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Click Here to Donate: An Examination of Online Crowdfunding Campaigns by Division I Intercollegiate Athletic Departments

Liz Sattler
Illinois State University

Craig Morehead
Indiana State University

Nels Popp
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Chad McEvoy
Northern Illinois University

Crowdfunding is an online mechanism allowing individuals, groups, and organizations to solicit and procure financial gifts from a large number of donors. An increasing number of college athletic departments are now utilizing crowdfunding as a tool to finance specific departmental needs such as new equipment and travel expenses. While many college athletic departments have embraced this fundraising mechanism, little is known about the effectiveness of crowdfunding in meeting fundraising objectives within athletic departments. A mixed-method approach was utilized to better understand how prevalent and successful crowdfunding campaigns are, which variables seem to impact whether a fundraising goal was met, and how college athletic fundraisers view the use of such campaigns. A total of 70 crowdfunding campaigns within NCAA Division I institutions were identified and examined through content analysis. Overall, 54.4% of campaigns met their stated financial goal. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and independent samples t-tests revealed that campaigns (a) focused on a single objective, (b) providing a greater number of updates, and (c) which included a greater number of reward tiers, were significantly more successful. In addition, qualitative interviews with development professionals (n = 11) revealed five primary themes regarding the effectiveness of crowdfunding campaigns: (a) new donor identification, (b) social pressure, (c) campaign specificity, (d) donor incentives, and (e) team participation. .

Keywords: crowdfunding, fundraising, intercollegiate athletics, online, donations

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Online crowdfunding is a form of fundraising allowing individuals or organizations to fund projects online by generating a wide variety of donation amounts from a large pool of individual donors (Morales, 2017). It is estimated that in 2015 alone, online crowdfunding platforms accounted for nearly $35 billion in global contributions (Massolution, 2015). A recent industry report revealed a 30.89% growth rate for 2018 (BusinessWire, 2018) while the World Bank predicts that by 2025, total contributions will reach $93 billion (Dholakiya, 2017). More specifically, studies indicate that crowdfunding is changing the way in which Americans donate to causes, with one-in-five Americans having contributed to at least one online campaign (Smith, 2016). Additionally, millennials prefer crowdfunding over traditional methods of giving (Bourque, 2016). This evidence suggests that crowdfunding is not merely a fad, but rather a sustainable fundraising technique in the modern era.

From high schools, to youth sports programs, to city parks and recreation departments, a growing number of organizations across the sport industry are now using some form of online crowdfunding (Attwood, 2014). Platforms like RallyMe have served as an online fundraising base for individual athletes, high school athletic programs, and even national governing bodies since 2012. Today, sites like SportFunder, MakeAChamp, and FanAngel serve a similar role in providing a fundraising platform for athletes of all ages. University athletic departments have also turned to online platforms to promote both annual fund and capital campaigns (Morales, 2017). This non-traditional mechanism for fundraising affords athletics administrators the opportunity to reach a wider audience of potential donors through their various social platforms. It also serves as a supplementary line of revenue for athletic departments beyond their existing annual fund.

American universities have moved towards a crowdfunding model to help reach their fundraising goals (Douglas-Gabriel, 2016; Gearhart, Smith, & Miller, 2018) as it provides a unique outlet to reach alumni and donors spread throughout the country and abroad. That, coupled with an effective e-mail and social media campaign, can result in great success in just a short window of time (Attwood, 2014). With the widespread success of these campaigns in recent years, it should not be surprising that university athletic departments are now entering into the crowdfunding game. The emergence of university-based campaigns linked to athletics can likely be attributed to a 2015 rules clarification by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The clarification stipulated member schools can use online crowdfunding platforms, in addition to traditional fundraising methods, as long as the funds raised are used for "actual and necessary" expenses related to competition, and individual athletes do not receive funds directly (Morales, 2017). During the same timeframe, the National Association of Collegiate Directors of America (NACDA) hosted a webinar entitled *Embracing the Moment: Crowdfunding in College Athletics,* in which they called on practitioners to "leverage unique fundraising opportunities to engage donors and alumni" (NACDA, 2014, pg. 1). Since then, an increasing number of intercollegiate departments have launched their own crowdfunding campaigns to subsidize various aspects of athletics budgets. Although the webinar and rules clarification cannot necessarily be identified as catalysts for the increased use of crowdfunding within intercollegiate athletic departments, the 2014-15 timeframe does appear to be the point of departure from which crowdfunding campaigns were first established as viable alternatives to more traditional fundraising methods.

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As the cost of sustaining a university-based athletics program has continued to rise in recent decades, intercollegiate athletic departments have maintained a heavy reliance on cash contributions as a source for generated revenues (Fulks, 2017). In his 2016 Division I Intercollegiate Athletics Programs Report on Revenues and Expenses, Fulks (2017) identified 'cash contributions from alumni and others' as the top generated revenue item for both Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) and Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) programs, ahead of ticket sales and broadcast rights fees, respectively. In Fulks' 2014 report, cash contributions ranked third for FBS programs, and second for FCS programs, so the 2016 findings suggest a shift in generated revenue sources with a more prominent reliance on cash contributions. Additionally, a report by the Council for Aid to Education found major athletic departments raised more than $1 billion in 2015, with some athletic departments doubling their athletics donations overall (not limited to online giving) from the prior year (Wolverton & Kambhampati, 2016). Therefore, although allocated revenues remain the primary source of revenues for all but autonomy institutions (Fulks, 2017), these reports suggest an increasing reliance on cash contributions in all levels of NCAA Division I athletics.

Since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act took effect on January 1, 2018, its immediate impact on college athletic donations has been mixed (Batt, Marks, McFarlane, & Weiberg, n.d.). Previously, donors could count up to 80% of their charitable contribution tied to ticket purchases as a deduction on their taxes, and because of the loop hole, most major athletic departments tied giving to the ability to purchase football and basketball tickets (Smith, 2018). The new bill eliminates that deduction altogether. Therefore, development offices across the country have restructured their giving programs in an effort to offset potential losses. For example, some athletics departments encouraged donors to 'lock-in' their donations for the 2018 year prior to the tax cut taking effect, therefore mitigating the legislation's impact in the first year (Novy, Williams, & Lorin, 2017; Bachman & Saunders, 2018). In other cases, schools have encouraged donors to shift contributions to philanthropic initiatives that are still eligible for charitable deductions because they do not include a tangible benefit (Bozick, 2018). Historically, favorable tax implications have been important considerations when assessing athletic donor motivation (Ko, Rhee, Walker, & Lee, 2014; Park, Ko, Kim, & Sagas, 2016; Staurowsky, Parkhouse, & Sachs, 1996). Therefore, given the recent changes in American tax law, a renewed investigation into the importance of tangible tax benefits is warranted.

