Frequently Asked Questions

Since 2007, we have worked with hundreds of PTAs, Booster Clubs and schools (plus a lot of non-profit organizations that don't have anything to do with schools) to produce thousands of fundraising events.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to show you how we can help your organization, and this document is designed to be a starting point in facilitating that discussion.

SchoolAuction.net

Thank you for your interest in our auction software!

This document contains:

Print this document and take it with you to a fundraising committee meeting. We know that the process of choosing and purchasing software to help with your auction can move slowly sometimes, and that it is often a group decision; we hope this document can aide you in the process.

If you have specific questions, please call me, Roger Devine, at (503) 913-4407 anytime; or email me at roger@schoolauction.net. I love talking about live auctions, online auctions, art shows, walk-a-thons, etc.; I've chaired my share, and helped many others with theirs.

Together we can figure out whether our software will work and be cost-effective for your particular event.

Sincerely,
Roger Devine

www.schoolauction.net
(503) 913-4407
roger@schoolauction.net

Subscription Plans & Pricing

Not all fundraising auctions are the same, and not all auction teams want the same things from their auction software. We have assembled a set of 3 subscription plans that allow you to choose what you want to pay for, based on what your team needs.

	Standard	Plus	Premium
	For Gala (Live/Silent), Online, and Hybrid Auctions	Add Mobile Bidding to Your Gala Auctions. Best Value!	Includes Mobile Bidding and Unlimited Phone Support.
Limits			
Items	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Bidders	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Event Types			
Gala Auction (mobile)	✘	✔	✔
Gala Auction (traditional)	✔	✔	✔
Online Auction	✔	✔	✔
Art Shows/Plant Sales	✔	✔	✔
Features			
Online Item Donations	✔	✔	✔
Online Cash Donations	✔	✔	✔
Online Ticket Sales	✔	✔	✔
Mobile Bidding	✘	✘	✔
Payment Types			
Cash	✔	✔	✔
Checks	✔	✔	✔
Credit Cards (see page 12)	✔	✔	✔
Support			
Online Documentation	✔	✔	✔
Online Video	✔	✔	✔
Donor/Data Import	✔	✔	✔
Unlimited Email Help	✔	✔	✔
Event-Night Phone Help	✔	✔	✔
Unlimited Phone Help	✘	✘	✔
	$1,000/year	$1,295/year	$1,500/year

Frequently Asked Questions

What is SchoolAuction.net?

SchoolAuction.net is a web-based software that your fundraising team can use to help plan, prepare for, and run fundraising events.

Somebody told me it's called Tofino Auctions (or PartySupporters.com). What gives?

We also sell the exact same software for use with names that are more appropriate for non-school customers. We can set your event website up as you.schoolauction.net/eventname, you.tofinoauctions.com/eventname, or as you.partysupporters.com/eventname. Since one of the key benefits of your subscription is an event website that helps you promote your event, we give you options for the site name, and you can decide which suits your organization best.

What kinds of fundraising events can I run with SchoolAuction.net?

SchoolAuction.net can be used for gala auctions (with or without mobile bidding), online auctions, and many other "point-of-sale" events – think art sales, bake sales, and similar. Organizations have also used our software for golf tournaments and walk-a-thons, but it is built primarily for use with auctions.

What does it cost?

A one-year Standard subscription costs $1,000. This lets you use the software for as many events as you need it for, and includes all support. We have several other subscription levels to meet the needs of a variety of auction teams.

What will I need to use it?

To get started, all you need is a computer (Mac or PC) or a tablet (iOS or Android), an internet connection, and a web browser (Chrome, Firefox or Safari). On the night of your event, you will need additional computers and printers to use as check-in stations (we recommend 4 stations for auctions of up to 250 guests, with an additional station for every 50 guests thereafter), and an internet connection at your auction venue, which can be wired or wireless.

To accept credit cards for payment, you'll also need a credit-card processing account with a bank (see for more information on credit-card processing).

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

What makes SchoolAuction.net different than other auction-software options?

Our competitors make good software - they definitely keep us on our toes, and you'll never hear us trash their products, but we do pride ourselves on a few things that set us apart:

1. Advance Check-In, and Self Check-Out

We hate lines. From the very beginning, we've designed our software to optimize the check-in and check-out processes, in order to keep the lines at our customers' events short and fast-moving. With SchoolAuction.net, guests can check themselves in from their home computer or smartphone, before even leaving for the event. And when you have all of your items entered, click the Self Check-Out button, and your guests will get an email with a link they can follow to check themselves out with their smartphone - skipping the lines all-together.

