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# Auction Software Information Packet



SchoolAuction.net

# Introduction

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Since 2007, we have worked with PTAs, Booster Clubs, and schools—as well as lots of non-profit organizations unrelated to schools—to produce thousands of fundraising events.

We thank you for this opportunity to discuss with you how we can help your organization.

This document is designed to be a starting point in facilitating that conversation. Print this document and take it with you to a fundraising committee meeting. We know that the process of choosing and purchasing software for your auction can move slowly sometimes, and that it is often a group decision; we hope this document can aid you in the process.

If you have specific questions, please call our office at (503) 715-1112 or email [info@schoolauction.net](mailto:info@schoolauction.net) anytime. We're here to help, and together we can figure out whether our software will work and be cost-effective for your organization.

Sincerely,  
Roger Devine

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# Setting the Stage

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## There Are a Lot of Different Types of Fundraising Auctions

And sometimes, the terminology can be confusing. So here's a quick survey of the 5 main types, and what we call them. (You can run any of these types of auction with our software.)

### Traditional Gala

An in-person auction gala, with a silent auction where you put out paper bid sheets, and/or a live auction where the guests bid by sticking paddles with their bid numbers up in the air. You may also have a raffle, and signup parties, and games, but as for the actual auctions, you are doing things the way they have been done for many years.

### Online Silent Auction

An online auction that takes place over a period of time that is usually between 3 days and 3 weeks; people pop in to bid when it is convenient for them. When they are outbid, they are notified by email or text.

### Digital Gala

An in-person auction gala where the guests bid using their smartphones (instead of paper bid sheets and paddles) is also kinda sorta an online auction, but obviously very different than the online auction listed above. In our industry, the term "Mobile Bidding" describes this type of bidding, but that doesn't name the auction type itself (just the bidding), so we've decided to call those Digital Galas.

### Virtual Gala

An online auction where the live auction portion of the evening happens at a specific time, and everyone who wants to bid has to be logged in at that time to do so. Guests watch livestreaming video of your auctioneer/emcee, who will present the live auction items one at a time, and sell them in real-time, as your bidders place their bids from their computer, tablet, or phone. These can easily be combined with online silent auctions.

### Fusion Auction

A live auction with some in-person bidders (who either use paddles or smartphones to place their bids - your choice), and some remote bidders (who use the Virtual Live Auction interface to bid).

# Subscriptions Plans and Pricing

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There are as many ways to run a fundraising auction as there are auctions; from our vantage point that is quite obvious. All of you are constantly thinking up new twists, better ideas, and more ways to optimize the process of planning and running a fundraiser.

So we don't even try to have a one-size-fits-all plan. We do have four full-service plans, all of which allow you to run your main fundraising auction, plus any ancillary fundraisers or events which might benefit from software.

## Traditional Gala \$1,000

### Top Features:

- ✓ Online ticket sales
- ✓ Integrated credit-card processing - store cards at check-in or when guests buy their tickets
- ✓ Print bid sheets, paddles, gift certificates, and more
- ✓ Support for raffles, wine wall, fund-a-need, signup parties and fixed-price items
- ✓ Email communication tools
- ✓ Unlimited users, bidders, and items

## Digital Gala \$1,500

### Top Features:

everything in the **Traditional** option, plus:

- ✓ Mobile bidding at your event
- ✓ Online "pre-bidding"
- ✓ Sell sponsorships
- ✓ Text-messaging - outbid notifications and custom messages
- ✓ Bulk processing for open orders

# Subscriptions Plans and Pricing

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## Virtual Gala \$1,750

### Top Features:

everything in the **Digital Gala** option, plus:

- ✓ Support for single-screen, 2-screen, and/or Zoom-based Virtual Live Auctions
- ✓ Online silent auctions
- ✓ Extremely low-latency (1-5 second) streaming video
- ✓ Use our credit-card processor or your own merchant account (call for compatibility)
- ✓ One 1-hour consulting session

## Fusion Gala \$3,000

### Top Features:

everything in the **Virtual Gala** option, plus:

- ✓ In-person guest bidding either with smartphones or paddles
- ✓ Premium support
- ✓ Two 1-hour consulting sessions

All of our plans also include support for: golf tournaments, crowdfunding campaigns, talent shows, plant sales, and more.

*The options listed in this document are our most popular offerings, and cover the majority of auction types we see. We also have plans available to cover other types of events, starting at \$300. Contact us for more details on these.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## 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.

