

## **Cycling Summer 2013 – Raising Funds with an Experiential Marketing Event**

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| <p>Adventure, long-haul journey, sport and charity tourism have become more and more popular ways of seeing the world. People want unique experiences and are constantly looking for self-fulfillment, self-discovery and excitement. Eco travel, adventures and charity are current topics not only in the field of tourism and hospitality but also in everyday life all around the world.</p> <p>With this project-based bachelor's thesis, we focused on a current topic of charity by implementing an experiential fundraising event. Understanding the characteristics and statistics of people giving and communicating with the event's followers are necessary aspects of raising awareness for a charity and a specific cause. This thesis concentrates on the theory of fundraising and marketing communications related to experiential events and the implementation of it in our Cycling Summer 2013 –project.</p> <p>Cycling Summer 2013 started with the process of brainstorming and planning in December 2012, having approximately half a year to do the preparations and embark on the journey on May 24<sup>th</sup> 2013. The cycling itself lasted 56 days, after which we took about a year's break before starting to transform the experience into paper. We had to change perspectives during the process, which led to quite short timeframe for finishing our thesis.</p> <p>The initial goal of this thesis was to raise money for UNICEF- charity organization with an experiential marketing event, cycling from San Francisco to New York in 56 days. Further the aim of the paper is to give a better understanding of actions to consider when organizing any kind of an experiential fundraising event.</p> <p>Experiential marketing is a new way for brands to increase their awareness and affect consumer loyalty. As competition in service and goods industry is rising, brands need to come up with new ways to market themselves. With experiential marketing, consumers' purchase decision can be affected by providing meaningful and emotional experiences ultimately creating a connection between the consumer and the brand.</p> <p>As the results of this thesis indicate, charity event is not the most profitable way to raise funds, but it gives a competitive advantage for the organization to affect consumers' minds emotionally thus creating awareness of the cause and increasing their knowledge as far as to get into their liking.</p> <p>For future projects, a short list of advice is provided in the final chapter of this paper. These are issues that we see as potential topics for improvement based on our own experience.</p> |   |
| <b>Keywords</b><br>Charity, marketing communication, experiential fundraising, sponsorship, event  |   |

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# 1 Introduction

*“We are two students about to pack our tent and sleeping bags on top of our bicycles and ride across United States, from San Francisco to New York 22.5. - 18.8.2013. We have 3 months to finish almost 5000km tour and raise funds to help the world’s children. We can’t do this by ourselves, we need your help as well” (Ahvenainen & Kähkönen, Oma.unicef.fi, 2013).*

*“Why do you have to drag Finland into this. This is your own stupid project. In the worst case, we need to be ashamed of you. Remove our county flag from your pictures” (Kaarlo in Cycling Summer 2013, 21 May 2013).*

*“All I wanna do is ride my bike, ride my bike and sometimes hike. Raise some money for the kids out there, kids out there and everywhere” (jennib in Oma.unicef.fi, 2013).*

*“Hello girls! Great to read you journey is going well – you will make true something that many only dream of but never make it happen! You probably get even too much advice from all sort of specialists but I give you one that can be crucial: Eat often and eat a lot!” (Lrider in Cycling Summer 2013, 29 May 2013)*

This project type thesis focuses on the implementation of our Cycling Summer 2013 – project, which had the objective of raising funds for UNICEF- charity organization with an experiential marketing event. However, no specific amount was set as we had no previous experience of fundraising.

Cycling Summer 2013 was a cycling adventure across the United States of America in the summer 2013. It was planned and executed, as well as communicated online with the aim of raising funds. In this product type thesis we compare the existing theory and our way of doing the preparations, marketing, sponsorship and the actual fundraising. With our findings and experience we wish to offer practical tips and guidelines for anyone interested in organizing any kind of an experiential fundraising event. We want to put our knowledge into a better use and help others avoid our mistakes.

