

Goals Events
What's Not Working Items
Auction Catalog Tickets
Mobile Silent Auctions
What's Working
Online
Auction
Attendees
Live Auction
Goals Events

**The State of the
Silent Auction**
A report based on surveys of
BiddingForGood Clients and Bidders

Spring 2012

What's Not Working Items
Auction Catalog Tickets
Mobile Silent Auctions
What's Working
Online Success Factors
Auctions Fund-a-need
Attendees Raffles Fundraisers
Live Auctions

Introduction

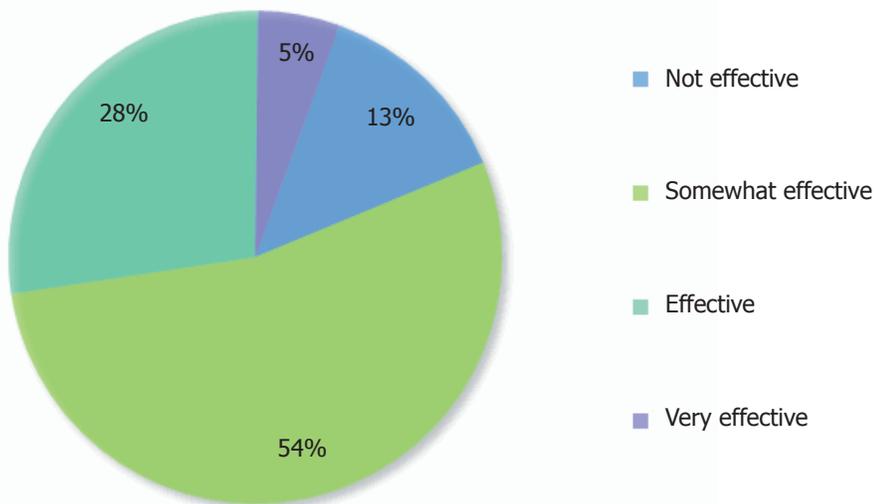
BiddingForGood is a charitable e-commerce company that connects fundraisers, shoppers, and businesses. Over 6,700 schools and nonprofit organizations have used our Smart Auction platform to run engaging fundraisers, reach new audiences, and raise more than **\$160 million** for their causes.

We recently surveyed a selection of our customers to see how they feel about the state of silent auctions today, what's working and what's not, and where they stand in terms of bringing new innovations to their fundraising. Increasing demand on nonprofit services, coupled with a sharp drop in available charitable dollars, means that organizations have to do more with less – making innovation in fundraising more critical than ever.

We also surveyed our Bidder Community, to learn more about the fundraising events they attend. Our Bidder Community is made up of more than 330,000 affluent, cause-minded consumers who regularly shop across our auctions. These generous supporters came to us via fundraising auctions just like yours, and they represent the people who attend your events and bid in your silent auctions to support your organization. We've included selected results from this survey, for added perspective on the state of silent auctions today.

The good news is that there's a lot going well. Nonprofits and schools are open to trying new things to make their fundraising events even more successful, and the people attending your events are supportive partners who want the best for the organizations they support. At the same time, there's plenty of room for improvement.

How effective is the silent auction format?

