately started piling up," and continued, "Every week, I would provide an update...about the shoe collection. They would then share it with the congregation (via a weekly bulletin with announcements) and..families and fans (via email prior to Saturday's game)...Weekly, I encouraged the congregation and attendees to ask their co-workers, friends, and family for shoes to donate."

Ian and Amy, with Jen's help, made their fundraising goal. We're fortunate to know them, and we're happy to call them part of the Funds2Orgs family.





Chapter Three

What Can an Adoption
Fundraiser Mean For You



The expenses of adopting a child can be daunting at \$30,000 or even \$40,000. Parents looking to adopt often ask family for money, take a loan or get a second job. One of the reasons why Funds2Orgs has so much success working with adoptive families is because there's no need to ask anyone for money for this fundraiser. Adoptive parents collect gently worn, used and new shoes. Upon completion of the [fundraiser](#), we issue a check. The total weight of the shoes collected determines the amount of the check.



1 Engage your supporters to collect their gently worn, used and new shoes.



2 Collect the shoes from your supporters. We supply the bags and rubber bands!



3 When the shoe drive is completed, simply call us and we'll pick up all of the bags.



4 Funds2Orgs will send you a check based on the total weight of shoes collected!

The [Better Business Bureau](#) has accredited Funds2Orgs. And, one of the reasons for this is because we give you everything you need for success, with no out-of-pocket costs.

- You get access to our fundraising coaching team.
- Digital promotional and marketing materials for your shoe drive fundraiser.
- A member of our logistics team picks up the shoes.
- We issue a check within 2 business days of shoe processing.

When you do a fundraiser with us, you're making a difference for yourself by raising money for your adoption, but you're also making a global impact:

1. Our [shoe drive](#) fundraisers are proven and have been done by many adoptive families to help them raise thousands of dollars for their adoption.
2. We consolidate and ship the shoes to [micro-entrepreneurs](#) (small business owners) in developing nations. Often, many adults and children live in systemic poverty. The shoes collected are given a new life and sold by micro-entrepreneurs at a profit, some who've gone from earning \$2 a day to over \$60.

Additionally, in developing nations shoes are the primary mode of transportation. Most people living in developing nations don't own a car. The following chart helps you understand car ownership in some developing nations.



| Country | Population | Vehicles per 1000 people | Percentage of people own vehicles | Number of people own passenger cars | Percentage of people own cars | Number of people own commercial vehicles | Percentage of people own commercial vehicles |
|-----------|------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Haiti | 10,879,821 | 12 | 13.05% | 97,800 | 11.24% | 43,200 | 5.85% |
| Nicaragua | 6,100,000 | 57 | 34.07% | 64,650 | 9.43% | 99,350 | 12.13% |
| Guatemala | 16,726,167 | 68 | 11.37% | 127,800 | 13.08% | 145,900 | 13.42% |
| Tanzania | 55,356,183 | 7 | 3.87% | 20,100 | 2.75% | 50,200 | 6.20% |
| Togo | 7,523,576 | 2 | 15.04% | 97,800 | 8.09% | 43,200 | 16.18% |

3. Over 600 million shoes go to landfills annually in the U.S. A single shoe can take more than 80 years to disintegrate entirely. Shoe drive fundraisers are a socially responsible way for our communities to re-purpose (give a new life) shoes without hurting the planet or our health.