Planning phase for this project started in January 2013 and product closure happened in October 2013. In this thesis we explain the entire preparation and execution process from the charity and marketing communication point of view. Marketing communication was needed to raise people’s awareness of this project in the aim of collecting charity donations. This thesis aims to help anyone who is interested in or planning an experiential

fundraising event, regardless of the style or approach. We narrowed our focus down to fundraising and marketing communication in order to keep the thesis within reasonable limits. When describing our project; we focused on the charity and marketing communications aspects leaving out physical, mental and practical perspectives and preparations because of the limited length of the thesis. The abovementioned limitation enables this thesis to be used for any kind of an experiential fundraising event and not only a physical one.

From the beginning it was clear this trip was meant to be done for a bigger cause than just our own experience and private benefit. After weighing a few options, the target of the charity was decided to be UNICEF and within UNICEF the world's children. The funds raised went towards underprivileged children's education, clean water, vaccinations and other health care to ensure equality, safety and wellbeing. There was roughly half a year of planning and preparation phase, when the focus was on training, marketing and searching for sponsors for the upcoming journey. From May to August 2013, we made the planning real by cycling across the USA, from San Francisco to New York in 56 days and raised almost 1000€ for UNICEF.

The structure of the thesis consists of the theory followed by the implementation of these theories in the form of experiential charity events. The theory consists of fundraising, event marketing communications and sponsorship. In the practical part we describe different experiential charity events and present our own project Cycling Summer 2013 and analyze the implementation of these theories through it. We then conclude the thesis with our discussions, recommendations and learning from the process.

In the fundraising part we discuss global trends in giving, the reasons and motivations for donating time and money and lastly review ways to organize a successful fundraising event. The event marketing communications part focuses on public relations, online presence and sponsorship.

We then describe three different experiential fundraising events, 24decure by Project 3000, Autolla Nepaliin and Jari Hämäläinen's rollerblading challenge for the new Children's hospital in Finland. From these three projects we proceed on to describing our own project, Cycling Summer 2013 and conclude with discussions and reflections.

## 2 Charity and Fundraising

In this part we discuss the global trends in giving, the reasons and motivations for donating time and money and lastly review ways to organize a successful fundraising event.

In broad terms, charity is defined as a range of products aimed to help the underprivileged and worse off. Charity is then further divided into four subcategories or main activities; the development of welfare trust to reduce poverty, increasing and promoting education, promotion of religion, and promotion of such initiatives that are beneficial to society. (Kashif, Sarifuddin, & Hassan 2015, 90)

Where Lee & Chang (2007, 1173) define giving as a two-fold term including money and time, The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) adds a third dimension to giving in their World Giving Index survey (2014, 4). CAF defines donating as a three dimensional topic, divided into monetary donations, volunteering time and helping strangers. The Charities Aid Foundation has concluded a World Giving Index measuring these three aspects of giving and ranking countries accordingly.

The global trends in donating time, money and helping strangers can be seen in the figure 1 presented below. The green line indicates helping others, blue financial giving and red donating time.