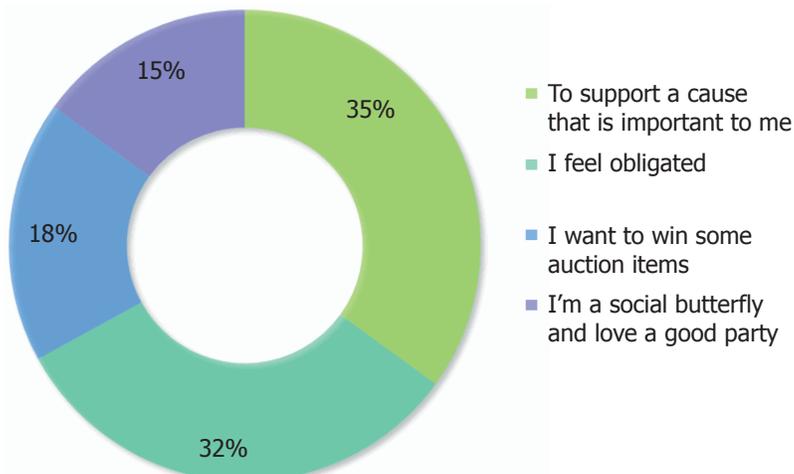


Only 5 percent rate it very effective

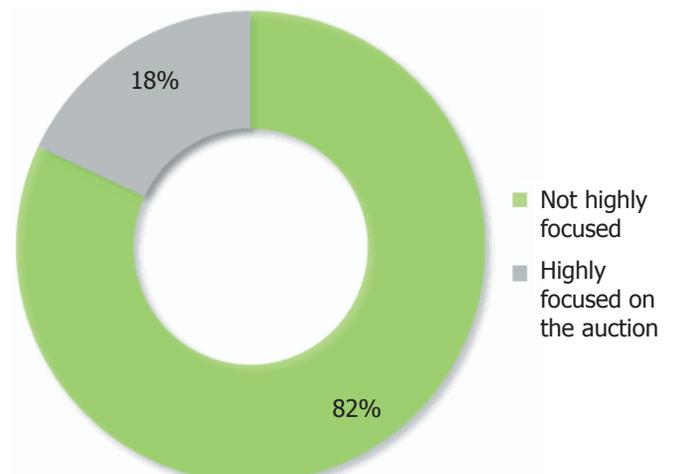
54 percent say it's somewhat effective

And we asked bidders:

What are Your 4 Main Reasons for Attending Fundraising Events?



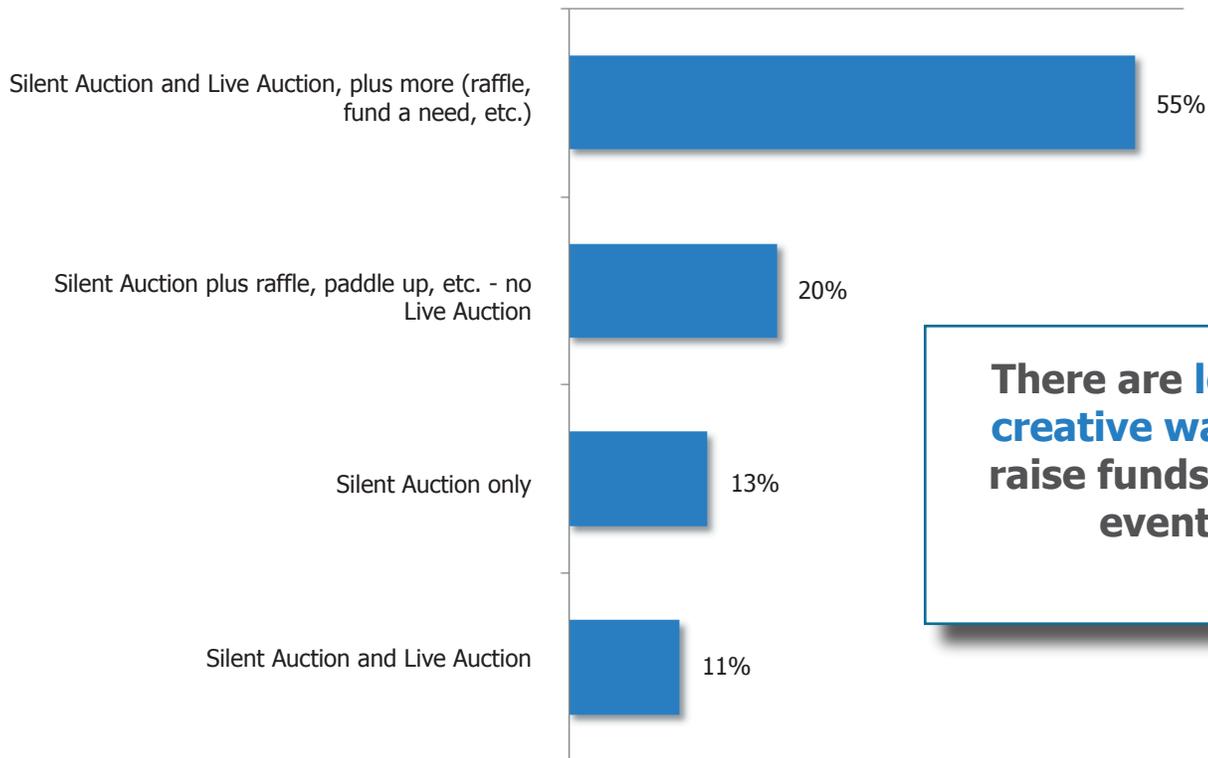
How Focused are You on the Silent Auction at the Event?