## What will I need to use it?

To get started, all you need is a computer or tablet, 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 and an internet connection at your auction venue. We recommend 4 stations for auctions of up to 250 guests, and an additional station for every 50 guests thereafter.

Virtual Gala subscribers who wish to use their existing full-service merchant account will also need a compatible *gateway account*, through a provider such as Authorize.net. (See [p. 14](#) for more info on credit card processing.)

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

SchoolAuction.net can be used for online auctions, gala auctions (with or without mobile bidding), and many other “point-of-sale” events—like art shows and bake sales. Organizations have also used our software for golf tournaments and walk-a-thons. Each fundraiser you run with SchoolAuction.net also includes a page for collecting online cash donations — both one-time donations and recurring donations (i.e. \$100/month for the next 12 months).

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

We have extensive documentation available online, an all-you-can-eat email support policy, and telephone support on the day and night of your event (until 11pm Pacific time).

## Can I change my mind later about which subscription level I want?

Sure—we start everyone out with a 30-day free trial of our Digital Gala subscription, and when you purchase a subscription, you can choose the level that is right for your organization.

# Frequently Asked Questions

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## 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 pride ourselves on a few things that set us apart.

### 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 line all-together.

### 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.

### 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.

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

We 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](http://you.schoolauction.net/eventname), [you.tofinoauctions.com/eventname](http://you.tofinoauctions.com/eventname), or as [you.partysupporters.com/eventname](http://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, so you can decide which suits your organization best.

## I have more questions. Can I call someone to talk about this?

Absolutely! Please call our office; we love talking to auction chairs. Our number is (503) 715-1112. We can also be reached by email at [info@schoolauction.net](mailto:info@schoolauction.net).



# Sample Printouts

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If you are going to hold a Traditional Gala, you're going to need bid sheets and paddles. We've got you covered on that, and more.

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

The bid and description sheets have customizable 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 at 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 #101  
Closing Time: 1:00 AM  
**Martini Set**  
Value: \$50

Closing Time: 11:00 AM

## Martini Set

Value: \$50

Minimum Raise: \$5.00

[illegible]

		\$75.00
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**Martini Set**  
Value: \$50

Value: \$50

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

## Restrictions

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

# Sample

Item #102

Closing Time: 11:00 AM

## Pyrometer

Value: \$75

Minimum Bid: \$30.00

Minimum Raise: \$5.00

[illegible]

Item #102

# Pyrometer

Value: \$75

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

# Sample

Item #100  
Closing Time: 11:00 AM  
**Sample Silent Auction Item**  
Value: \$100

Minimum Bid: \$35.00

Minimum Raise: \$5.00

[illegible]

Buy it now:

		\$150.00
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## Sample

Item #100

## **Sample Silent Auction Item**

Value: \$100

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

### *Restrictions*

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

A blue starburst graphic with a white border, containing the word "Sample".

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.

### Restrictions

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

Sample

# Credit Card Processing Information

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

The following information details your options for credit card processing to help you decide what is best for your team.

## Option 1

Use our integrated payment service.

Groups that opt for our Traditional or Digital Gala subscriptions will use this service - it's built-in, extremely fast and easy to set up and link to your bank account, and affordable.

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. There are no setup fees, or any annual or monthly fees - you only pay when you submit a transaction.

### Why You Might Choose This Option

If you choose our Traditional or Digital Gala subscriptions, or 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 may be able to save money by subscribing at the Virtual Gala or Fusion Gala subscription levels, and using your existing processor, or one of our preferred partners.

# Credit Card Processing Information

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## Option 2

Use your existing processor.

Just about any full-service merchant processor offers accounts that are compatible with our Traditional or Digital Gala subscriptions, and provide all of the benefits of our internal processing (including card storage at check-in), at potentially lower cost. 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:

WePay

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

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

Element Payment Gateway (Vantiv)

iATS Payment Gateway

Merchant e-Solutions

Moneris

eProcessing Network

PayTrace

Vanco

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

Popular processors that are not compatible include: Intuit and PayPal. Square is also not compatible, but you may choose to use Square alongside our software with external credit card payments.



# Credit Card Processing Information

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## 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. If you are a subscriber at the Virtual Gala or Fusion Gala levels, you can choose to work with any of them. The accounts provided by these companies provide full compatibility with all functions of our software.

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. It is also NOT available to Traditional or Digital Gala subscribers.

## Option 4

### Using an external credit card processing service (e.g. Square)

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.

# Credit Card Processing Information

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## 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](mailto:cardservices@schoolauction.net) to discuss how to connect it.

# Testimonials

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"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

"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

# Testimonials

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"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

"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