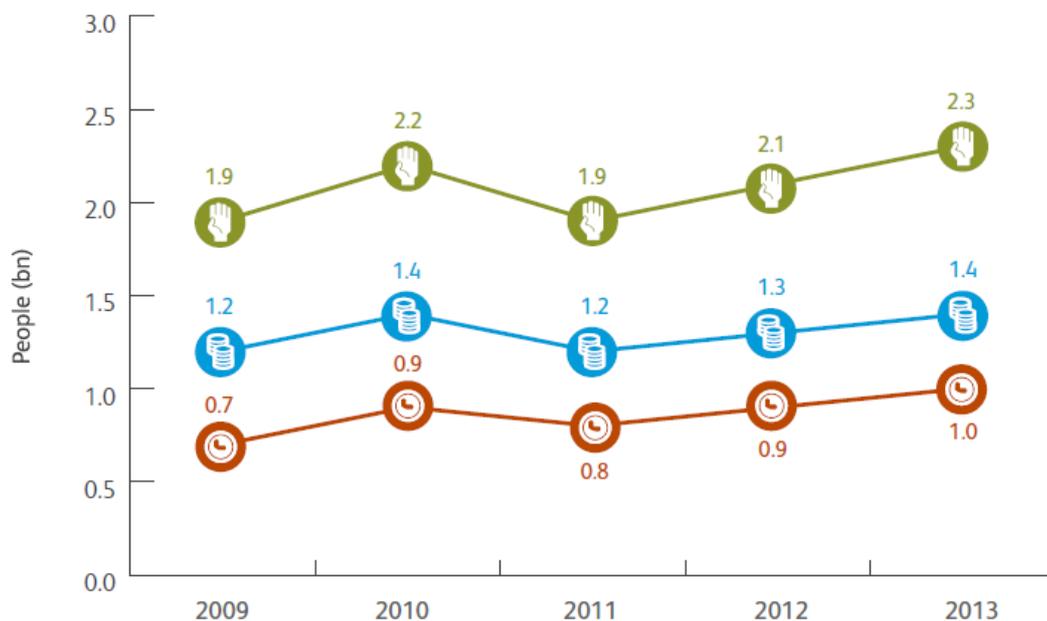


Figure 1. Worldwide figures in giving (Charities Aid Foundation, World Giving Index 2014, 15)

The statistics show a decline in all of the above-mentioned during 2011, after which all started to rise again. The increase in figures in 2010 can be seen as reflection of the economical state after the Great Recession ended.

## 2.1 The effects of economy status, age, gender, culture and events in giving

While many attributes, such as age and gender, affect the giving behaviour of an individual, the economic status of a country can't be used as a predictor of one's giving practice. The World Giving Index reveals that the wealth of an economy does not guarantee higher levels of giving nor does an expanding economy. The nature and culture of an individual country is more important in determining the giving status than the economical state.

Unlike country's economic state, gender can be a predictor of giving behavior. Worldwide trends in donating money show that women tend to donate more than men in high income countries, whereas men are more likely to donate in middle and low income countries. This is likely to reflect the wider gender equality in developed countries when compared to developing and transition countries.

The figure 2 below shows the general difference in giving between sexes and how it has changed from 2009 to 2013.

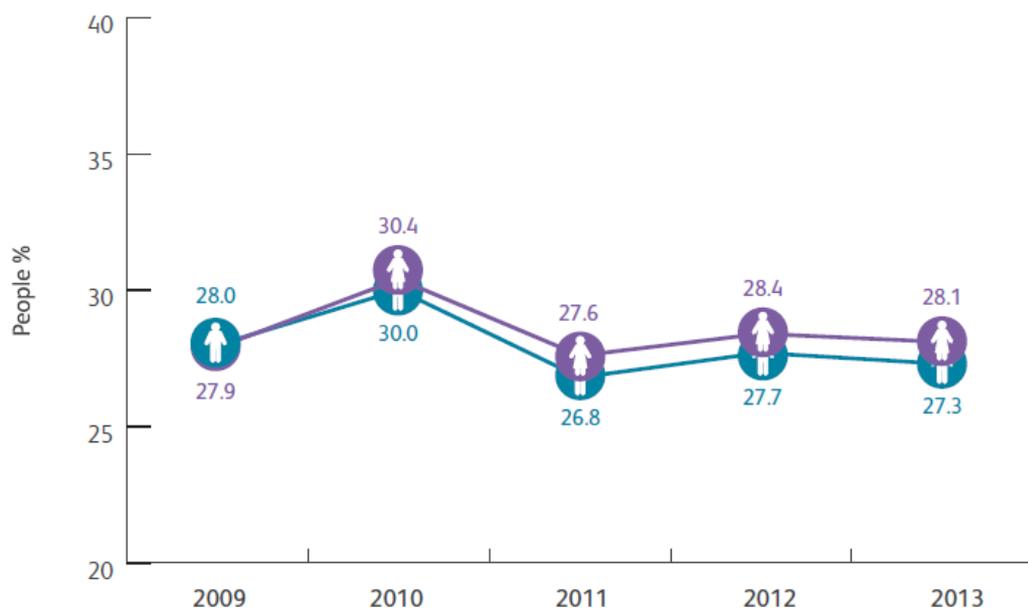


Figure 2. Gender differences in giving (Charities Aid Foundation, World Giving Index 2014, 20)

Lee and Chang (2007, 1176, 1178) found out that people with one or more children had a strong positive association with the likelihood of monetary donation. They also found a correlation in the amounts of money donated and marital status. Married individuals in general donate more than their single counterparts.