Fundraising events come in all shapes and sizes

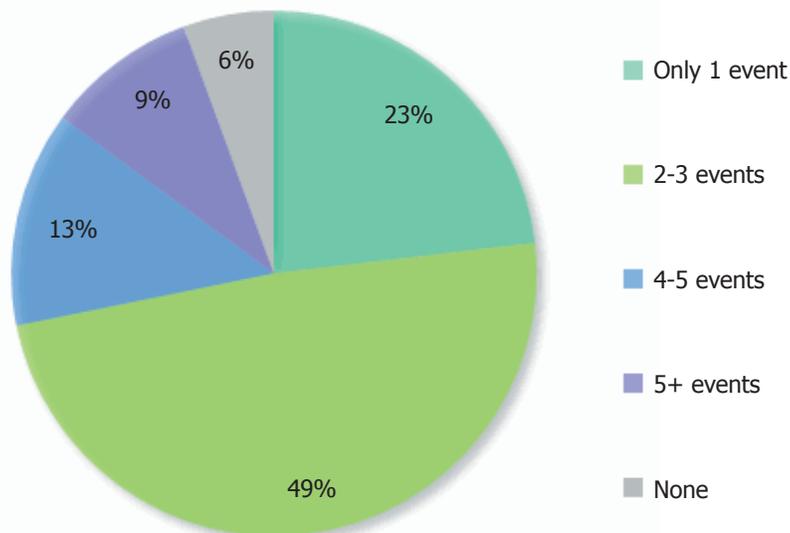
When it comes to running events that maximize fundraising opportunities, organizations bring a lot of variety and creativity to the table. Most of those surveyed have multiple fundraising activities (silent auctions, live auctions, raffles, etc.) happening during their events, and they typically have 2-3 events per year.

Which of the following types of fundraisers do you have during your event (in addition to an online auction)?



There are **lots of creative ways** to raise funds at an event

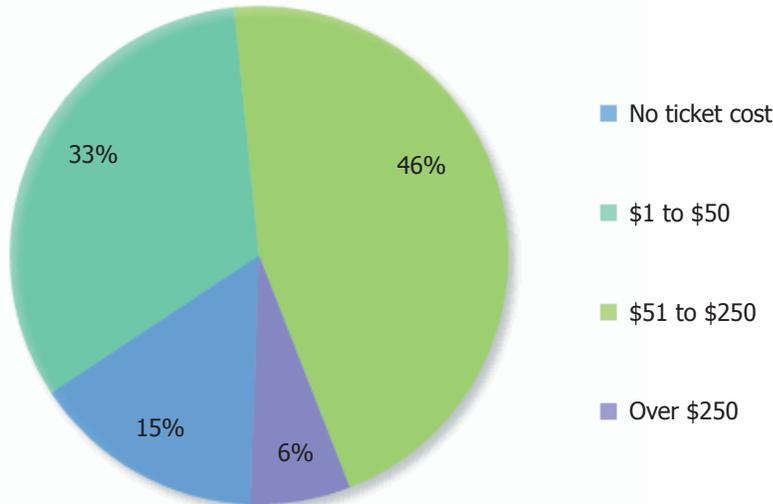
How many events do you have during the year in addition to an annual gala?



