ClickBid
Simple Mobile Giving

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO

RUNNING A GREAT MOBILE BIDDING EVENT

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

This content comes from 16 years of conducting electronic silent auctions and the outcomes I've seen (both good and bad). Having seen many successful events over the years, I've tried to line up a "best-of" guide on thinking through the concepts of mobile bidding and how to be prepared for your auction. I always welcome feedback. And of course, if you feel that you're ready to take a leap into mobile bidding or if you're looking for a different provider, please feel free to drop us a line at success@clickbidonline.com

I hope you enjoy this guide!

THE DIVE / TIMELINE
Jump in and plan your mobile bidding timeline

Welcome! *I hope that these sessions help you come to a better understanding of how mobile bidding works. Let's jump right in by setting your timeline.*

Just like planning your overall event, having a unique timeline for mobile bidding is key to being successful and removing stress. Here's my suggested timeline that you can customize for your mobile bidding event.

ClickBid Foundation Fall Gala
Mobile Bidding Timeline *

Essential Details
Event Date: March 23rd
Mobile Bidding Link: https://mbdemo.cbo.io

March 23rd - Event Day

March 2nd	March 5th	March 19th	March 23rd	March 26th	April 3rd
Auction Item Deadline	Promotion Start Date	Bidder Registration Opens Start Bidding Day	Auction Close	Payment Follow Up	Done Day

* This is a sample planning timeline to show how we think about your mobile bidding flow.

Start Bidding Day - Though not your first milestone, your most important. When will people be able to bid? Setting this date will help you plan other dates. When deciding this date, think about your *actual* event date. Then, back up between one and two weeks. Opening your auction early will help you get the bids rolling and guests using your software. This takes pressure off your event because attendees will already be bidding and have less questions or concerns during the event.

Auction Item Deadline - This date helps you lock in your auction items so you're ready to open and accept bids. Use this deadline to have all your item data entered into your mobile bidding account. This is typically the day or two before you plan to open your auction. *A note on this. There is value in promoting your event by showcasing an auction preview.* If you plan to promote your auction before it opens, consider aligning this date with the date you plan to launch your mobile bidding landing page. Or, at a minimum, have some items ready to preview when the landing page launches.

Bidder Registration Opens - Would you like your donors to register themselves to bid? If so, what date would you like that to happen? Some charities set this date equal to the Start Bidding Day so that bidders can bid once they register. Other charities will allow registration before bidding. Either way, make sure you consider your Promotion Start Date (next) when setting this deadline.

Promotion Start Date - What date would you like to share your auction landing page with donors? Of course, your auction landing page can be more than just auction related. It can promote your event, goal and more. It's a story about a focused fundraising goal. Typically, when considering your Promotion Start Date, you should have at least a few auction items established for preview and you may even consider letting visitors register to bid. You can also promote your ticket sales from here as well.

Auction Close - Now we're moving forward. Many times this date and time is the same day as your event. However, it is

important to know when your mobile bidding event transitions from bidding to collecting payments.

Payment Follow Up - This is the reminder date to start following up on those who have not completed their payments. Mobile bidding allows payment from mobile devices. Therefore, you can send a reminder via email or text to winners who haven't paid requesting that they do so. Typically, this is the following 2 to 3 days.

Done Day - As you can imagine this is the day you can close the books on the mobile bidding event. Your goal is to hit this day and have no more payments to collect. After reaching out via email and text for unpaid invoices, you can spend a few more days making select calls to winners to make payments over-the-phone. This day is your goal and once you hit it you can evaluate if you are truly done or if there's a small list of things to complete.

In our next topic, I'll will talk about how important it is to have great content for your items and your landing page.

SOFTWARE IS SIMPLE - CONTENT IS KING

Don't let your software distract you from your content

In a <u>great article written at Medium.com</u>, Marcus Castenfors explains how Pixar focuses their process on story versus technology.

In much the same way, you have an opportunity to tell a story about your mobile bidding event. Instead of going too deep into concept, let's dive into two examples of an organization explaining their upcoming silent auction. Choose which you'd rather have on your event landing page.