2. Everything you need, one fixed cost

It's a lot easier to buy software when you know exactly what it is going to cost you, so we don't have any "price escalators." We won't charge you more for adding more software users, we won't charge you a fee for every ticket you sell, and we won't take a portion of each transaction you process. You can put the subscription cost in your budget, knowing there won't be any surprises later.

3. Excellent Customer Service

Our customers have been incredibly positive about our customer service – if you'd like to talk to any of them, let us know. We treat our customers the way we want to be treated by the people we buy from, especially since we still think of ourselves as the same kind of people our customers are – most of us are also former or current auction chairs, PTA presidents, development directors and the like.

What kind of support and training will I get with my subscription?

We have extensive documentation available online (including videos), an all-you-can-eat email support policy (for subscribers at the Standard and Premium levels), weekly free online training sessions for event-night volunteers, and even on-demand cell-phone support on the day of your event for Standard and Premium level subscriptions.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

Can I change my mind later about which subscription level I want?
Sure – we start everyone out with a two-week free trial of our Plus subscription (which includes mobile bidding), and when you purchase a subscription, you can choose the level that is right for your organization.

I have more questions. Can I call someone to talk about this?
Please do. You can call me, Roger Devine. I'm a founding partner in the company, and I love talking to auction chairs. My mobile/office number is (503) 913-4407 (go ahead and text me if you prefer). I can also be reached by email at roger@schoolauction.net.

Sample Printouts

The following pages show some sample printables: bid sheets, description sheets, a signup-party sheet and a gift certificate.

The bid and description sheets have several customaizable options, including:

Size
The Normal sheets fit 2-across on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper, the Large are each 8.5 x 11.

Bid Increments
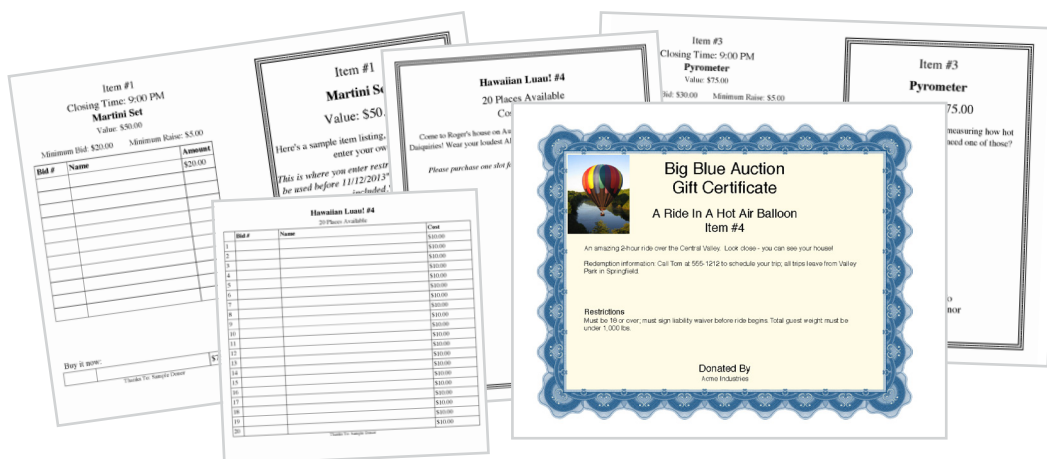Print just the first line, and leave the others blank, or print bid increments all the way down the line.

Show FMV
Either have the Fair Market Value printed at the top, or not.

Show Closing Time
Either have the Closing Time printed across the top, or not.

Buy it Now
Have a Buy It Now price printed at the bottom, or not - this can be selected on an item-by-item basis.

Item #1
Closing Time: 9:00 PM
Martini Set
Value: $50.00

Minimum Bid: $20.00   Minimum Raise: $5.00

Bid #	Name	Amount
		$20.00

Buy it now: | $75.00

Thanks To: Sample Donor

Item #1
Martini Set
Value: $50.00

Here's a sample item listing, to inspire you to enter your own.

This is where you enter restrictions, like "must be used before 11/12/2013" or "batteries not included."