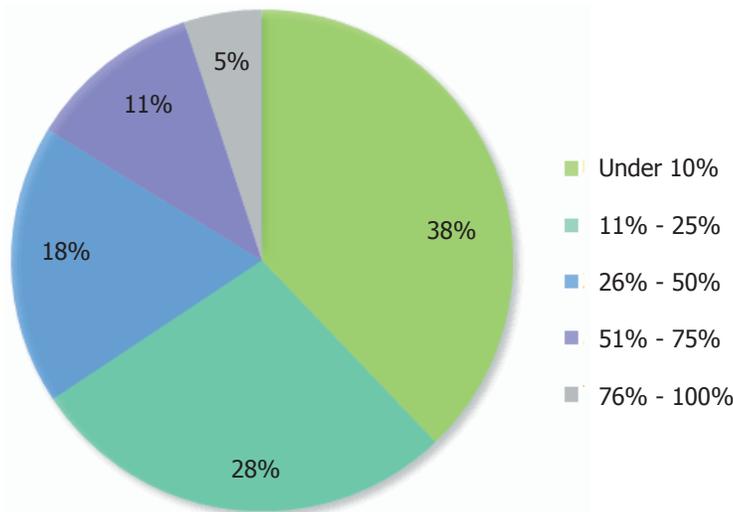
71% of organizations have two or more events per year, while **78%** of bidders attend two or more events each year.

Selling Tickets

What is the price of a ticket to your major annual event?



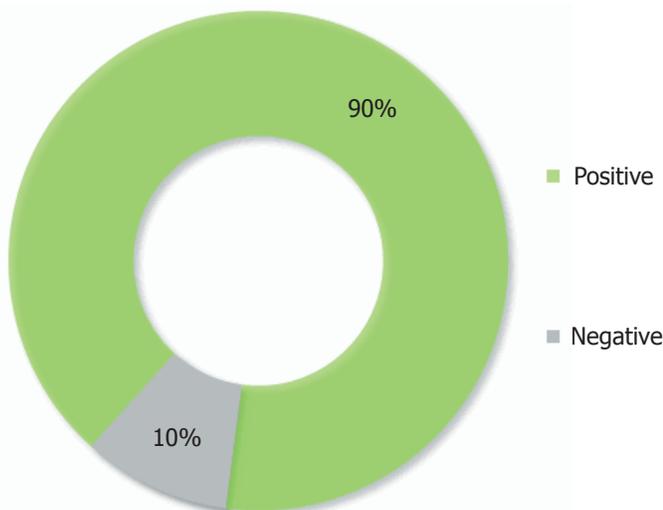
What percentage of your event revenue comes from ticket sales?



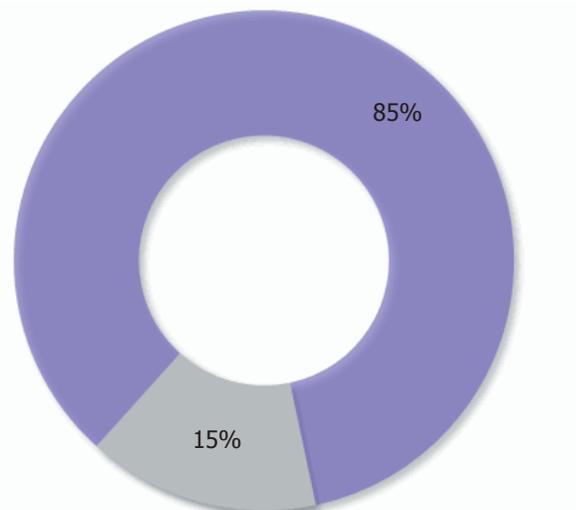
Event Tickets = untapped potential

38 percent realize less than 10 percent of event revenue from ticket sales

How do you feel about the idea of selling event tickets online?