This year, join us for an evening of fun and bidding. The 12th annual Bidder's Ball. Signup now and start bidding on items like a trip to Paris and signed artwork from our kids. All proceeds benefit the ClickBid Foundation's Autism Awareness Fund which gives to regional ASD programs including schools and organizations. This year, Walker Smith will produce a sand painting in real-time while sharing his journey growing up on the spectrum.

"Do you really think someone will buy it?" said Parker who was covered in paint to his elbows. "Of course they will! You just watch." replied Mrs. J, the kindergarten parapro. Parker smiled and picked up his pace, painting and talking about adding trees and trains. "How do I paint smoke?" he asked while squirting blue paint from the tube.

Don't miss out on this masterpiece and other student projects at this year's Bidder's Ball. All proceeds benefit the ClickBid Foundation's Autism Awareness Fund. Signup now and join us as Parker shows us his artwork along with others.

Certainly, the second version took much more time to create. However, the ability to visualize your event and what it's for is key to inspiring your donors to sign up and attend. The details can come later. First, you need to cast a vision. Typically, when writing these stories, you want to ask yourself "what is one thing I want people to learn at our event?" Then, write a story that illustrates that thing. From there, you can add it to your landing page, fliers, etc. and support it with key information about the event.

*Tip: Set a time limit of a half hour on your first draft and see what you can come up with.*

PULLING THE TRIGGER
Open your auction early and let it go to work

You're two weeks out from your event and your items are entered into your admin with closing times, categories, etc. You've followed your timeline and you are ready to let your donors register to bid. **This is also a good time to open your auction.**

Why? I've historically seen charities raise 30-40% of their auction goal before the event starts. I also have seen check-in run better because as guests arrive, many can skip check-in because they are already checked in and bidding. Even if you require a check-in process, less questions will arise since guests are bidding already.

GOAL PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN

	Pre-Event Launch	Event Day	Auction Close
100			●
75			
50			
25		●	
0	●		
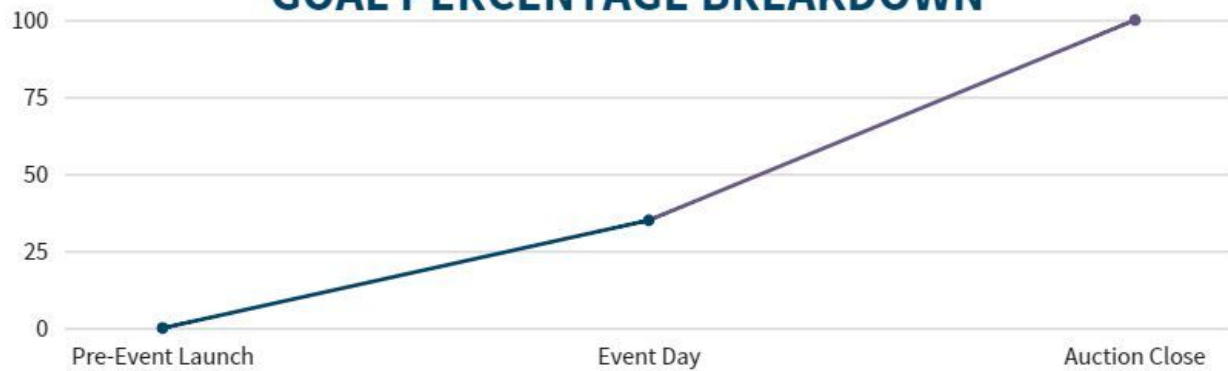
Here's how opening your auction works. You start without any bidders in your account. Using your mailing service, send out a newsletter or announcement about the opening of your event. Send your landing page link and encourage people to register and bid.

This will begin to populate your bidder list. Once you get close to your event, you can cross reference with your guest list and import those who have not already registered. *Note: wait until 24 hours before event to limit duplicates.*

A few days before your event, send out a newsletter or specialized email to your donor base. Tell them that if they haven't already done so, go ahead and register to bid and start bidding by going to your mobile bidding landing page. As the do this, you can see who signs up and remove any duplicates from your bidding software.