Thanks To
Sample Donor

Sample

Item #1
Closing Time: 9:00 PM
Pyrometer
Value: $75.00

Minimum Bid: $30.00   Minimum Raise: $5.00

Bid #	Name	Amount
		$30.00

Thanks To: Sample Donor

Item #1
Pyrometer
Value: $75.00

A very handy gadget for measuring how hot things get. Who doesn't need one of those?

Thanks To
Sample Donor

Sample

Hawaiian Luau! #4

20 Places Available
Cost $10.00

Come to Roger's house on August 12, for Pig, Poi, and Pomegranate Daiquiries! Wear your loudest Aloha shirt and bring the kids to swim in the pool.

Please purchase one slot for each adult attending - kids are free!

Thanks To
Sample Donor

Sample

Hawaiian Luau! #4

20 Places Available

	Bid #	Name	Cost
1			$10.00
2			$10.00
3			$10.00
4			$10.00
5			$10.00
6			$10.00
7			$10.00
8			$10.00
9			$10.00
10			$10.00
11			$10.00
12			$10.00
13			$10.00
14			$10.00
15			$10.00
16			$10.00
17			$10.00
18			$10.00
19			$10.00
20			$10.00

Thanks To: Sample Donor

Sample

Big Blue Auction
Gift Certificate

A Ride In A Hot Air Balloon
Item #4

An amazing 2-hour ride over the Central Valley. Look close - you can see your house!

Redemption information: Call Tom at 555-1212 to schedule your trip; all trips leave from Valley Park in Springfield.

Restrictionns
Must be 18 or over; must sign liability waiver before ride begins. Total guest weight must be under 1,000 lbs.

Donated By
Acme Industries

Establishing a Credit-Card Processing Account

When using the SchoolAuction.net software, you have a wide range of choices regarding credit-card processing. You can integrate (almost) any processor you have an existing relationship with; you can set up a seasonal account with one of our preferred providers, or you can use our in-house processing service. You can also use a non-integrated payment service alongside our software, to process payments at check-out only.

The following information describes your options for credit-card processing to help you evaluate your options and proceed once you've decided which is best for you.

Option 1 Use our integrated payment service (powered by WePay)

This is the simplest and fastest option - there is no paperwork to download, any member of your organization may set it up in about 10 minutes, and the cost structure is simple - the only time you pay for this service is when you process a transaction. There are no setup fees, monthly fees, statement fees, or PCI Certification fees. This means you can leave the account up and running year-round, without having to worry about it costing the organization when it isn't in use.

The rate for processing a credit-card transaction is 3.25%, plus $0.30/transaction. This rate is the same regardless of card type - personal or business; Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express.

Why you might choose this option: If you need to get processing set up very quickly, and you don't want to have to think about closing the account when the event is over, this is an excellent option. If you anticipate processing $50,000 or less, it is also cost-effective.

Why you might not choose this option: If you think you will process more than $50,000 in credit-card transactions, you can save money by going with one of our preferred partners.

Establishing a Credit-Card Processing Account (continued)

Option 2 **Using Your Existing Processor**

Just about any full-service merchant processor offers accounts that are compatible with our service. In order to be compatible, your account must:

1. Accept e-commerce transactions

2. Be able to connect to one of the following Internet Payment Gateways:

      A. Authorize.net (type: ecommerce, with the Customer Information Manager)

      B. eProcessing Network

      C. Element Payment Gateway (Vantiv)

      D. iATS Payment Gateway

      E. Merchant e-Solutions

      F. Network Merchants, Inc. (requires card-storage upgrade)

      G. PayTrace

      H. Vanco

Please note – these are the only gateways we are integrated with. If your processor says that there gateway is not on that list but is "Authorize.net compatible", then your processor is not compatible with our software

Popular processors that are <u>not</u> compatible include: Intuit and PayPal. Square is also not compatible, but you may chose to use square along side our software. For more information on using square with our software, see page 15.

To use your existing account, contact your processor, and ask them to set you up with an account with one of the gateways listed above.

Why you might choose this option: You have an existing account with a credit-card processor you like and don't plan on canceling your service with them.

Why you might not choose this option: You don't have an existing account with a credit-card processor, or you are looking to cancel/change your service with your current processor.

