



Preparing The Raiser's Edge® for a Capital Campaign—Gift Management

The following are questions to answer and tasks to do to prepare The Raiser's Edge for a new capital campaign in the area of gifts management.

Campaign, Fund and Appeal Structure

Campaigns

- How does this new campaign fit into your existing campaign structure? Is it just a matter of adding one new campaign record to The Raiser's Edge to track the money for the new campaign?
- Or are you doing a comprehensive campaign? If so, how does your existing campaign structure and reporting from that need to change for the new capital campaign?

Funds

- What new funds are needed to identify funding areas within the campaign?
- How do they relate to your existing fund structure, especially if this is a comprehensive campaign?
- Have you coordinated these new funds with your accounting department?

Appeals

- Does the new campaign require anything new or different in your appeal records in The Raiser's Edge?

Pledges

Fundraising Decisions about Pledges

- What pledges will the accounting department book and not book?
- Will you want to record verbal pledges, as some call them, so you don't forget about them even though you cannot yet book them in accounting?
- Will a distinction need to be made in The Raiser's Edge between conditional and unconditional pledges for this campaign?

phone

415.861.5454

email

bill@billconnors.com

web

www.billconnors.com

address

584 Castro Street, #320
San Francisco, CA 94114

- Will pledges simply be posted as usual with existing procedures, or will accounting prefer to book pledges based on pledge forms? What changes are needed to the posting process to accommodate the campaign pledges?
- What changes, if any, are needed to post pledge payments? This is especially applicable if accounting is not currently booking pledges and therefore accounting treats a pledge payment no differently than an outright cash gift. If they book campaign pledges, they will need to know when a cash gift is a pledge payment.
- In summary, you need to decide what pledge situations will be entered into The Raiser's Edge, counted in campaign reports, and booked in accounting.
- What is your write-off policy? Under what circumstances and who can write off pledges?
- What is the process for communicating write-offs to accounting?

Pledge Forms

Pledge Forms need to collect all of the information that is needed to properly manage the pledge in the database (in addition to other fundraising, accounting and legal requirements you determine).

The Raiser's Edge requirements include:

- Donor name and address information.
- If you wish to provide this option, recognition name format if different than what will be assigned as the Primary Addressee for the donor.
- If the donor wishes the gift to be made anonymously, is this a one-time request for this gift or a broader statement for all the donor's giving?
- Based on your decisions made in the previous section, what kind of pledge this is as it affects the database.
- The campaign for the gift if more than one RE campaign record is created for the fundraising campaign (this and some of the other gift fields can be filled out by development staff in an "Internal Use Only" section of the form after receiving it back from the donor).
- The fund(s) for the gift.
- The appeal for the gift.
- The date the pledge was made. This needs to be clearly defined for both campaign and database purposes—is this the date the donor made the commitment, such as verbally, the date the form is signed, or some other date? There should be a campaign policy that defines this and the pledge form should have a field that includes that date.
- The total amount of the pledge.
- The RE "solicitors" that get credit for the pledge and if applicable, how much credit each fundraiser gets (each can get up to the amount of the pledge; the sum of the credit can exceed the amount of the pledge).
- Whether the donor wishes to receive pledge payment reminders (it is recommended that they do to help expedite payment, so this is a fundraising decision: direct the database staff to send reminders for all pledges unless a specific note says otherwise on the form, or provide an option on the form for the donor to opt in or out of reminders).

- Any special notes about things to watch for about the payments, such as payment by a separate entity than the constituent making the pledge (e.g., donor advised fund or private foundation)?
 - If a different entity is paying the pledge than making it, consider legal and fundraising issues related to that in addition to the database considerations.
- Whether any other constituents should be considered for soft credit.
- Whether there are any employer matching gifts expected on the payments.
 - The form, or at least discussion with the donor, should be clear that in tracking the pledge we are only recording, at the pledge level, what the individual donor will pay. In The Raiser's Edge do not enter a pledge in a person's record that will be partially paid by the match from the individual's employer. The person can later be given credit for the company's match, but that match amount should not be included in the pledge amount entered into The Raiser's Edge.
- Whether the gift is made in honor or in memory of anyone and if so, those details.
- The payment schedule. Please be sure to offer a schedule in a way that The Raiser's Edge easily accommodates so the system can support the process efficiently. Common options for The Raiser's Edge are illustrated below. The full list of frequency options includes:

Pledge Installment Schedule for Robert C. Hernandez

Use the 'Schedule' fields, then select 'Distribute' to help generate an installment schedule.