Globally, older people are more likely to donate than younger generations. This has been the trend worldwide during the five years the World Giving Index survey has been concluded. Lee and Chang’s research done in Taiwan (2007) supports the data collected by CAF providing the results that older people are more likely to donate money than the younger generation. The amount of donations amongst older people has remained about the same while it has declined amongst youth. CAF argues that the reason for the amount of people donating money decreasing versus the increase in donating time and helping strangers can very well reflect (youth) unemployment and tough financial times. In the chart presented below the global participation of different generations is portrayed. Whereas the participation in the segment of people over 50 years has been steady from 2011, the behavior within the younger segments has had more change and reflects the global economic events more.

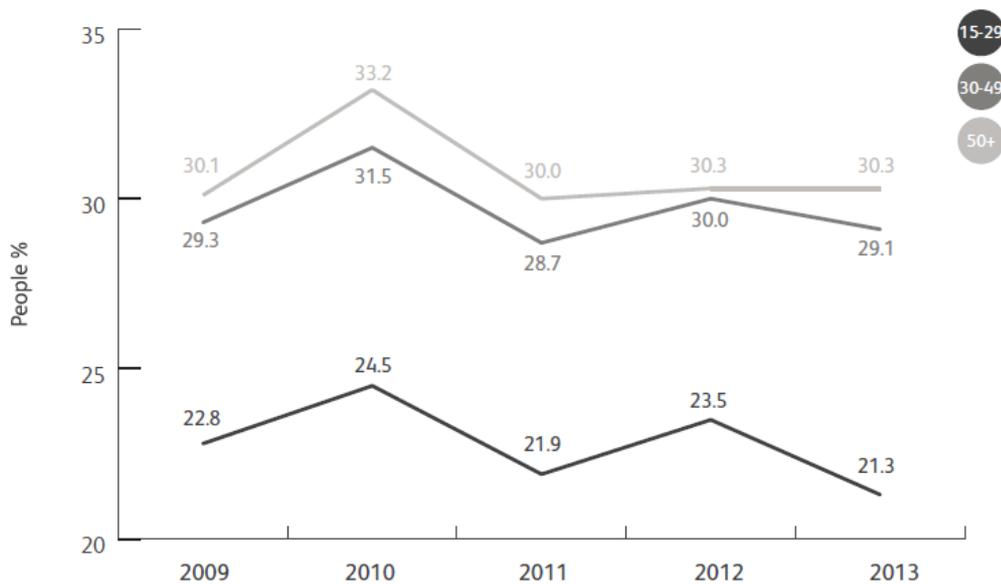


Figure 3. Age difference in giving (Charities Aid Foundation, World Giving Index 2014, 21)

Disruptive events are without a doubt one of the biggest factors affecting people’s giving behavior. (Charities Aid Foundation 2014, 29-30) To help those in need is a universal behavior and is seen in all three ways of giving during natural disasters and other disruptive events regardless of culture or geographic location.

## 2.2 Who donates and why

According to the World Giving Index survey conducted by Charities Aid Foundation in 2014, which measured giving in three different dimensions: money, time and helping strangers, United States holds the leading place with Myanmar. The survey was conducted in over 160 countries by asking the participants whether they had donated their time to an organization, donated money to a charity or helped out a stranger. The ranking of the countries can be found as attachment 1.

In 2011, in Finland 49 % of the population donated money for charities and 30 % donated time volunteering for different organizations. In the USA the corresponding numbers were 65% and 43% (Charities Aid Foundation, World Giving Index 2011, 54).

The same survey has been conducted every year since, and the latest numbers are from the 2014 report. Finland held the 25<sup>th</sup> place in the 2014 report, USA and Myanmar sharing the first place when all the three ways of giving were taken into consideration.

