



# Beyond the Gala: Your Post-Event Follow-Up Playbook

3 Essential Templates to Turn Attendees into Lifetime Donors

## Get Your Hours Back.

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**Developed by Aha Apps**

Proven Strategies to Strengthen Nonprofit Donor Relationships

# The Problem

## The "Event Hangover" Is Costing You Donors

Your event was a success. The gala was beautiful, the auction was buzzing.

But now... the real work begins.

You're staring at a mountain of manual data entry. You have spreadsheets from:

- EventBrite for ticket sales
- A clipboard sign-in sheet for walk-ups
- A separate spreadsheet for your volunteers
- Auction software for winning bids
- And your master donor database (if it's not just another Excel file)

**It's a manual work nightmare.**



# The Connection Is Fading

By the time you untangle this data chaos, the emotional spark from your event is gone. The connection fades. That new, passionate attendee? They're already forgetting you. That dedicated volunteer? You forgot to thank them, and you still don't know if they're also a donor.

**This disconnect is where nonprofits lose their next generation of supporters.**

## The Big Mistake: Why Most Post-Event Follow-Up Fails

For small teams with limited time, follow-up often fails in three ways:

### It's Too Slow

A "thank you" sent two weeks later is an afterthought, not a relationship-builder.

### It's Generic

The \$2,000 sponsor gets the same email as the \$25 ticket-buyer. This makes no one feel valued or special.

### It's Disconnected

Your systems are in silos. You can't see the full picture. You're missing the massive opportunity to convert supporters who are already warm.

# The Solution

## The "Beyond the Gala" Philosophy: Your 3-Step Framework

The goal isn't just to thank attendees. It's to convert them. This playbook provides a simple framework to turn event attendees into loyal, long-term donors.

**The entire strategy comes down to three things:**

## Your 3-Step Framework

01

### SPEED

Act while the emotion is high (The First 48 Hours).

02

### SEGMENTATION

Talk to people based on who they are and what they did.

03

### STEWARDSHIP

Start a long-term relationship, not a one-time transaction.

# 1. SPEED: The First 48 Hours

The "gratitude clock" is ticking. A prompt, personal, and relevant thank-you is the single most important factor in securing a second gift.

## Your 48-Hour Action Plan:





## 2. SEGMENTATION: One Size Fits None

Stop sending one mass email. To be effective, you must send the right message to the right person.

This is the secret weapon of high-growth nonprofits. Your follow-up must instantly recognize the different relationship you have with each attendee.

### Your Top 3 Post-Event Segments:

1	2	3
<p>The "Hot Leads" (Non-Donor Attendees)</p> <p><b>Who they are:</b> They paid for a ticket (or came as a guest) but have not made a donation.</p> <p><b>The Goal:</b> Convert their interest into a first-time gift.</p> <p><b>The Message:</b> Thank them for coming, show them the impact of the event, and give them a clear, compelling reason to make their first gift.</p>	<p>The "Welcome Wagon" (New First-Time Donors)</p> <p><b>Who they are:</b> They made their first-ever donation at your event.</p> <p><b>The Goal:</b> Welcome them and begin the stewardship journey to get a second gift.</p> <p><b>The Message:</b> This is 100% gratitude. Welcome them to the "family." Tell them exactly what their gift will do. Do not ask for more money.</p>	<p>The "Heroes" (Volunteers)</p> <p><b>Who they are:</b> They gave their precious time to make your event happen. They are your highest-potential future donors.</p> <p><b>The Goal:</b> Show profound, specific gratitude for their time.</p> <p><b>The Message:</b> Thank them for their work. Be specific (e.g., "managing the check-in desk"). Do not include a donation ask. This email is purely for stewardship.</p>

## 3. STEWARDSHIP: The Long Game

An event is not the end of a campaign; it's the start of a new donor journey.

1

Week 2

Send an impact update to all attendees. "Because you came to the gala, this happened..." Show photos of the impact, not just the party.

2

Week 4

Invite them to a non-financial engagement. Ask them to subscribe to your newsletter, follow you on social, or (for volunteers) sign up for another opportunity.

3

Week 12

For your "Hot Leads" segment, make your next, relevant, and personalized ask.

## ★ Your 3 Post-Event Email Templates

Copy, paste, and customize these templates for your three most important segments.

### Template 1: The "Hot Lead" (Non-Donor Attendee)

**Subject:** Thank you for making [Event Name] a night to remember!

**Body:**

Hi [First Name],

Thank you so much for joining us at [Event Name]! It was incredible to see our community come together, and we were so happy you were a part of it.

The energy in the room was amazing, and it was all in support of [Your Mission]. Because of the funds raised, we'll be able to [Specific, Tangible Outcome, e.g., "provide 5,000 hot meals to our neighbors"].

I hope you had a wonderful time. As you saw, the need is great, and our work is only possible because of people like you.

If you were inspired by the stories you heard, you don't have to wait until next year's gala to make a difference.

**[BUTTON: Make Your First Gift to Continue the Impact]**

Thanks again for spending your evening with us!

Warmly,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]



# Template 2: The "Welcome Wagon" (New First-Time Donor)

**Subject:** Welcome to the [Your Organization] family!

## Body:

Hi [First Name],

Wow. Thank you!

Not only did you join us for [Event Name], but you also made your first-ever gift to [Your Organization]. We are absolutely thrilled to welcome you to our community of supporters.

Your generous gift of [Donation Amount] is already on its way to work, helping us [Specific, Tangible Outcome].

We believe that giving is a partnership, and we're excited to start this journey with you. You'll hear from us soon with stories about the impact you're making impact that you made possible.

For now, from all of us here at [Your Organization] thank you.

Gratefully,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

P.S. I'll be giving you a quick call in the next day or two just to say thank you personally!

# Template 3: The "Hero" (Volunteer)

**Subject:** We couldn't have done it without you, [First Name]!

## Body:

Hi [First Name],

I'm still catching my breath from [Event Name], and the first people on my mind to thank are you and the incredible volunteer team.

You truly were the heroes of the night. From [Specific Task, e.g., "managing the check-in desk"] to [Specific Task, e.g., "making sure the auction ran smoothly"], you did it all with a smile. We logged your [XX hours] and are just so grateful.

This event simply would not have been possible or as successful without your hard work and passion.

Thank you for giving us your most precious resource: your time. You are a critical part of our mission.

With immense gratitude,

[Your Name]

[Your Title / Volunteer Coordinator]

# This Is Impossible... With Spreadsheets.

Feeling overwhelmed? How can a small team possibly know who was a volunteer, a new donor, and an attendee all at once... and then send 3+ different emails within 24 hours?

**You can't. Not with your old, disconnected systems.**

The "manual work nightmare" isn't just frustrating; it's costing you your best donors.

The secret of high-growth nonprofits is a single, unified platform where your event data, volunteer data, and donor data all live in one place.

When you use an integrated system like Aha Impact, this entire process becomes simple.

**Our all-in-one platform was built specifically for growing nonprofits like yours.** The moment your event closes, you can:

- **Instantly See Who's Who:** Run a report that automatically cross-references your event attendees with your volunteer logs and your donor database.
- **Segment in Seconds:** Find your "Hot Leads" (non-donor event participants) and your "Heroes" (non-donor volunteers) with one click.
- **Automate Your Gratitude:** Send these personalized, segmented emails in minutes, not weeks, and get back to building relationships.

# Stop Juggling Systems. Start Growing Your Impact.

Your event follow-up shouldn't be a data chore; it should be your most powerful fundraising opportunity.

If you're tired of fighting with technology and ready to see what a truly unified CRM can do, let's talk.

Let's get started today!