Installment Schedule

Gift Amount: \$0.00

Frequency: **Single Installment** No. Installments: **1**

Starting on: **Weekly**

Date	Amount
12/28/2009	\$0.00

Distribute Reschedule

Starting on: **Weekly**

Starting on: **Irregular**

Starting on: **Single Installment**

Distribute Reschedule

The most common payment frequency options:

Pledge Installment Schedule for Robert C. Hernandez

Use the 'Schedule' fields, then select 'Distribute' to help generate an installment schedule.

Installment Schedule

Gift Amount: \$0.00

Frequency: **Single Installment** No. Installments: **1**

Single Installment

Starting on: **12/28/2009**

Installments due on 12/28/2009

Date	Amount
12/28/2009	\$0.00

Distribute **Reschedule**

OK **Cancel**

Pledge Installment Schedule for Robert C. Hernandez

Use the 'Schedule' fields, then select 'Distribute' to help generate an installment schedule.

Installment Schedule

Gift Amount: \$0.00

Frequency: **Monthly** No. Installments: **1**

Day **28** of every **1** month(s)

The of every month(s)

Starting on: **12/28/2009**

Installments due on 12/28/2009

Date	Amount
------	--------

Distribute **Reschedule**

OK **Cancel**

Pledge Installment Schedule for Robert C. Hernandez

Use the 'Schedule' fields, then select 'Distribute' to help generate an installment schedule.

Installment Schedule

Gift Amount: \$0.00

Frequency: Quarterly No. Installments: 1

Day 28 of every three months

The [] of every three months

Starting on: 12/28/2009

Installments due on 12/28/2009

Date	Amount
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Distribute Reschedule

OK Cancel

Pledge Installment Schedule for Robert C. Hernandez

Use the 'Schedule' fields, then select 'Distribute' to help generate an installment schedule.

Installment Schedule

Gift Amount: \$0.00

Frequency: Annually No. Installments: 1

On December 28

Starting on: 12/28/2009

Installments due on 12/28/2009

Date	Amount
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Distribute Reschedule

OK Cancel

The Raiser's Edge wants to know the full amount of the pledge and the payment schedule and then it will divide the payments equally on that schedule. While The Raiser's Edge can accommodate irregular amounts and schedules, this obviously has to be entered manually. You want to be careful about how often you offer this option and how many payments are in the schedule to avoid creating a data entry nightmare.

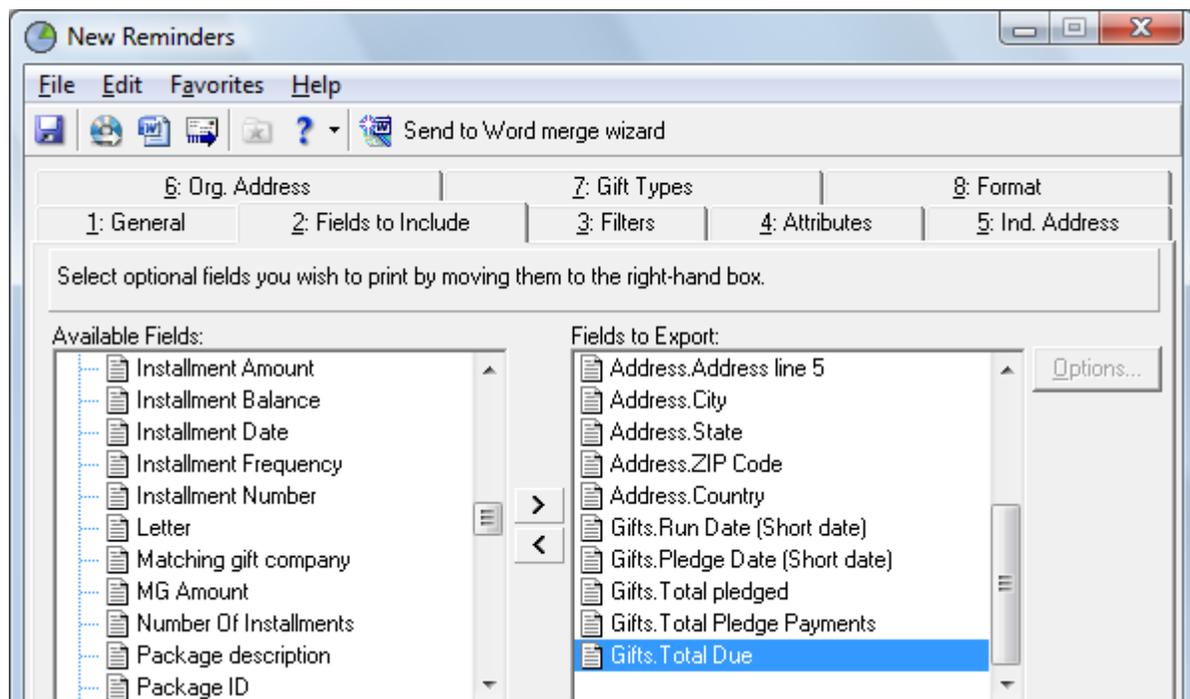
Note that planned gifts require more and different details to enter properly into The Raiser's Edge. Most planned gifts should not be entered into The Raiser's Edge as pledges.