To understand the target group of a charity, knowing why people donate in addition to whom is needed. Webber (2004, 123-124) presents motivations for donating money and divides these into seven different categories listed below:

1. Philanthropic
2. Purely private
3. Prestige
4. Leadership
5. Relationship with the charity
6. Warm glow and associated warm glow
7. Peer pressure

(Webber 2004,123-124)

In philanthropic motivation the donor believes in the cause of the charity and wants to support the cause. Private motivations include everything the individual might wish to gain from the event. Prestige refers to the desire of the participant to be associated with the event or cause, the event providing social status or a sign of a certain lifestyle. Leadership in this case means that the participant wishes to encourage others to give by showing example and generosity. Relationship with the charity can be linked to personal experiences with the cause, for example having diabetes or having lost a friend to cancer. Warm glow refers to the enjoyment of giving and associated glow is about the donor supporting the organizers because they are friends. (Webber 2004, 124)

Just like Webber, Merchant, Ford and Sargeant (2010, 757) mention warm glow and pure belief in the cause when listing altruistic motivations. In addition to these two they add a desire to cause social change. Snelgrove, Wood and Havitz (2013, 135-137) also reduce the number of motivations to three, mentioning the donor getting an image of supporting a good cause or just attending an event and developing their identity as a fundraiser, aligning self and cause and developing social bonds.

People are likely to help the person in need when feeling empathy towards a topic or a subject (Lee & Chang 2007, 1117; Merchant, Ford, & Sargeant 2010). Ye, Teng, Yu, Wang (2015, 480,485) argue that charities should emphasise both, benefits to the donor himself as well as others (the receivers of the donation), to get more people interested and motivated to donate. They agree on the selfish reasons of donors in addition to the desire to help. Pointing out both benefits can increase the donor group. Furthermore, taking into consideration the type of giving leads to the best results knowing why people donate. The motives affecting volunteering are mostly intrinsic while those for monetary donations are mostly extrinsic (Lee & Chang 2007, 1173).

### **2.3 Fundraising methods**

Charities Aid Foundation (2014, 7) points out that people give more when it's made easy for them and where they can have the incentive to give. This should be kept in mind when organizations and non-profits are deciding on their fundraising methods.

The Institute of Fundraising lists the following; legacies, committed giving, memberships, local fundraising, fundraising events and direct marketing as fundraising methods collecting monetary donations from individuals.

Fundraising events can be anything from sponsored bike rides to fashion shows to annual galas but are required to have one common attribute: private benefit for the participants (Webber 2004, 123,124). The private benefit can be a sense of personal achievement or an opportunity to show off the generous side of a person in social circles but also a tangible product received from the event.

Webber (2004,130) argues that fundraising events are one of the least productive methods for charities to collect funds and generate income, but also admits that they do open up a channel and streams of donations simply not possible for other methods. Fundrais-

ing events are also criticized of lacking donor development in the sense that there is no further engagement and development after the event.

Figure 4 below shows the income per invested pound in different fundraising methods leaving special events far behind committed giving and memberships.