As athletics budgets continue to balloon, and reliance on external funding increases, it is worth investigating the increasingly popular fundraising tool of crowdfunding as an alternative to financing athletics budgets. Although researchers have recently identified general best practices in FBS donor relations (Wanless, Pierce, Martinez, Lawrence-Benedict, & Kopka, 2017), little-to-no research exists to guide athletic administrators in designing effective online crowdfunding campaigns, despite the fact programs across the country are actively using them to raise funds to support their athletics teams (Morales, 2017). As a result, the primary purpose of this study was to analyze crowdfunding campaigns across Division I intercollegiate athletic departments in order to identify both structural commonalities and determinants for campaign success. A secondary purpose of the study was to explore the process of developing and implementing campaigns through the eyes of development practitioners with this experience. This exploratory, mixed methods study will establish a foundation of knowledge for college athletics administrators as they work to both develop and manage online crowdfunding campaigns in the future.

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Review of Literature

Intercollegiate Athletic Donations

It is evident, through decades of scholarship, that intercollegiate athletics plays an important role in institutional giving across American Universities. In their meta-analysis of intercollegiate athletics and institutional fundraising, Martinez, Stinson, Kang, and Jubenville (2010) found intercollegiate athletics does have a positive effect on overall giving, with giving relationships related to gift target, alumni status of the donor, level of NCAA membership, and inclusion of a football team. Donor motivation refers to the underlying factors that propel an individual to give (Ko, et al., 2014). A number of scholars have examined specific donor motivations across traditional fundraising campaigns in college athletics (Bass, Achen, & Gordon, 2015; Gladden, Mahony, & Apostolopoulou, 2005; Hardin, Piercy, Bemiller, & Koo, 2010; Ko, Rhee, Walker, and Lee, 2014; Popp, Barrett, & Weight, 2016; Shapiro, Giannoulakis, Drayer, & Wang, 2010; Shapiro & Ridinger, 2011; Staurowsky, 1996; Stinson and Howard, 2010; Tsiotsou, 2006; Wells, Southall, Stotlar, & Mundfrom, 2005); however, discrepancy remains as to whether individuals are driven primarily by transactional or altruistic motivators (Popp et al., 2016).

While some studies have shown donors are motivated primarily by the ticket-related benefits (Mahoney et al., 2003; Wells, et al., 2005), or tax-deduction incentives (Park, et al., 2016), others have found donors are driven primarily by their desire to improve the quality of athletics and the opportunity to help student-athletes (Gladden et al., 2005). In their analysis of open-ended responses of donors across three college athletic programs, Gladden et al., (2005) found 61.8% of donors cited ‘support and improve the athletic program’ as a motivator for giving, with 49.8% identifying ‘ticket-oriented’ benefits. Stinson and Howard (2010) suggest both transactional and altruistic motivations may be present for intercollegiate athletics donors, with altruistic motivations developing later on in the giving life-cycle. Other studies suggest that demographic distinctions, such as age, income, and education are key determinants of giving behavior (Tsiotsou, 2004; Shapiro & Ridinger, 2011; Staurowsky, 1996; Tsiotsou, 2006). For instance, differences in donor motivation have been found based on level of giving. In their analysis of low and high-contribution donors, Park, et al. (2016) found low-contribution donors were motivated by tangible benefits, while high-contribution donors were motivated by socialization. It is important to note, however, that motivational factors have yet to be linked to donation amount (Mahoney, Gladden, and Funk, 2003).

In an effort to better understand the conceptual framework of donor motivation within college athletics, Ko et al., (2014) winnowed prior motivations identified from existent literature into eight primary factors. These eight factors were then examined in relationship to Alderfer’s (1969) Existence, Relatedness, and Growth Theory of motivation, and through structural equation modeling, the researchers confirmed donor motivations appear to have strong relationship to all three constructs of ERG Theory, suggesting multiple salient donor motives. Thus, as the authors of the study conclude, “It is of interest to ascertain what factors influence financial donations and determine whether these factors resonate more desirably among donor groups” (Ko et al., 2014, p. 540). Such an assertion suggests exploratory research is needed examining a variety of factors related to donor behavior, including marketing communications and solicitation tools utilized by development staff.

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In addition to considering literature regarding donor motivations, it is also useful to consider predictors of future giving behavior, particularly as administrators look to identify prospective donors. Donor intention is simply a mental state representing a commitment to donate in the future. While many prior studies have examined current donor behavior, Brunette, Vo, and Watanabe (2017) investigated current university students' intentions to donate to their alma mater at a later date. Given that crowdfunding donors tend to be younger (Smith, 2016), the findings of Brunette et al. are of particular interest to the present study as affiliation to student groups and attendance at athletic events are directly related to the donation intention of current students. Additionally, place identity and attachment, as well as knowledge of how to make future donations were influential to donation intention. The findings also suggest students affiliating with student groups have higher donor intention. A more recent study (Cho, Lemon, Levenshus, & Childers, 2018) similarly found college students who were highly involved in clubs had higher rates of donor intention. These results helped inform the line of questioning used during interview sessions in Phase II of the current study.

For college athletic departments, annual fund campaigns typically include reward tiers linked to tangible items like tickets or parking. It is important to note online crowdfunding campaigns focused on capital projects (e.g. facility construction, equipment, or uniforms) are likely to provide rewards tiers focused on low-cost giveaway items (e.g. t-shirts, other memorabilia items) or name recognition, if rewards are offered at all. This is an important distinction, as the transactional rewards in a crowdfunding campaign are often not a primary marketing tool, whereas access to premium seating and parking tend to be the focus of more traditional fundraising campaigns.

A recent Pew study (Smith, 2016) found 84% of crowdfunding donors were motivated by the sense of connection to the projects they support, and donors were far more likely to donate to 'help a person in need' or 'for a school' than they were to fund a business, or a new product or invention (Smith, 2016). This finding suggests crowdfunding donors may be more inclined to be driven by altruistic motivators, as opposed to transactional motivators – a finding that could indicate a key opportunity for athletic departments.