So now you have registered bidders and guests who have registered for the event. Using mass messaging, you can send a pre-event check-in link to simplify the physical event check-in.

THE ~~BIG~~ BID EVENT!

Sub: Get check-in right and the rest will follow

I've been to many silent auctions. Check-in is one of the critical components of the event. The key for mobile bidding is to make sure we add speed and efficiency to the process so guests move easily into bidding and socializing. Afterall, we don't want them talking about how long they had to wait to get past check-in.

Something I highly recommend is allowing guests to pre check-in and then reward them by skipping the line when they arrive. This requires that you send a check-in text and/or email the day-of or day before letting them know that if they check-in now, they can skip the line later. This also requires that your greeters ask if a guest pre-checked into the event. If so, they should be instructed to skip the line. Otherwise, they can move to the check-in tables. You'll be surprised at how much this cuts down on check-in staff requirements.
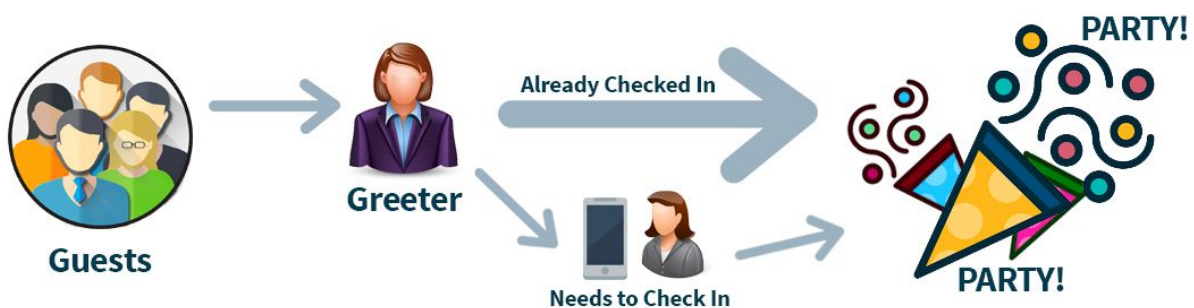
For those who need to check-in, a last name and confirming a mobile number is all that should be asked to get a guest checked in. That process will send a welcome text to the number and a

direct bidding link that can be pressed to load the bidder's bidding account.

Of course, this does assume that you do not have other reasons that a guest must visit a check-in table. Perhaps you're giving out bidder paddles. *Here's a tip. Group your paddles by table and then place them at the table. During the event, your MC or auctioneer can instruct guests to hand them out.*

The goal is to get guests into the social and bidding portion of the event. That means fast and minimal requirements at check-in. When I have had a great check-in there is a significant lul in busy-ness for volunteers and staff while guests mingle and bid. It allows you to prepare for other stages of the event such as live, appeal and check-out.

Tip: don't let check-out sneak up on you. Make sure your team is ready 10 minutes before you open check-out. Just like check-in it's important to be ready so you can run smooth.

END ON A HIGH NOTE
A smooth check-out will leave your attendees happy.

With everything coming to a close, it's time to have a great check-out. Having been to many events, I have found the following elements in common which create great experiences.

First, as the first check-out goes, so goes the rest. Be ready for the first person to be in line early. They may be in line ten

minutes before checkout begins and want to pay for a closed item (a board chair that you can't say no to). That one person can distract you up until the next five or six people come and from there it spirals downhill. In my experience, it's never too early to prep check-out. Here's the list of things you need to accomplish:

1. Assemble the tables - *1 for payments and 1 for pickup (keep them spaced out)*

2. Know your team - *who is responsible for running, payments, lookup, questions?*

3. Know the plan - *what happens when someone has paid and needs pickup?*

Numbers one and two are fairly easy. I will note however that I've seen great results when the payments table and the pickup table are physically spaced apart. That's because if you have loitering guests waiting for items, better to have it away from where someone is trying to pay.