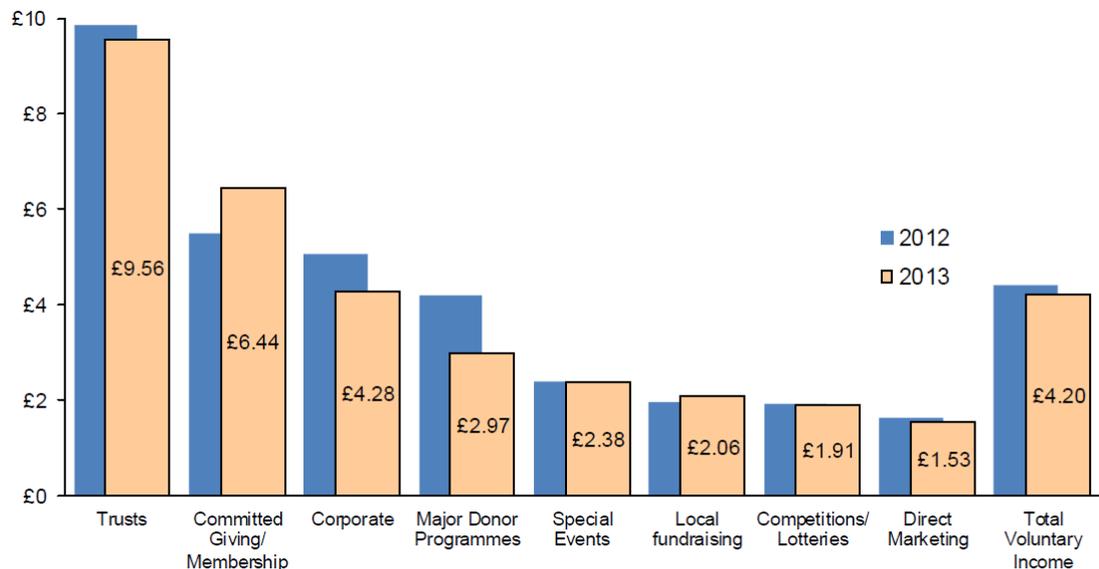


Figure 4. Income per invested pound in different fundraising methods (Fundratios 2013)

Regardless of the unproductive nature of fundraising events, they are proven to be a way to broaden the group of donors beyond the ones purely believing in the cause by engaging people who wish to gain something from the events themselves. This can be done by adding the private benefit into the fundraising event, which can be for example the fun had, goodie bag received or the experience itself. Often supporting the charity is only a secondary reason for attending the event for the participants, private benefit being the primary reason. In the early stages of a charity's life, fundraising events can make a remarkable difference by allowing the charity to reach out to individuals not necessarily interested in the cause itself. Once the charity grows and is past the risky stages, it will be able to target more productive fundraising methods, such as memberships and company sponsorships. Fundraising events fill their role even after the charity has established itself by increasing awareness and later on reaching out to a broader group than the true believers in the cause (Webber 2004, 133).

Many charities organize fundraising events because of the awareness and possible publicity it creates. Image 1 below illustrates how the awareness increases from the event organizers to friends to general public even without press coverage. Usually the advertis-

ing and awareness of the charity followed by an event is about two to three times the number of people attending the event.

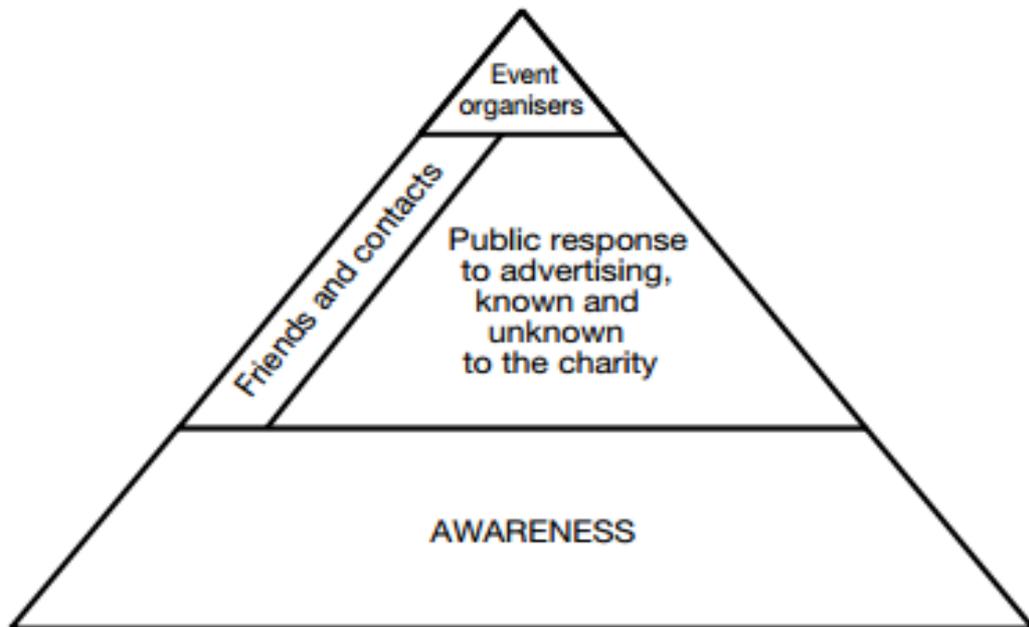


Image 1. Awareness expansion (Webber 2004, 125)