Determinants for Crowdfunding Success

Crowdfunding has been defined by experts as "an open call, essentially through the Internet, for the provision of financial resources either in the form of donation or in exchange for some form of reward in order to support initiatives for specific purposes" (Schweinbacher & Larralde, 2010, pg. 4). Crowdfunding campaigns are segmented based on the purpose and/or cause related to the campaign. Four major categories of campaigns have been identified: (a) donation, (b) rewards, (c) debt, and (d) equity (Zeoli, 2014). While it is important to distinguish between all four categories of crowdfunding campaign types, it should be noted intercollegiate athletics campaigns tend to be either donation-based or rewards-based. Donation-based campaigns rely on donors who give money simply for the good of the cause, with no expectation of something in return. An example would be a campaign driven by the American Red Cross to raise funds in the wake of a national disaster. Rewards-based crowdfunding is more transactional, with contributors expecting to receive some type of 'reward' in exchange for their donation. This type of crowdfunding tends to be very popular by offering donors an added incentive to donate. An example of a rewards-based campaign would be a campaign driven by an

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athletic department that provides donors an autographed jersey as a reward if they donate at least $500.

Today, a vast number of crowdfunding platforms are available to individuals or businesses looking to raise funds. Funders have the option of using traditional crowdfunding sites like Kickstarter to host their campaign, or opting for more control with a white label crowdfunding platform that gives them the flexibility to host the campaign on their own website. When it comes to traditional crowdfunding platforms, all-or-nothing (or fixed) funding sites like Kickstarter require funders to reach their goal, otherwise donations are returned to backers of the campaign. Indiegogo offers funders the option of having a fixed or flexible campaign, where flexible campaigns will get funds regardless of meeting the campaign goal. Most traditional crowdfunding platforms are fee-based, meaning a percentage of funds raised are charged back to the platform as a fee for utilizing the site. Kickstarter charges 5%, on top of a processing payment per transaction (Kickstarter, 2019), while Indiegogo charges a 3% processing fee and an additional 30 cents per transaction (Indiegogo, 2019). Some sites are advertisement-based, meaning they supplement costs by running advertising, making it possible for them to operate a zero-fee model (Causes, 2019).

While utilizing a traditional crowdfunding website as a host site is one popular option for crowdfunding, a more recent trend is white label crowdfunding, or platforms that allow companies to purchase a subscription to their services, provide training to staff, and allow the organization to host the campaign on their own website. White label crowdfunding platforms allow the host to maintain control over their campaign(s), gain access to and manage data, while still having technical support from the platform. These types of platforms tend to be subscription-based, rather than fee-based, meaning a company would need to pay an annual subscription fee, or a one-time license fee to access the platform. For example, the University of Buffalo Athletic department has hosted dozens of crowdfunding campaigns on their website through a platform called ScaleFunder. The platform allows University administrators to set a campaign goal, as well as establish reward tiers for giving. Hosts have the option to incorporate video or photos, a narrative about the campaign, and campaign updates. Once the campaign is launched, “backers” have the ability to share the campaign via social media links and comment on a donor wall, both imbedded in the page. Due to the flexible nature of white label crowdfunding platforms, it appears more and more universities are moving towards white label crowdfunding. While dozens of these sites are geared towards universities, ScaleFunder and USEED appear to be most commonly used by university athletic departments.

Despite the growing popularity of online crowdfunding, studies have shown nearly half of the projects on Kickstarter, failed to meet their funding goal (Stohmeyer, 2013). By and large, studies on crowdfunding success have utilized ‘percent goal’, or the percentage of funding generated by a campaign, as a marker for success (Lagazio & Querci. 2018; Chen, Thomas, & Kohli, 2016; Mollick, 2014; De Larrea, Altin, & Singh, 2019). For example, Lagazio & Querci (2018), defined a campaign as successful if the rate of financing is equal to or higher than 100%. They explain that when projects don’t meet (or come close to meeting) their goal, they fail because either the more fundraising is needed or the project has to be scaled back.

While online crowdfunding has been utilized for nearly a decade, and enjoyed vast growth in a short period, it remains an understudied area among academic researchers (Mollick, 2014). In fact, just a handful of studies have examined factors salient to campaign success (Chen, Thomas, & Kohli, 2016; Lu, Xie, Kong, & Yu, 2014; Mollick, 2014) and none of those studies have focused solely on athletic campaigns. In their study of crowdfunding campaigns across

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Kickstarter.com, Chen et al., (2016) examined the effect of appeal modes (e.g. guilt appeals, self-benefit appeals, and nostalgia appeals), product characteristics and message frames (e.g. utilitarian vs. experiential products), and presentation characteristics (e.g. images, video, professionalism, reward tiers, funding goal, etc.). They found (a) guilt appeals, (b) utilitarian product types, (c) an emotional message frame, and (d) reward tiers were positively related to reaching funding goals. Specifically, they found funders were more likely to engage when provided with a functional, utilitarian product, and campaigns providing fewer, more meaningful reward categories were more likely to be funded.

Project quality, social media, and frequent communication with donors are other predictors of success based on recent studies. A study by the University of Buffalo School of Management identified (a) high quality photos and video, (b) previous crowdfunding success, and (c) positive comments from backers to be key factors in reaching campaign goals (Manne, 2016). Additional studies have identified a strong correlation between social promotion of campaigns through social media and fundraising results, suggesting social media influence is a key factor in reaching campaign goals (Lu, et al., 2014; Mollick, 2014). In his exploratory study of over 48,500 crowdfunding projects, Mollick (2014) identified project quality and social capital as determents for success. When measuring 'project quality', he found campaigns which included a video and provided early updates (within the first three days of launch) were associated with success, whereas spelling errors reduced success rate. De Larrea, et al. (2019) found that frequent communication with funders was a key driver for success in their study of restaurant crowdfunding campaigns. Additionally, Lagazio & Querci (2018) found updating and commenting on a campaign page increases the hit rate, and that fixed, small-sized campaigns were more likely to be funded.

The findings across the crowdfunding literature suggest a variety of predictors for crowdfunding success, including product type, presentation, and social capital. However, given the vast differences in sample size and campaign types across the literature, it is difficult to theorize concrete predictors particularly given the limited data available in this new area of study. Still, the structure and findings of these exploratory studies serve as an important framework for the development of the current study, which analyzes determinants for success across crowdfunding campaigns among NCAA Division I intercollegiate athletic departments.