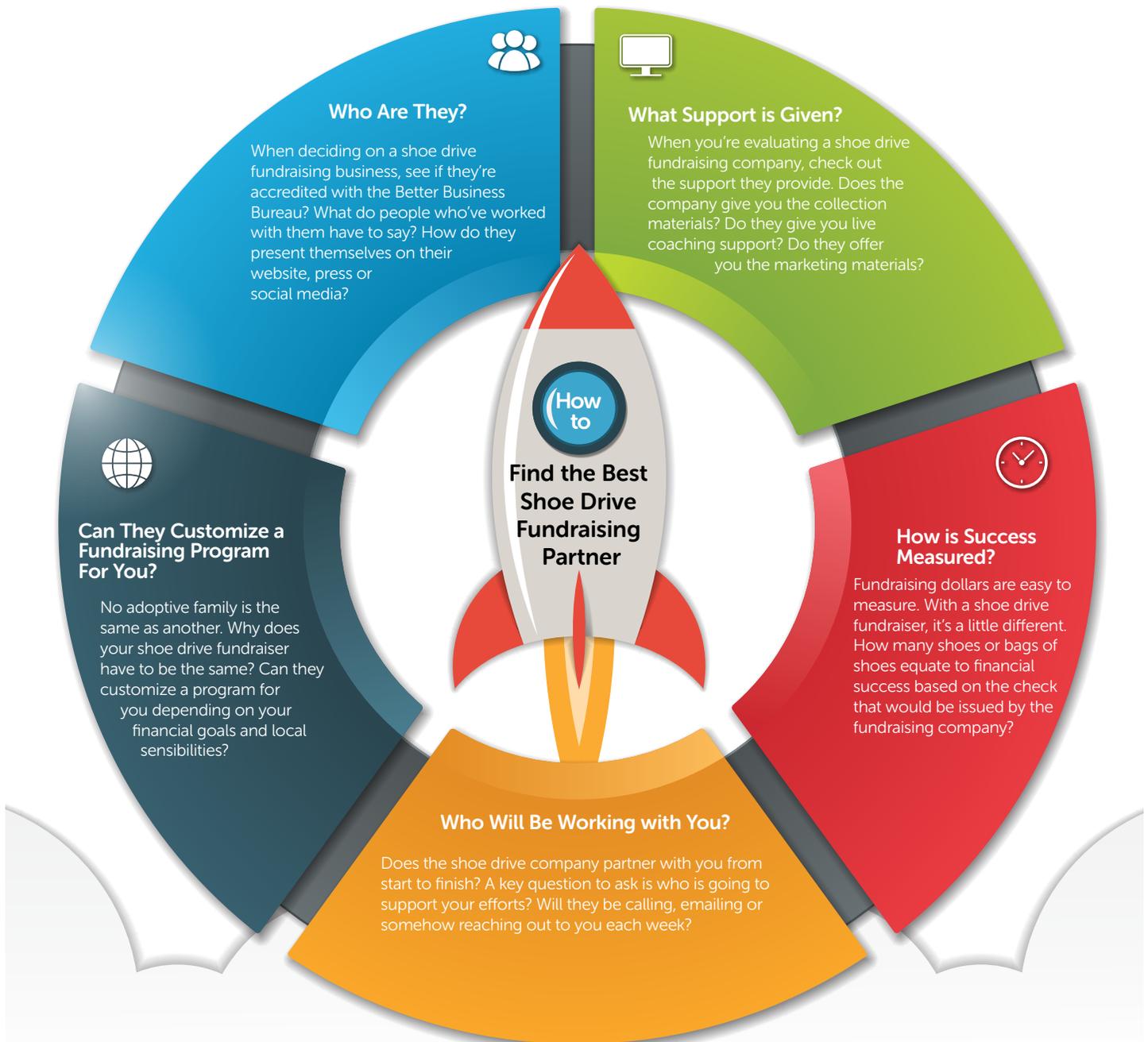


Chapter Four

5 Steps to Hiring the Best
Shoe Drive Fundraising Company



If you think a shoe drive fundraiser can help you with your adoption, take the time to look at different reputable companies. Of course, we would like to earn your business, but it's more important that you feel you made the right decision for any company that you choose to work with for your fundraising efforts.





Chapter Five

6 Steps to a Successful Shoe Drive Fundraiser



Once you've decided on the shoe drive fundraising company you'll use, you will want to have everything you need for a successful adoption fundraiser. If you're considering adopting and are looking for creative fundraising ideas, I invite you to reach out to us for your [free information kit](#). If you know someone who is thinking about adoption, or in the process, and is wondering how to raise the necessary funds; I ask you to please share this guidebook with them. And if you have something you want to ask or share with us, please visit us at Funds2Orgs.com or call us at 407-930-2979.

6 Steps to a Successful Shoe Drive with funds2orgs™

01

Work with members of your organization and your F20 fundraising coach.

Plan, Market & Recruit



02

Let everyone in your community know about your drive.

Kick-Off Your Drive + Social Media



03

Make sure you've collected all pairs of shoes from your supporters.

Half-Way There



04

Band and bag your shoes; communicate your bag count to F20 weekly.

Final Push



05

We will arrange pick-up. Make sure your coach knows your final bag count.

Pick-up



06

You've completed your shoe drive fundraiser! Great work!

CELEBRATE!





About Funds2Orgs

Funds2Orgs is the leading shoe drive fundraising social enterprise in North America. Funds2Orgs works with churches, schools, nonprofits, civic groups and others helping them fundraise in an easy, new and innovate way. Further, Funds2Orgs works globally in partnership with micro-entrepreneurs in developing nations around the globe. It also offers organizations and their local communities a socially responsible way to dispose of unwanted shoes in support of a good cause.

Copyright

© 2017 Funds2Orgs all rights reserved. Unauthorized use and/or duplication of any kind of this material without express and written permission from this book's author and/or owner are strictly prohibited.