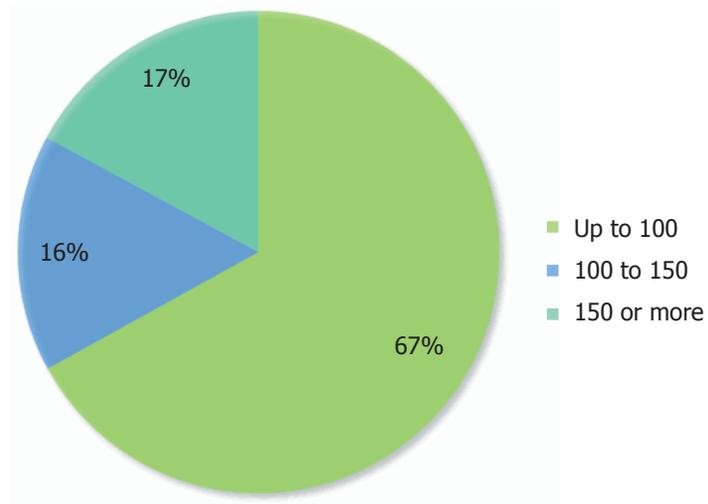
...And 85% of bidders prefer to buy event tickets online (vs. by phone or in person)



Auction Items: *Less is More*

When it comes to the size of the auction catalog, our best practices show that sometimes, less is more. We have found that auctions with too many items can overwhelm bidders and suppress bidding. The survey supports this, and a majority of our customers keep their catalogs limited to 100 or fewer items. Of course, the number of items will vary depending on many factors including your fundraising goals and expected attendance.

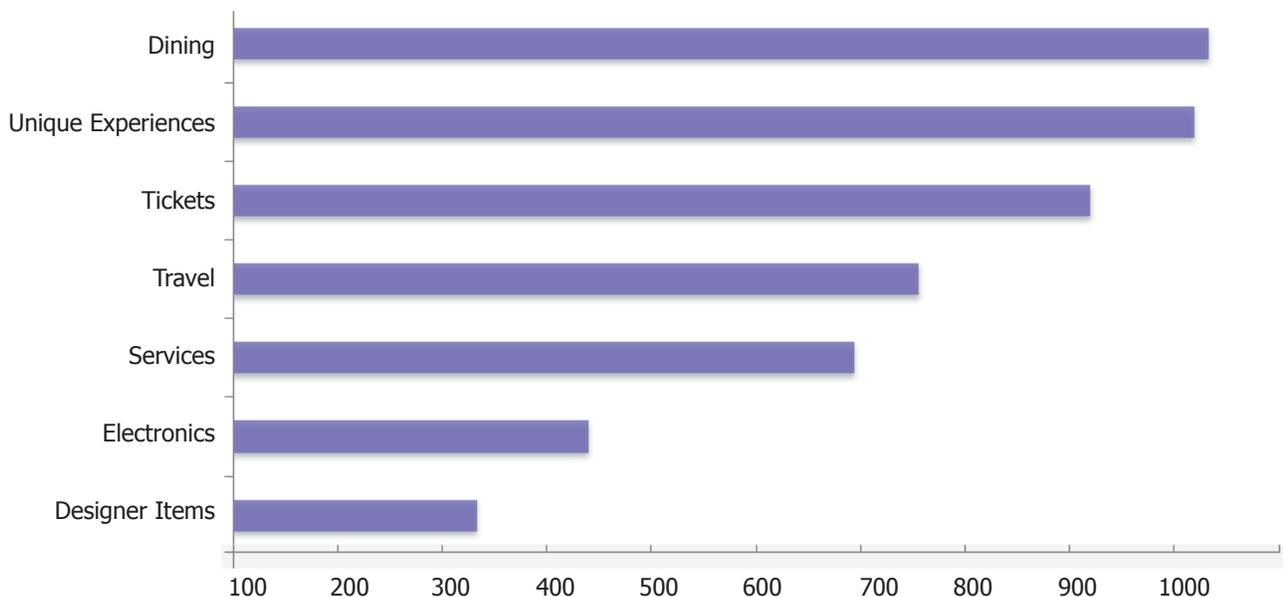
How many items do you typically have available for bidding at the event?



