Description

KittyCorner of Central New York, Inc. (KC) is a small, non-profit feline rescue facility located in Liverpool, NY. They foster cats that either had to move from their homes, or cats that haven't yet known the joy of a forever home.

As of June 1st 2024, they had 282 active names on their email list. Having run a successful list building raffle in 2023, it was determined that KC would spend more money in 2024 than the previous year to attempt to build the list to an even larger number.

The 2023 raffle was run using a program called PerkZilla. The 2024 raffle was run using a Wordpress plug-in called RafflePress Pro.

Objective

The stated objective was to add 100 names to KC's email list. That would have been almost a 35% increase. Privately, I knew adding 100 names was unlikely to happen, and I was hoping to add 30 - 35 names to the list. (*"Your reach should exceed your grasp."*)

Timeline

Pre-announcements started the first week of May 2024. The raffle went live at 8 AM Eastern on Monday June 17th. It closed at 11:30 PM on Sunday, June 30th.

Entry form parameters

The entry form was created in early May 2024. Using the RafflePress Pro form builder, the users first had to log in to the contest before entering, using either their Facebook info, or their email address.

The first entry item on the list was mandatory to enter the contest. It was to join the email list - the entire point of having the raffle - for which the entrant would receive 3 entries (or tickets) in the raffle.

Entrants were offered one ticket each for visiting the KC FB page and the KC Instagram page.

The final item on the list was the "refer a friend" option. Each entrant clicking this option would be given a custom URL link to the entry page. Each time someone signed up using a custom link, the person giving that link would receive 5 more entries to the raffle.

Three separate listings of the prizes, and pictures, were available for viewing directly above the entry form, using back-and-forth arrow controls for viewing the prizes.

Steps

There were three prizes. **First Prize** was a stuffed toy cat (Tate the Tuxedo), a pre-printed adoption form for the final recipient to fill out, a $100 PetSmart gift card, a bag of assorted cat toys, 6 tubes of Puddonio brand lickable wet cat treats, and a bag of Temptations brand dry cat treats. **Second prize** was a stuffed toy cat (Rae the Russian Blue), a pre-printed adoption form for the final recipient to fill out, a $50 PetCo gift card, a card of 3 Bizzy Ball brand cat toys, 4 tubes of Puddonio brand lickable wet cat treats, and a bag of Temptations brand dry cat treats. **Third prize** was a $25 Amazon gift card, 4 tubes of Puddonio brand lickable wet cat treats, and a bag of Temptations brand dry cat treats. All prizes were purchased in May of 2024, for a total of $218. Facebook ads were scheduled for the week of 2024-06-27, and cost less than $17 (paid on Sunday June 30th). Shipping for all three prizes was approximately $45, for a grand total cost of $280.

The raffle was pre-announced in May of 2024, with a full announcement on June 1st. An email newsletter was sent out, and posts were made to the KC Facebook page, and on the KC website.

Contest rules - auto generated by RafflePress Pro and then edited by myself - were posted on a separate page, and short instructions on how to enter the contest were posted above the form and prize pictures on the entry page.

The contest was declared live at 8 AM Eastern time on Monday, June 17th, with a closing date and time of Sunday, June 30th at 11:30 PM. This was announced to email list members with an email on the morning of the 17th. Reminders - text with still images - were posted on FB and Instagram on June 18th, June 20th, June 22nd, and June 29th.

Still-image advertisements went live on Facebook and Instagram on Sunday June 23rd, targeted at users in and around Syracuse, NY aged 18+, who listed "cats" or "pets" as interests.

Results

During the running of the campaign, two members who had joined in March and April of 2024 unsubscribed.

61 individuals logged in to the raffle. Of these, 22 new names joined the email list. [NOTE: existing list members who signed up as a means of gaining more entries did not add to the number of people on the list.] As of July 1st, Mailer Lite (the Email Service Provider, or ESP) showed the active number of email addresses to be 304. Of the 61 people who logged in to the contest, 14 declined to sign up for the newsletter (first item of the entry list), even though 5 of them confirmed their email addresses, and so were not offered the other options to join the raffle. Effectively, these people did *not* sign up for the raffle. No entry tickets means a zero percent chance of winning.

5 people joined the list from referrals by other entrants via those entrants' unique links. This "refer a friend" tactic is the one we most hoped to exploit.

Oddly, in the first four days after the raffle ended, 10 people "liked" the KC Facebook page. This is much more than an average number of people following the page in similar timespans. Since a couple posts were made after the contest ended, we can't definitively tie those likes back to the contest, though.

Conclusions

Although written instructions on how to enter the contest were posted above the form on the entry page, at least one person wrote to the KC directors stating that they couldn't find "the place to get a custom link." Upon reflection, this leads me to believe that -

1) Detailed written instructions on what is expected of entrants is warranted
2) Since the entire object of the raffle is to have people sign up for the KC email list - which is a double opt-in list - asking for confirmation when they log into the raffle form is unnecessary.
3) A short video explaining the raffle, its rules, our expectations, and how to obtain a custom URL via the "refer a friend" link should have been created this year, and must be created before running any subsequent raffles.
4) Announcements and reminders should probably have animated content mixed in, either as motion GIFs or even video clips.
5) The "refer a friend" link, as the most important objective of the raffle, should be moved to second place on the list, right below joining the newsletter list link.
6) Effectively, it cost just under $13 to add each name to the email list. In order to break even, each of those new names should either donate $13 to KittyCorner, or refer KC to friends, relatives, or acquaintances who donate $13. This should be relatively easy to accomplish.