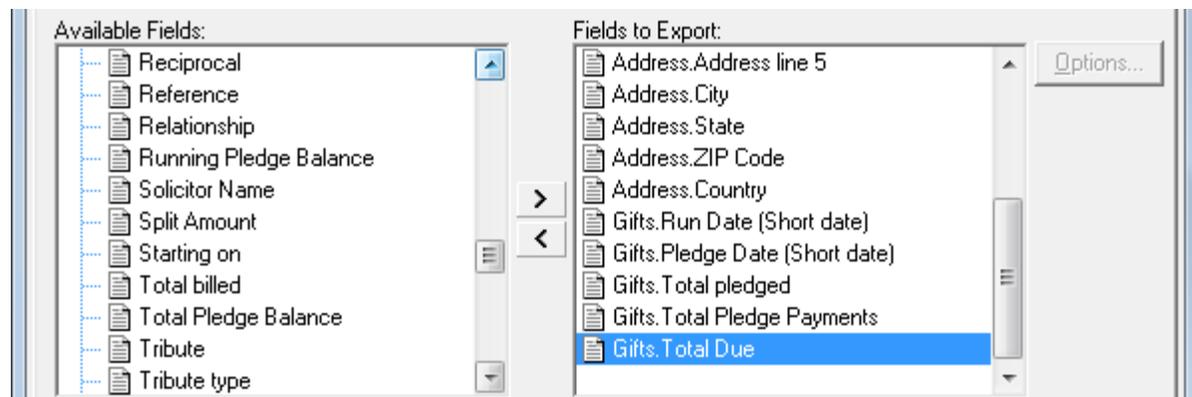
Gift Acknowledgements

- Will campaign stationery be used? For all gifts (comprehensive campaign) or just campaign gifts?
- Text is needed for pledge letters and pledge payment letters for the campaign.
- Text is also needed that is specific to the campaign for the standard outright cash gifts to the campaign.
- Do these letters need any special handling after they are generated or can they just be merged, printed and mailed?

Pledge Reminders

- What schedule do you want to send them on? Example, the middle of each month for all of the following month?
- Do you want to send more than one reminder for an installment? Do you want to send a second or third reminder for a missed payment?
- What format do you want the reminders in (letter, form, combo?), what do you want them to say, and what merge fields do you want? See the **Available Fields** on the left side of the screenshots below for examples of the merge field options (this is not a complete listing, only examples):





Pledge Reporting

I recommend setting up and running the following two reports on a monthly basis.

Past Due Pledge Report

Run this at the beginning of every month to immediately address past due payments from the previous month.

Pledge Status Report

Run this report in Format 2 (Format tab) with a date range of “Last Month” for reconciling account receivables with accounting. This report shows starting balances (which should have been previously reconciled); the month’s new pledges, payments and write-offs; and the ending pledge balance which should match accounting’s receivables total.

Campaign Reporting

What new reports are needed for the campaign and do existing reports need to be modified to address the campaign’s reporting needs?

For more information on managing the fundraising for the campaign—the prospects, fundraisers, volunteers, and “moves management”—see Chapter 6 of my book, *Fundraising with The Raiser’s Edge: A Non-Technical Guide* (Wiley, 2010).

All the best of success with your campaign!