(Sport) events are exceptionally attractive to potential donors combining the opportunities to engage in two activities at the same time – in doing good and a personally meaningful activity (Wood, Snelgrove & Danylchuk 2010, 38-39). Participating purely for the private benefit, in this case for the personally meaningful activity, can later on lead to engaging with the cause more inclusively even though it wasn't the participant's first intention.

## 2.4 Organizing a successful fundraising event

In organizing a fundraising - or any - event, six general components are to be considered. The components identified are:

1. Analysis
2. Planning
3. Execution
4. Control
5. Evaluation
6. Professional ethics

In any event an analysis should be performed before starting the planning phase. The analysis can include internal and external aspects and research of the possible competition and the broadness of it depend largely on the type of the event as well as resources available. If short on time, financial or people resources, the analysis will be limited.

Planning phase of an event is taking care of all the details and conceptualizing all possible nuances of the event. However, it is important to realize that not everything can be planned when organizing an event due to the unpredictable nature of nature, people, weather and other variables.

Execution phase refers to the actual doing and delivering of the event. This includes the build up, delivery and take-down of the event.

Control is about making sure everything goes as planned and taking the necessary measures and actions needed to ensure the smooth delivery of the event.

Evaluation is a crucial part to learn from the event. It can be done by a customer feedback, staff questionnaire and feedback, the evaluation of the event organizers or all of the above combined

The last component, professional ethics, is extremely important when dealing with fundraising events and issues. The organizers' motives can be questioned as well as the distribution of the finances raised and the organizers must be prepared to answer these questions raised.

These six components can be further dissected into more specific guidelines depending on the type of an event the fundraiser is. Another very broad guideline that can be applied to organizing any event lists relationship building, structuring the fundraiser, discovering what your donors value, solicitation & stewardship, involving volunteers, managing the fundraising process and ethics and accountability as the pillars to execute an event (Canon 2011; Aldrich, Tempel, Seiler 2010, 68).

Wolf (2010, 6-7) puts the six components Aldrich et al. presented into different words by using the well-known 5 W's and adding an H. She argues that the most important aspect in planning an event is to determine the 5 W's: Who, what, when, where and why. In addition to the W's an H is added to the list bringing the "how" aspect into planning. Wolf explains the process of an event by opening the Ws and H into taking care of the details including the venue and date, creating a blueprint for the project, envisioning the event,

making it special and lastly following up after the event. Determining who, what, when, where and how is a part of analysis, planning, execution, control and evaluation phases whereas “why” is directly related to the professional ethics raised by Aldrich et al.

### 3 Event Marketing Communication

Event marketing communication is needed to raise people's awareness in the aim of collecting charity donations.

Event marketing is part of marketing communication practices, where events are used as a live means, for instance, in a communication campaign or a branding strategy (Gerritsen & Olderen 2014, 5). American Marketing Association (2014) defines marketing communications, or "marcom," as an all-encompassing term, covering marketing practices and tactics including advertising, branding, graphic design, promotion, publicity, public relations and more.

Mayo & Hausler (2015) say marketing communications is traditionally known as the promotional element of the four Ps of marketing. As seen from figure 5 below, it acts as the soul of multiple different functions aiming to reach and affect the behavior of defined target audience by informing, persuading and reminding.



Figure 5. Elements of Marketing Communications (Reference for business 2015)

As the event is the core business and starting point of business operations that is supported by several marketing means and communication practices, it can be considered as a product (Gerritsen & Olderen 2014, 39). Wyer & Carberry (1998, in O'Donnell 2004, 206) argue, that traditional marketing theories are hard to apply for small businesses and products as traditional marketing models are found from research conducted in large organizations.