While a basis of literature is developing in the area of study surrounding online crowdfunding, at this point no research has been conducted to specifically study the development and implementation of crowdfunding campaigns by intercollegiate athletic departments. As athletics budgets continue to rise, and reliance on external funding increases, it is crucial for athletics administrators to consider popular, cost-effective alternatives such as crowdfunding. The current landscape provides little research-based guidance to administrators as they develop these campaigns. This exploratory, mixed methods study will establish a foundation of knowledge for college athletic administrators as they work to both develop and manage online crowdfunding campaigns in the future. Further study of this area is needed if athletic administrators are to become more effective at developing lucrative crowdfunding campaigns, as well as executing them in an efficient manner. In order to explore this topic, the following research questions were developed to guide the study:

RQ1: What percentage of intercollegiate athletic crowdfunding campaigns met their stated fundraising goal?

RQ2: Do differences exist in regards to campaign attributes such as: (a) number of

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reward tiers, (b) number of communication updates, (c) fundraising objective, (d) professionalism or (e) length of campaign, based on campaign success rates?
RQ3: What factors do intercollegiate athletic administrators believe are important to ensure success for online crowdfunding campaigns?

Methods

A sequential mixed-methods approach was utilized to address the defined research questions in this study. The approach is used in cases where the researcher completes one method and then uses a second method to elaborate on the findings identified through the first (Andrew, Pedersen, & McEvoy, 2011). Historically, mixed methods approaches have not been widely used across the sport management discipline. Rudd and Johnson (2010) acknowledged this and called on sport management scholars to incorporate more mixed method approaches into their research. In the current study, a quantitative methodology was used first (Phase I), followed by a qualitative methodology (Phase II).

Sample (Phase I)

In Phase I of the study, a quantitative content analysis approach was used. Andrew, et al. (2011) define quantitative content analysis as the "systematic, objective, and replicable examination of symbols of communication that have been assigned numeric values" (p. 121). In sport management scholarship, this type of analysis has been used to study journal content (Shapiro & Pitts, 2014), course syllabi (Foreman, Walker, Seifried, Andrew, 2016; Young, 2001; Li & Cotten, 1996), job descriptions (Bae & Miller, 2011; Pierce, Petersen, Clavio, & Meadows, 2012), and social media content (Geurin & Burch, 2017; Achen, Kaczorowski, Horsmann, & Ketzler, 2018). Because no one has previously examined crowdfunding campaigns across intercollegiate athletic departments, a quantitative content analysis was deemed the appropriate methodology to provide some foundational knowledge about how crowdfunding is being used in this space.

Crowdfunding campaigns that were complete (meaning they reached their end date prior to the compilation of this data) were the focus of the content analysis. An e-mail was sent to a total of 482 Division I college athletic administrators in development/fundraising, seeking website links for completed crowdfunding campaigns that had been administered through their department. Of those contacted, 23 administrators responded to the request, with some providing a single campaign and others providing a handful of campaigns their athletic department had completed. Additionally, researchers identified campaigns through Internet-based searches. After removing campaigns that were not yet complete, a total of 70 completed campaigns at the Division I level were identified and considered usable for the current study. All told, the data set contains campaigns from 33 unique University athletic departments.

Variables (Phase I)

Key variables were determined through content analysis of each campaign website. Prior to examining the campaign pages, a codebook was developed to help analyze key quantitative variables. The codebook included 31 questions to analyze crowdfunding campaigns. Two independent coders responded to questions related to campaign type, monetary goal, actual funds

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raised, number of donors, length of campaign, length of video, number of photos, number of campaign updates, and number of reward tiers. Campaigns were classified as having either a tangible focus (facilities, equipment, travel) or an intangible focus (philanthropy, spirit enhancement, recruiting). Campaigns were also classified as either having a single campaign objective or multiple campaign objectives. Reliability between the two coders was established through a Cohen's kappa measurement, with all variables having a coefficient of at least .70. For exploratory studies, this is considered an appropriate standard (Neuendorf, 2002). The initial variables were identified largely through the examination of existing crowdfunding literature. For example, Chen, et al., (2016) identified utilitarian product type and reward tiers were positively related to reaching funding goals. Thus, for the present study, researchers identified fundraising objective (product type), and number of reward tiers as key variables to consider (among others).

Campaigns were categorized into three groups based on the percentage of funds raised relative to campaign goal, with those raising over 110% of their goal classified as highly successful because they surpassed their stated goal, those raising between 90-110% as successful because they came close to or just exceeded their stated goal, and those raising below 90% of their goal as having low success because they failed to meet their stated goal by 10% or more. The literature on crowdfunding suggests a wide range of success rates based on campaign platform and type, making it difficult to define the term success in this regard (Mollick, 2014). Because the sample of campaigns in this study did have a higher average success rate than general crowdfunding campaigns, the previously stated groups were deemed appropriate. Additionally, these groupings aligned with the distribution of the study sample, thus allowing the authors to run the proper statstical analsyis. These groups served as the dependent variable.

Data Analysis (Phase I)

Once the two coders completed their content analysis of the campaign pages, quantitative data were analyzed using version 22 of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM Corp., 2013). In order to respond to the first research question, data were first analyzed using descriptive statistics. With the second research question, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Independent Samples *t*-tests were conducted in order to identify group differences among the independent variables.

Study Participants (Phase II)

A qualitative in-depth interview methodology was used in Phase II of the study. A total of eleven practitioners working in Division I athletics, with experience administering crowdfunding campaigns were interviewed about their experiences. Given the relatively small number of athletic programs currently implementing crowdfunding campaigns (a population of 70 such campaigns identified in Phase I), and the researchers' desire to collect data from a range of NCAA Divisions I subgroups, a stratified purposeful sampling method was utilized for Phase II. Based on these delimiting factors and the desire to seek depth of understanding about how crowdfunding is actually practiced from the viewpoint of individual athletic administrators, 11 such development officers were interviewed, which represents a high percentage of the population (over 15%) and demonstrates sampling adequacy. Further strategies for trustworthiness include member checking demonstrating both credibility and authenticity;

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triangulation of data sources (i.e., data solicited from diverse subgroups of NCAA administrators) demonstrating transferability; triangulation of data methods (i.e., mixed-methods study design) demonstrating confirmability; and triangulation of investigators (i.e., multiple coders) demonstrating dependability.

Of the eleven interview subjects, four were identified through their response to the e-mail outreach used in Phase I of the study. The remaining subjects were the result of a snowball sampling approach, in which the interviewer asked each practitioner to recommend others who were also known to be working on crowdfunding campaigns across Division I. In confirming the final set of interview subjects, the researchers made sure the sample included representation from a variety of athletic departments in regards to University enrollment and athletics stature. Five of the subjects worked at universities with enrollment of 12,000 or fewer, while six of the subjects worked at universities with enrollment of 12,000 or more. Four of the subjects represented athletic departments classified as Power Five schools (Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference, Pac-12 Conference, Southeastern Conference), while three of the subjects represented Group of Five schools (American Athletic Conference, Conference-USA, Mid-American Conference, Mountain West Conference, Sun Belt Conference), and the remaining four represented Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) schools. Table 1 provides a more extensive description of the interview subjects and the schools they represent.