The majority of organizations agreed with these statements:

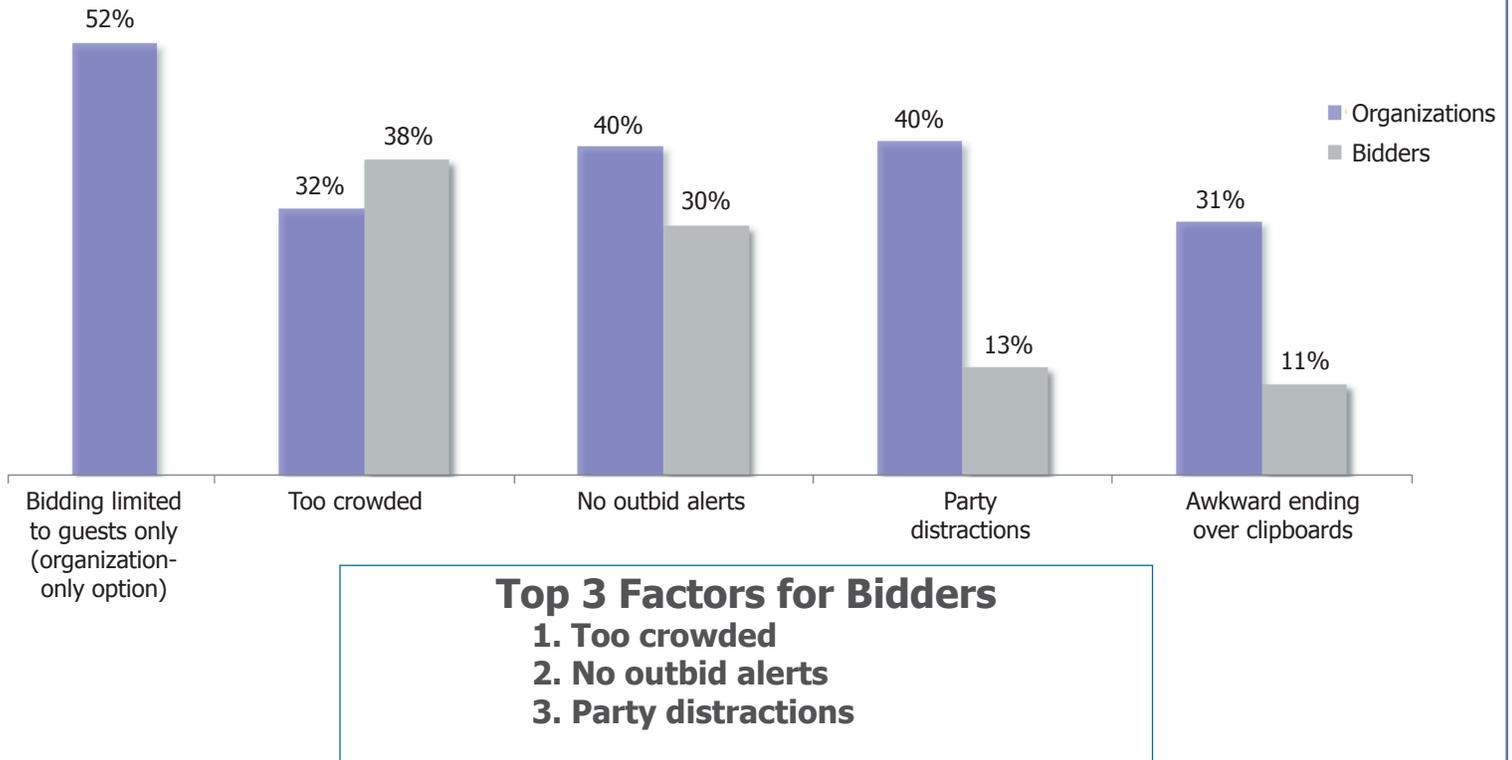


Bidders tell us that these are the types of auction items they're most likely to bid on:



Factors that reduce the success of your silent auction

We asked organizations to weigh in on the factors that can adversely impact an auction's outcome. At the same time, we asked bidders to rank the top factors that reduce their bidding in traditional auctions. Here's how they compare:



And organizations had some interesting comments...

"Silent auctions are boring and outdated in my opinion – we have been striving to reduce or eliminate ours altogether."