Winners! → **Usher(s)** — Already Checked Out → **Auction Item(s) Pickup**

Check Out With Volunteer

Number three is really the biggy that catches events off guard. The main positions for check-out include: Greeter, Payments, Pickup, Runner, Questions. If you're allowing guests to pay from their phones (and you should), you need to reward them by allowing them to go right to the pickup table. You will be surprised at how many prefer this method. In this case, your

greeter is key. They can help guests go to the right table (skip the payment table). Make them front and center.

Having a dedicated pickup volunteer available to lookup a winner's items and jot them on a sticky note is critical for smooth check-out. That sticky note then goes to a runner who gets the items. I recommend two or three runners per pickup volunteer. Lastly, if a winner has specific questions that aren't easily answered, there is a "questions" volunteer or better yet charity staff member who has the authority to change bids, refund, etc. Those questions can be handled off to the side so that normal check-out can progress smoothly.

I actually like to draw my layout so it's easier to see how things can move. A few hiccups can slow everything down for everyone so you want to see what check-out will look like.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLES
Places that I've seen these practices pay off.

1

A Non Check-In - Several years ago, we conducted a mobile bidding event with a family foundation in Chicago. It was a small group that expected maybe 300 attendees. Being a family foundation, finding enough helping hands was a challenge, so I was on-site to help.

The organization had decided to let attendees buy their tickets through ClickBid. This allowed us to easily convert them into bidders. The charity was then able to send a pre-event check-in link to every converted ticket holder.

The result was that I only had to help a small handful of guests start bidding (literally less than 10). Everyone who walked in the door was already checked in and bidding. With the small venue, this was critical. If we had to check in each guest, the venue would have required guests to stand outside in the cold.

2

Handling Bidder Paddles at Check-In - We worked with a client that conducted only a Fund-A-Need at their event. Roughly 800 people were in attendance and it was a seated event with paddles. In past events that I had done, organizations would hand out those paddles at check-in. This would cause a back up because we would need to locate a paddle for every guest.

What this organization decided to do was take each table's paddles and group them. They would tie a ribbon on them and place the group at the table. Then, during the event, the auctioneer would instruct the tables to hand out the cards. This had two great outcomes. First, guests didn't have to socialize with bidder paddles in their hands (while waiting to be seated). More importantly, check-in went much faster and with no backup because there was no need to locate a paddle.

3

Real World Testing of a "Swiper-less" Check-In - We hear a lot that organizations, auctioneers and event planners feel better when credit cards are swiped during the check-in process. At ClickBid, we have done away with swipers because they are prone to break, malfunction and guests are hesitant to swipe their card when they aren't sure they will even bid. Instead, we

take the approach that guests can pay via their mobile devices during and after the event.

We had the chance to test this a year ago when an organization allowed us to use our method of check-in and check-out for their final major city fundraiser. The results from this change were immediately noticeable. Check-in speed increased dramatically and the number of payments remaining to be paid after the event were actually lower; proving that more and more guests are willing to pay for items from their personal device.

4

Crazy Smooth Check-Out - I use this example all the time because it left such a big impression on me. What's more is that it's not a technological solution. Instead, it simply involves separating your payment table from your pick up table by a distance around ten feet or more. That's it.

What happens is that those guests who pay for their items from their phones are rewarded by skipping the payments line. They get to go right away to pick up. Secondly, as people wait for their items, they mingle. This can quickly crowd an area where you are trying to move people along. By separating the two areas, you can keep payments moving quickly and let any mingling occur over at pick up. This little change yields a much smoother guest experience.

LEARN MORE

Hopefully, this guide has given you some input into our process and in the process of mobile bidding in general.

16 years of helping events raise money has allowed us to build a platform that is easy to use and focused on accomplishing your goal of raising more money. We'd love to put that experience to work for your event!

Feel free to setup a demo and we'll connect and guide you through a personal mock auction. You can also call us at (800) 513-5097.

www.cbo.io