Table 1: Interview Subjects*

Participant	University Type	University Enrollment	Conference Group
Ed	Public	25,327	P5
Jordan	Private	8,410	FCS
Renee	Public	19,951	G5
Max	Public	10,104	FCS
Louis	Private	5,741	FCS
Terry	Public	24,250	P5
Ryan	Public	11,537	FCS
Nico	Public	15,079	G5
Kevin	Public	23,684	G5
Alonzo	Public	28,942	P5
Brandon	Private	10,849	P5

* Pseudonyms have been used in order to protect the confidentiality of the study participants.

A semi-structured interview approach was utilized during the interview sessions, which lasted from 35 to 45 minutes with each subject. Interview questions were developed after Phase I of the study had been completed. The researchers determined questions based on the findings of the content analysis, as well as the relevant literature. Most notably, interview questions focused on the development practitioner's experiences implementing and managing crowdfunding campaigns. Sample questions included "What factors are most important in implementing

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successful crowdfunding campaigns?", and "What barriers have you faced in implementing online crowdfunding campaigns?" Subjects were also asked to discuss their views on the role crowdfunding will play in college athletics fundraising in the future. A full list of the interview questions is available in Appendix A.

Data Analysis (Phase II)

All interviews were transcribed and two cycles of manual coding were conducted by independent coders, using Microsoft Word. To ensure trustworthiness of the data, interview subjects were e-mailed a copy of their transcript and asked to confirm the accuracy of the discussion that occurred. Initially, axial coding was conducted to organize and identify overarching pieces of text (Saldana, 2013). During the second cycle of coding, categorical aggregation was used in an attempt to identify specific instances and/or quotations that were relevant to the research questions (Stake, 1995). Each coder independently identified emergent themes, and then the researchers discussed those themes until consensus was reached (Hays & Singh, 2011). Collectively, these themes helped to elucidate the experiences of intercollegiate athletic administrators who have spearheaded online crowdfunding campaigns as a development tool.

Results

RQ1: What percentage of intercollegiate athletic crowdfunding campaigns met their stated fundraising goal?

A total of 70 completed campaigns at the Division I level were identified and considered usable for the current study. The campaigns selected were all completed from 2015-2017, and represented 17 different athletic conferences. Overall, 54.3% of the campaigns in the sample met their stated fundraising goal. This success rate is moderately higher than the 44% rate that has been reported by Kickstarter as an industry standard (Strohmeyer, 2013). Previous studies in crowdfunding literature have utilized "percent goal", or the percentage of funding generated by a campaign, as a marker for success (Lagazio & Querci. 2018; Chen, et al., 2016; Mollick, 2014; De Larrea, et al., 2019). The mode campaign length was 30 days, while the mode campaign goal was $10,000. Nearly 40% of campaigns had three or more communication updates throughout their duration. Of the campaigns featuring reward tiers, five tiers was the mode. In regards to fundraising objective, 44% of the campaigns identified more than one objective, with Equipment (44.3%) and Travel (41.4%) having the highest representation. At least one photo was included in 62.7% of the campaigns, while 74.3% included a video. The majority of campaigns utilized the white label crowdfunding platform, ScaleFunder. A full summary of descriptive campaign results is available in Table 2.

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Table 2

Campaign Variables

Length of Campaign (days)	*n*	*%*	*Goal Met*	*n*	*%*
>30	11	15.7	Yes	38	54.3
30-39	30	42.9	No	32	45.7
40-49	18	25.7			
50+	11	15.7			

Monetary Goal	*n*	*%*	*Communication Updates*	*n*	*%*
> $10,000	22	31.4	None	21	30.0
$10,000 - $19,999	25	35.7	1	9	12.9
$20,000 - $29,999	10	14.3	2	5	7.1
$30,000 - $39,999	2	2.9	3	12	17.1
$40,000 - $49,999	0	0	4	5	7.1
$50,000 - $59,999	2	2.9	5+	11	15.7
$60,000+	9	12.9			

Reward Tiers	*n*	*%*	*Fundraising Objective**	*n*	*%*
None	43	61.4	Equipment	31	44.3
1	2	2.9	Travel	29	41.4
2	0	0.0	Facility	25	35.7
3	2	2.9	Apparel	10	14.3
4	2	2.9	Scholarship	6	8.0
5	12	17.1	Spirit enhancement	3	4.3
6+	9	12.9	Philanthropy	3	4.3
			Technology	2	2.9

# of Photos	*n*	*%*	*Video Length (seconds)*	*n*	*%*
None	26	37.1	None	18	25.7
1	21	30.0	1-30	3	4.3
2	6	8.5	31-60	16	22.9
3	7	10.0	61-90	9	12.9
4	5	7.1	90+	24	34.3
5+	5	7.1			

*44% of campaigns had more than one fundraising objective

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RQ2: Do differences exist in regards to campaign attributes?

Results from an independent samples *t*-test indicated group differences in the percentage of funds raised based on fundraising objective. Campaigns focused on a single campaign objective (e.g. raising money for a new locker room facility for the soccer team) had more success (M=1.02, SD=.48) than those campaigns with multiple objectives (e.g. uniforms, travel, and scholarship support for the soccer team) (M=.79, SD=.30). Table 2 provides a complete breakdown of the fundraising objectives for the sample campaigns.

The dependent variable (percentage of funds raised) was divided into three categories: low success, success, and high success. Results from an ANOVA test yielded significant results for number of campaign updates ($F = 5.953$, $p = .004$) and number of reward tiers ($F = 4.347$, $p = .017$), with highly successful campaigns providing more updates and a greater number of reward tiers. No significant differences were found for length of campaign or professionalism of campaign.

RQ3: What factors do intercollegiate athletic administrators believe are important to ensure success for online crowdfunding campaigns?

A series of in-depth interviews were conducted with intercollegiate athletic administrators to better understand their experiences and tips for conducting online crowdfunding campaigns. Through consensus coding of the interview transcripts, the following five themes were identified: (a) new donor identification, (b) social pressure, (c) campaign specificity, (d) donor incentives, and (e) team participation. Table 3 provides a breakdown of frequency of occurrence of the various themes across the eleven interview sessions.

