

ROD'S TOP 10 FUNDRAISING TIPS

Great American Road Rally 2026

Fundraising isn't about asking people for money.

It's about giving people an opportunity to be part of something bigger than themselves.

Over the years, I've learned that the most successful fundraisers aren't always the ones with the largest social media following. They're the ones who consistently tell the story, make personal connections, and ask people to join the mission.

Here are the ten strategies I would focus on over the next 50 days.

1. Build Credibility Before You Ask

Before asking anyone for a donation, spend time sharing Friends of Jaclyn content and stories.

The Friends of Jaclyn Facebook page contains incredible videos featuring children who will be adopted during the Great American Road Rally.

Share these videos.

Share the stories.

Let people see the impact.

When people understand the mission and see the children whose lives are being changed, supporting the cause becomes an easy decision.

People donate to people, not links.

2. Start With Your Warm Market

Don't start with strangers.

Start with the people who already know, like, and trust you.

Current sponsors.

Former sponsors.

Family.

Friends.

Race fans.

Neighbors.

Teachers.

Business associates.

Most drivers already have a network of 50 to 100 people they can contact immediately.

These should be your first conversations.

3. Have Real Conversations With Companies

When calling a company, don't immediately ask for a donation.

Start by sharing what you're doing.

Tell them about the Great American Road Rally.

Tell them about Friends of Jaclyn.

Tell them about helping children battling pediatric cancer.

Then ask a simple question:

"Do you have an employee, customer, client, or family member who has been affected by pediatric cancer?"

You may be surprised by the answer.

In many cases, someone inside that organization has a personal connection to the mission.

When that happens, you're no longer having a fundraising conversation.

You're building a relationship and creating an advocate for life.

The donation often follows naturally.

4. Talk to Human Resources, Not Just Marketing

Many drivers automatically contact the marketing department.

That may not be the best place to start.

Many companies have charitable giving programs that fall under:

- Human Resources
- Community Relations
- Employee Engagement
- Corporate Giving
- Philanthropy Departments

A pediatric cancer initiative often fits much better into these areas than a traditional sponsorship budget.

5. Use LinkedIn

LinkedIn is one of the most underutilized fundraising tools available.

Business owners.

Executives.

Managers.

Decision makers.

They're all on LinkedIn.

Share your story.

Share your mission.

Share updates about the Rally.

You never know who may see your post and decide to support your efforts.

6. Use Your Social Media Pit Crew

You should not be the only person promoting your campaign.

Ask your parents, sponsors, crew members, family, friends, and supporters to share your content.

Every share expands your reach.

Every share creates new opportunities.

A Social Media Pit Crew can often create more exposure than the driver's account alone.

7. Make the Personal Ask

Social media creates awareness.

Personal conversations create donations.

Phone calls.

Text messages.

Direct messages.

Emails.

These are often far more effective than simply posting a donation link online.

People respond to relationships.

Don't be afraid to ask.

8. Ask Every Donor to Share With Three People

This may be the most powerful tip in the entire guide.

When someone donates, thank them and then ask:

"Would you mind sharing my donation link with three people who may want to support this cause?"

One donor can easily become three more donors.

Three can become nine.

This is how momentum grows.

9. Thank Every Donor Personally

Never allow a donation to go unnoticed.

Send a text.

Make a phone call.

Write a personal message.

Show gratitude.

People remember appreciation.

Many repeat donations and referrals come from a simple thank-you.

10. Create Momentum and Track Progress

People love supporting progress.

Post updates throughout the campaign.

Share:

- Days until the Rally
- Fundraising milestones
- Number of supporters
- Friends of Jaclyn stories
- Team updates

Momentum creates excitement.

Excitement creates engagement.

Engagement creates donations.

Don't focus on raising thousands of dollars today.

Focus on making one call.

Sending one text.

Sharing one story.

Securing one donation.

Then repeat tomorrow.

FINAL THOUGHT

The Great American Road Rally isn't just about driving across America.

It's about creating hope for children and families facing one of the toughest battles imaginable.

You don't need to be a professional fundraiser.

You simply need to care enough to ask.

Tell the story.

Share the mission.

Make the connection.

Give people the opportunity to help.

You may be surprised by how many people say yes.

See you on the Rally.

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