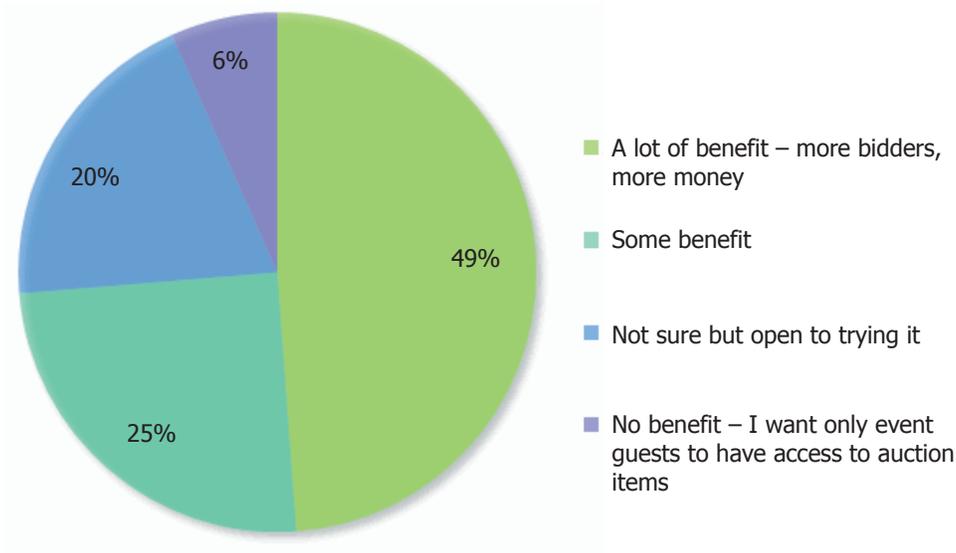
"The event is short and does not allow a lot of time for bidding or collecting payment – it feels rushed."

"We had too many items and not enough bidders."

"Attendees want to socialize, not pay attention to a silent auction."

New ways to think about your silent auction

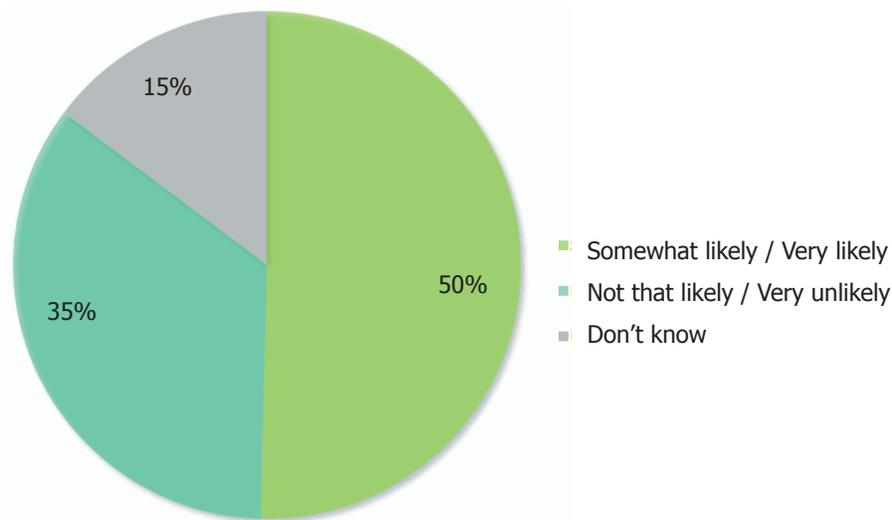
How much benefit do you see in opening up your auction to the public via the internet?



94 percent see the benefits and are open to it

Bidders agree: 95 percent think fundraising auctions should be online and open to the public. They don't need exclusive dibs on your auction items.

Many organizations are now offering event attendees the ability to bid on silent auction items via their mobile phones. How likely is your organization to try this in the next year?



To conclude...

Thank you for taking the time to read our survey report, *The State of the Silent Auction*. We hope you found this report informative!

If you would like to learn more about BiddingForGood and our Smart Auction platform please connect with us:

- Call 1-866-918-0313
- Visit us at www.biddingforgood.com
- [Build a sample auction](#) with our edemo

Contact our Sales Department

- Call 1-866-918-0313
- Email sales@biddingforgood.com
- Schedule a [15-minute call](#)

Follow us:



www.facebook.com/bidding4good



www.twitter.com/#!/biddingforgood



www.linkedin.com/company/biddingforgood