Table 3: Qualitative Themes

Theme	Description of Theme	Frequency of Occurrence
New donor identification	Crowdfunding is a unique tool to cultivate new donors	10/11
Social pressure	The importance of influential people among the donor base	8/11
Campaign specificity	The importance of implementing campaigns leading to specific, tangible outcomes	9/11
Donor incentives	The managerial and taxation complications that arise from incentivizing crowdfunding gifts	10/11
Team participation	The importance of team buy-in and participation to campaign success	9/11

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New Donor Identification. Development officers regularly commented on how crowdfunding can be used as a unique tool to cultivate new donors. From a logistical standpoint, online crowdfunding campaigns can reach a far greater audience than more traditional fundraising strategies. As Renee describes, "they just all came out of the woodwork" when they began implementing online crowdfunding campaigns. She continued by saying "if we would have sent the regular secret mailer or email, nothing would have happened with some of these people." Ryan said that in the first day of one of their online crowdfunding campaigns they had "over 1,000 interactions on our page, and I can't call that many people in a day." For those departments who use online crowdfunding, administrators have found it to be an opportunity to engage not only first-time donors such as students, but even high-level donors.

For Jordan, crowdfunding is a tool his school utilizes specifically for its ability to attract new donors. Max offered similar thoughts, saying "everyone knows that it's really costly to do donor acquisition and get people on board, but we see these kinds of projects as a really good way to draw people into being philanthropic to the university." One of the important aspects to such crowdfunding campaigns is the low barrier of entry for those first-time donors. Ed said in their first baseball campaign, they had gifts ranging from as little as $10 to as much as $3,000. Of those giving at the lower end of this continuum, administrators suggest crowdfunding provides a great opportunity for students to make their initial gift to the athletic department. As Renee suggested, "we need young people in the pipeline." To that end, Terry described one crowdfunding initiative his department introduced where 60 percent of the donors were students giving just five or ten dollars apiece. Alluding to the long-view of customer lifetime value, Terry takes the idea of early identification and involvement even further, suggesting:

> "I think it's a good way to find new people, and then if you do it the right way, you get the new people into your funnel, and then hopefully you can move them into annual donors, you can move them down the line hopefully into major givers and all kinds of stuff down the road."

Perhaps most surprising, some schools found crowdfunding to be a point of entry for those willing to provide major gifts to the university. Brandon said "a lot of this is small and minimal giving, but this website brought some people out that have an interest in clipping off big gifts." Terry described one specific donor to an online crowdfunding campaign, "Out of nowhere, we had a lawyer in Atlanta who ended up giving $10,000 … and he wasn't even anywhere on our radar." Therefore, although the cumulative effect of multiple small donations is at the heart of crowdfunding, it is still possible to identify willing donors who have the capacity for larger gifts through this platform.

Social Pressure. Data revealed among successful online crowdfunding campaigns, a sense of social pressure is at play. More specifically, the athletic administrators interviewed alluded to the importance of influential people among the donor base identified to help persuade others, or to be an important word-of-mouth resource for the campaign.

For Jordan's department, campaigns had volunteers who shared crowdfunding projects on social media and through email. Some platforms make this kind of ambassadorship easier by allowing donors to publicize their gift on Twitter or share news of their gift on Facebook. As Louis suggests, the social pressure that comes from online crowdfunding campaigns can be significant because potential contributors can see who else has donated, which can help serve as

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validation: “If they are, then maybe I should too.” To that end, this socialized giving can also lead some to contribute due to a fear of missing out. In order to describe this concept and how it applied to a recent campaign, Renee stated, "People came to us after it closed and said, “can we still give?”

Some administrators lean on well-known personalities to endorse their campaigns. For Brandon, this could be athletic administrators, coaching staff, visible alumni, or former players who are now professional athletes or otherwise have large social media followings. Alonzo has used similar tactics by engaging well-known ambassadors in his programming, leveraging the power of social media by asking former student-athletes to Tweet about their experiences and what the university means to them, thus providing an authentic voice for the campaign.

The importance of a lead donor was also an important element in establishing a successful crowdfunding campaign and having such a donor grows in importance as the monetary goal of the project increases. As Nico suggests, “it’s just more enticing for the donors” if they see an initial gift pre-loaded into the campaign when it is launched. Louis says that his department likes to move forward with a campaign if they have a large gift that moves them close to half of the goal. To be more specific, both Ryan and Jordan suggested having lead or matching donors accounting for 40% of the fundraising goal is ideal.

Campaign Specificity. Development administrators expressed the importance of implementing campaigns leading to specific, tangible outcomes. In general, administrators suggested donors like to see their gifts having a direct positive impact on student-athletes or the athletic department as a whole. Terry suggests departments should have “a clear vision on where the money is going.” In fact, the administrators interviewed suggested campaigns with a specific purpose and tangible outcome are easier to message and manage.

Another aspect of launching a successful crowdfunding campaign is to ensure goals are realistic and attainable. Max’s FCS department found “$5,000 to $10,000 is kind of the sweet spot” they believe can be raised through crowdfunding campaigns, which is similar to the maximum goals set forth by Louis’s FCS department. For some, location may be an important factor in setting campaign goals. However, Power 5 programs may have the ability to reach higher in their goal-setting, as Ed provided an example of how his baseball team was able to shatter a public goal of $75,000 despite concerns raised by the university foundation on overestimating their capacity.

For Renee, part of the fun of crowdfunding for a specific purpose is on the back-end once the item is received and she can instantly update those who contributed to the project. Nico provided a good example of this kind of campaign specificity related to fundraising for knee braces for the football team:

> “I look at it like a fantasy football-type thing, you’re able to claim something and kind of brag about it. Someone will say to a buddy, ‘Hey, see number 75 there? I gave them their knee brace.’ Then it’s a tangible thing that they’re paying for, kind of, and they feel more ownership of it.”

For Jordan, the key is following through, and “making sure that if we are promising to do something with someone’s money, that we’re doing that.” Alonzo takes the idea of campaign specificity even further, suggesting it is not only “what” you are fundraising for that is important,

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but also when and why: "It's making sure people understand why we're doing them," but also "doing it at appropriate times and with the appropriate cause."

Market segmentation is also an important factor to consider when implementing a successful campaign. More specifically, administrators suggested each crowdfunding campaign should have a specific target market, and a story to tell that is specific to that audience. Ed suggests his department tries to keep their campaigns segmented, and "keep it to the people we know have an affinity for the sport" for which they are trying to fundraise. Sometimes this means targeting friends, family, and former student-athletes. This is especially important for Olympic sports because those in that sport community already share a passion and likely have a pre-existing relationship that can be tapped for support.