Establishing a Credit-Card Processing Account (continued)

Option 3 Setting Up A New Seasonal Account

There are some credit-card processors who actively court non-profit customers. Several of these have contacted us, and gone through a screening process to become SchoolAuction.net Preferred Providers.

You can find the current list of Preferred Providers on our website, at:
http://www.schoolauction.net/partners

Why you might choose this option: You can shop around, and have some control over rates and fees. Having a merchant account for your organization to use for tuition payments, fees, and other fundraisers can be useful. This is often the most inexpensive way to go.

Why you might not choose this option: There is an application and underwriting process; one officer of your PTA usually has to submit personal information for the underwriters. If you are not diligent about turning off the account after the event, you could rack up extra charges. This is the option that takes the most work to set up and manage.

Option 4 Using A Non-Integrated Payment Service

If you have a Square card-reader, or another merchant account that does not accept eCommerce transactions, and you want to use that on event night, it is possible to use it to process Gala-auction card transactions at check-out. To do so, enable the External Payment method and disable the Credit-Card method for event night sales (our Support Team can help you with this).

Why you might choose this option: You have an account with one of these providers, and are only planning on making transactions at a gala-auction the night of the auction.

Why you might not choose this option: You plan to sell tickets online, hold an online auction, or accept online donations. You want to ask your guests to swipe-and-store their card numbers at check-in. You want to run more check-out stations than you have card-readers. You want to offer your guests the option to check themselves out from their own smartphones at the end of the auction.

Establishing a Credit-Card Processing Account (continued)

Option 5 Using a Group Merchant Account

If your school district's foundation, your diocese, or another parent organization to your group has a master merchant account that is available for your use, please contact cardservices@schoolauction.net to discuss how to connect it.

If your foundation, diocese, or parent organization would like to establish a master account for all of the individual groups in your district to use, please contact cardservices@schoolauction.net for advice on setting that up.

Connecting Your Credit-Card Processing Account To Your SchoolAuction.net Software

The connection between your processor's servers and SchoolAuction.net is your gateway account. If you are using an existing account (Option 1) or setting up a new account through one of our Preferred Partners (Option 2), you will plug connection information for that gateway account into the Credit-Card pane of the Admin section of your SchoolAuction.net event website.

For instructions on how to do so, please contact support@schoolauction.net, and let them know which gateway (e.g. Authorize.net, eProcessing Network, Element/Vantiv, Network Merchants, Inc, iATS) you have an account with.

Customer Testimonials

"We got exactly what we wanted from the software, and didn't have to pay for any extra bells and whistles we didn't need. All of us felt like it was a great value. And between the super-responsive support staff and the excellent documentation, I never felt lost at sea, which means quite a lot."

— Tatianna Peck | Girls, Inc. of Alameda County

"Our PTA wanted to make sure their money was being well spent... I research and evaluate (and install) software for a living. So I researched the different auction software systems that are out there and hands down SchoolAuction.net was the best choice. I can't say enough about what great service we've gotten over the past few years I've been working with this company."

— Stacey Seibold | Marshall Lane Elementary School

"All of our volunteers had a really easy time with the system – we had far fewer complaints than we did when using the other software we had tried. All of the volunteers wanted to use it again! And I love SchoolAuction.net because of the excellent customer service – I knew that I could count on a thorough and timely response whenever I had a question. I recommend SchoolAuction.net often, whenever I talk to a school that is holding a fundraising auction."

— Callie Philippi | The Prairie School

"Our major fundraising each year supports all the programs and school functions that happen during the year. So it is very important to be able to count on the software and support we get from the people behind Tofino Auctions to meet the challenges that come with reporting and tracking donors, items and keeping information confidential and secure. I highly recommend them." — Marg Everett | Congregation Neveh Shalom

— Marg Everett | Congregation Neveh Shalom

"Having used SchoolAuction.net two times over the past 3 years I can't say enough positive things about the system and the support available. The registration and auction set up is very easy to create and manage, the timelines and email reminders are essential to staying on track and the online auction feature helped us raise even more money after the actual auction date. We had multiple users entering data into the system (many who were very new to this type of tool and they were up and running with 20 minutes of training!) If you are planning an auction and have not considered using an online auction management tool, I urge you to think again and definitely look at using SchoolAuction.net." — Andrea Lowery | Boones Ferry Primary School

—Andrea Lowery | Boones Ferry Primary School