Donation Incentives. Among the crowdfunding campaigns in the current sample, Power 5 schools tended to use more reward systems, and non-Power 5 schools tended to eschew reward systems. For the Group of 5 and FCS administrators, they did not want to complicate the donation process any more than necessary from a managerial perspective given the potential taxation complications that might arise from incentivizing crowdfunding gifts. As Renee stated, her department "really tried to stay away from anything of monetary value on it, because there was possibly a tax implication on that." Beyond the potential taxation issues at play, Jordan said his department simply does not "have the bandwidth to then fulfill" the tangible gifts they might institute for various giving levels.

However, Power 5 schools appeared to be much more willing and able to provide some kind of incentive for their online crowdfunding campaigns, although those incentives may come in different packages. For Ed's department, depending on the level of donation someone might receive a signed ball from the head coach or a photo of the team. However, on another project they memorialized donors with their names on a plaque, which he believes tended to be "more successful than some piece of memorabilia that you could put on a desk." Terry suggested that his department has been successful with programs that provide "tangible things that also are unique, one-time opportunities" such as pieces of the facility or game-worn equipment. In an effort to manage the number of gifts they will have to fulfill, Brandon's department limits the number of items that can be claimed at each gift level, but he still recognizes the difficulty in coordinating with the individual sport programs to have gifts signed by the head coach.

Team Participation. The final theme was the importance of team buy-in and participation to campaign success. Each department needs a champion to spearhead the crowdfunding efforts, to be the point-person who fights for the cause. But in order to produce successful campaigns, involvement from the coaching staff and from team members was said to be crucial for crowdfunding, especially in the context of fundraising for Olympic sports. For instance, Jordan suggested the involvement of coaches gave a project legitimacy when a donor could say "Oh, this is what our fencing coach actually wants." Stakeholder involvement is needed across the athletic department (e.g., development, marketing, sports information) to achieve success, but Ryan points out that "buy-in from players, and staff, and coaches are one of the biggest hurdles, and the biggest determining factors of success."

Respondents acknowledged one successful campaign or program can start a domino effect across the entire department. As Kevin describes, "we had a three-week period where we had wrestling heavily involved, and they were doing really well … because of that the other

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sports started to notice, and coaches started asking more questions, started asking their student-athletes to get involved."

The involvement of the coaching staff and the players helps to provide the campaign with a more authentic message. As Renee said, "People do not want to hear from me. They do not care about Renee. They are giving to that program. It is the coaches and their platform. To me, it makes it more personal, more real." Louis tells coaches, "in order for this to be successful, you have to own it, your student-athletes have to own it." In the digital age, video of the athletes is a popular tool for providing updates to the crowdfunding pages. However, not all administrators agree with using student-athletes in their crowdfunding messages. Ryan, Terry, and Alonzo all described their desire to eschew the solicitation and involvement of student-athletes in fundraising efforts to avoid potential negative feedback from stakeholders.

Discussion and Implications

As this was an exploratory study, the findings establish a foundation of knowledge for college athletic administrators as they work to both develop and manage successful online crowdfunding campaigns in the future. The results of this study suggest crowdfunding can be a viable fundraising tool for intercollegiate athletic departments, particularly in instances where departments can focus their campaigns on a single fundraising objective. More than half of the campaigns in the sample (54.4%) met their intended goal, with 92.1% of those campaigns raising more than their intended goal. This success rate is moderately higher than the 44% rate that has been reported as an industry standard (Strohmeyer, 2013). Additionally, the interview subjects were energized when speaking about the power and utility of crowdfunding. Even those who had experienced a failed campaign spoke positively about the tool, and its ability to generate supplemental funds for their department.

Quantitative analysis of the campaigns revealed visual elements related to professionalism (video/photos) did not have an impact on campaign success. This is somewhat surprising given the literature on crowdfunding determinants related to professionalism (Chen, et al., 2016; Lu, et al., 2014). Also, longer campaigns did not result in higher percentage of funds raised. The mode campaign length was 30 days, which was echoed by many of the practitioners during their interviews. Those practitioners suggested if a campaign is too lengthy, you risk losing the excitement and momentum that comes with a limited time period. As development practitioners consider an appropriate length of campaign, a 30-day window appears to provide sufficient time to generate interest, share campaign updates, and secure donations.

The cultivation of new donors is perhaps the most pertinent finding of this study. Development practitioners interviewed repeatedly acknowledged they viewed crowdfunding as a tool to reach new donors. Not only were they able to identify a subset of individual donors outside of their existing donor base, but in some cases, campaigns helped identify major donors. While it is difficult to generalize the demographics of these new donors given the qualitative approach used in Phase II of this study, it is worth mentioning several practitioners suggested crowdfunding as a tool for reaching former student-athletes – noting this historically has been a difficult donor group to reach (Shapiro et al., 2010). While more research is needed to determine the lifetime customer value of this group, it is worth considering as development practitioners work to identify target markets for their subsequent crowdfunding campaigns.

The findings suggest effective communication through campaign updates, social media, and e-mail is essential for campaign success. The content analysis revealed highly successful

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campaigns provided more communication with donors throughout the course of the campaign. This finding is consistent with existing literature on crowdfunding success and communication updates (Lu, et al., 2014; Mollick, 2014), as well as the "Message" category of Best Practices suggested by Wanless et al. (2017). These updates allow the athletic department to notify participants on the status of the goal, as well as provide new content (e.g. student-athlete video message thanking donors or announcing a match donor). Some of the practitioners found these updates encouraged new donors to give as well as existing donors to give again. The communication element also ties into the social pressure inherent through this form of fundraising. Traditional forms of athletics fundraising involve some level of anonymity (ie. donor receives a letter in the mail requesting their annual donation; donor writes check and sends it back to the athletic department). With crowdfunding, donors have the opportunity to share with friends and family online that they have given to a campaign. Additionally, as they see others in their peer circle giving to a particular campaign, the FOMO element kicks in. This finding is of particular importance for athletic departments to consider as they look to reach a younger, more social, and internet-based generation of donors.

Another key finding of the study is the need for campaign specificity. The content analysis revealed campaigns that offered a single campaign objective (e.g. raising money for a new locker room facility for the soccer team) were more successful than those that included multiple objectives (e.g. uniforms, travel, and scholarship support for the soccer team). Development practitioners echoed this in their interviews, suggesting crowdfunding donors in particular like to have a clear vision for how their money is going to be used, rather than just being told their donation will help supplement the operating budget for a team. With the short window of fundraising involved in most of these campaigns, donors are actually able to see their donation go to use in fairly short order – something not necessarily true with more traditional annual campaigns. When building campaigns, development personnel should meet with coaches about what their needs are and work to develop a specific campaign focus based on those conversations. This ties back to the need for team participation or buy in. Development practitioners repeatedly echoed the need for coach involvement – both in the development phase and the implementation phase. Coaches have the ability to act as a spokesperson for their team, as well as motivate their players to share the campaign page with friends and family. While development practitioners should provide sufficient support related to campaign administration, gaining buy-in from the coach or coaches should be the first step in developing a campaign.

The development of sufficient reward tiers may be key to building successful campaigns, although there appears to be a disparity between actual donor behavior and practitioner perception. While the content analysis revealed campaigns that were highly successful provided a greater number of reward tiers, interview subjects had mixed reviews on providing rewards or incentives. They cited barriers (e.g. tax implications, limited staffing/resources) as to why they sometimes avoid crowdfunding incentives altogether, although some did acknowledge the value of offering a tangible, unique experience or item as a reward. This is reflected in the current literature on crowdfunding, as Chen, et al., (2016) also found that fewer, more meaningful rewards were linked to campaign success. Given the disparity identified here, further study may be needed into donor motivations surrounding reward incentives specific to crowdfunding campaigns. Based on current findings, if athletic departments have the resources to offer incentives, they should consider unique items that will motivate their donors to give at a certain level, rather than just give away a generic piece of memorabilia to all donors.

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Limitations and Future Research

As with any research, there are limitations to the current study. Because online crowdfunding across intercollegiate athletics is still in its infancy, existing literature on the topic is limited. Because of this, the authors had to rely on more general crowdfunding literature to determine criteria for the content analysis in Phase I of the study. In order to ensure reliability, two of the authors did complete an independent review of a sample of completed intercollegiate athletics campaigns before confirming the final criteria for the analysis. Due to the dearth of information in this area, the authors chose to use a three-tiered percentage of goal model as a categorization of success. Future studies should test this model, among other models present in general crowdfunding scholarship (Lagazio & Querci. 2018; Chen, Thomas, & Kohli, 2016; Mollick, 2014; De Larrea, Altin, & Singh, 2019) in order to determine the best way to measure athletics crowdfunding success.

Another limitation of this study is the small sample size of campaigns used in the content analysis, which limits the ability to generalize findings. The smaller sample size of campaigns also limited the author's testing ability. While a regression analysis may have been preferred to test for predictors of campaign success, the small sample size made it difficult to justify its use. Even though the researcher included a large potential pool of participants in the e-mail request for campaign pages, there are still only a handful of athletic departments actively using crowdfunding. It is worth noting that dozens of responses from development officials stated while they were not currently conducting crowdfunding efforts, they were planning to sometime in the near future – a sign of interest from practitioners and further justification for the current study. A limitation in Phase II was the sample size of interview participants due to the relatively small population of athletic departments using crowdfunding as a means of revenue generation. Finally, an assumption of this study was that development practitioners are open and honest in their responses related to their experience using crowdfunding at their university. Prior to the study, they were assured their responses would be kept confidential and that no identifying information would be made available.

While this study serves as a strong starting point for examining crowdfunding across intercollegiate athletics, more research in this area is needed. Potential directions for future research include examining potential donor fatigue, customer lifetime value, and measuring the motivations of crowdfunding donors. One potential concern for development practitioners as they consider new methods for fundraising is donor fatigue. Annual donors may already feel as though are being solicited for gifts on a regular basis. Does the addition of several crowdfunding campaigns to the annual fundraising calendar lead to donor fatigue or does effective market segmentation and the broad-based nature of crowdfunding circumvent it? Perhaps a qualitative, focus-group setting of athletics donors would be appropriate to consider these questions surrounding donor fatigue.

Another key issue worthy of further study is the concept of Customer Lifetime Value in relation to this new classification of 'crowdfunding donor'. No empirical analysis has been conducted to measure the customer lifetime value of crowdfunding donors in general, let alone intercollegiate athletics. Perhaps a longitudinal study tracking a sample of crowdfunding donors over a multi-year span would provide insight into the likelihood of retention and lifetime value of this illusive donor.

Finally, while extensive work has been done to study the motivations of donors more generally to intercollegiate athletics programs, no study has sought to measure what motivates

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crowdfunding donors. Survey methodology of crowdfunding donors using previously tested instruments for donor motivation (Mahoney, et al., 2003; Ko et al., 2014) may be helpful in determining these differences, which in turn could assist athletic departments as they seek to more effectively implement crowdfunding campaigns in the future. As crowdfunding continues to grow in popularity across the sport industry, both scholars and practitioners can benefit from a deeper knowledge and understanding of this fundraising tool.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Hello _____. Thank you so much for taking the time out of your schedule to chat with me about crowdfunding. Our hope is through these interviews we're able to identify some "best practices" and other themes that might be helpful to other athletic administrators looking to implement crowdfunding at their school.

Interview Questions:

1. Tell me a little about background in college athletics and your current role in development at _____.
2. Talk me through when your department first considered online crowdfunding as a tool for fundraising college athletics; and what that decision-making process was like.
3. Have you found that you you've able to reach new or different target markets (as opposed to your tried and true annual donors) with the online campaigns?
4. How important is it for a campaign to have an appropriate goal set – and how do you go about determining what a goal should be for a particular project?
5. Have you found that the *type* of campaign makes a difference in how willing people are to donate?
6. In what ways has your department communicated information about the various campaigns?
7. How have you determined how many reward tiers to offer and what types of rewards have you found to have the most impact? (e.g. something tangible like a t-shirt vs. something intangible like having their name on a plaque outside of the weight room)
8. How involved have coaches and athletes been in implementing and marketing campaigns? Have you found their level of involvement plays a role?
9. Based on your experience, what factors would you say are most important in implementing a successful crowdfunding campaign?
10. What kind of resources does an athletic department need to initiate an online campaign?
11. What barriers, if any, have you faced in implementing online crowdfunding campaigns?
12. How does your department plan to use crowdfunding in the near future?
13. Over the next five to ten years, how do you expect online crowdfunding to impact the business of fundraising in college athletics?
14. Is there anything else you'd like to add about your experience managing crowdfunding campaigns?

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