Masterman (2004, 168) identifies sport event industry increasing its competitiveness. Therefore, when planning an event related to sports, innovative marketing methods need to be taken into use, as traditional media and marketing no longer applies. It is good to integrate multiple tools and techniques for event communication, as the purpose is to create an inspiring message, which leads recipient to positive actions.

Lavigne and Steiner (1961, in Masterman 2004, 169) created a hierarchy of effects model for marketing communication, which suggest that going through these six steps as seen in the figure 6 below, marketers encourage recipient towards positive decision-making.



Figure 6. Hierarchy of Effects (Lavigne & Steiner 1961)

This model can be used in event communications, especially if event is unknown for the audience. As Lavigne & Steiner (1961, 137) state, marketing communication is a slow process, which needs a long-term strategy. Target market should be located and the most critical steps should be determined to be able to define tools and channels to be used for event communication. Each above seen step should lead consumer towards decision-making, and each step should be measurable. (Lavigne & Steiner 1961, 140)

### 3.1 Public relations and publicity

The relentless force of nature in marketing is public relations. Public relations is the organized process designed to seek free publicity (Hudson 2013). It can be defined as a function which identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics upon which its success or failure depends on (Mayo & Hausler 2015). It is not only meant for marketing push, it goes all the way to managing communications with all groups, individuals and important organizations which has sufficient influence for the successful implementation of the project. Every event is unique and these assets should be identified and used as an advantage in attracting media's attention through public relations. This also gives value for attracting sponsors for the event (Masterman 2004, 173).

To gain publicity, well crafted online and offline presence is acquired. When it is done in a form of a press release, it can catch eyes and ears of thousands of people. Press release

can cover a variety of subjects, but the information released positions the product and brings the attention and better yet, credibility for it. When credibility is received through publicity, it goes far beyond the scope of advertising (Hudson 2013). The distinction of advertising and PR lies in the matter that advertising is paid by the organization to media channels and they are in control of the content, when PR is trying to lure the media to cover their story free of charge (Theaker 2008, 13). Research shows that positive effect of publicity is on average about three times as strong as advertising, if the product is unknown for the recipient (Eisend & Küster 2010, 906).

Hudson (2013) emphasizes that offering interviews to radio or TV news programs promotes the image as a professional of the industry. It does not mean everything has to be known from the field, it is more of painting a picture through storytelling and being accessible to deliver interesting and useful information in easily understood sound bites.

Merchant et al. (2010, 754) state that most charity and non-profit organizations use storytelling to appeal to donors. Describing what the organization does and for what cause in a story format helps the organization not only to engage new donors but also to “differentiate itself from others in the minds of existing donors, potential donors and other publics. Many nonprofits deem storytelling as key in their attempts to engage new audiences.” (Merchant, Ford, & Sargeant 2010, 754).

As Kotler & Keller (2006, in Eisend & Küster 2010, 906) describe, communication through publicity secures editorial space in media for promotional purposes without an identifiable sponsor. It may not always lead to a favorable result, as there is no control over message content, which is delivered. Publicity might reveal negative information of the product and as publicity is a less common way of communication, the consumer critically evaluates it. Then again marketing-oriented publicity has positive effects for products, which are unknown for consumers, but media loses their interest rapidly on reporting about same products. Therefore, more general means of communication needs to be taken into use (Eisend & Küster 2010, 918).

### **3.2 Online presence**

In today's world, online presence is recommended if one wants to succeed. There are multiple different social web channels and tools to choose from, which enhance the efficiency of communication needs. Social media is one of many ways for consumers to find new products and services as well as receive the input they need for the final decision-

making. Social media is not just a marketing tactics, it's about consumer engagement (Berkley & Walter 2013, 1).

Image below presents the big variety of social media channels to choose from depending on one's needs and aims.



Image 2. Social media map (Marketing Type Guys 2015)

In order to be successful on social web, it is advisable to give the focus on handful of the chosen social spaces where most of the target audience is located, instead of trying to be everything to everyone - or everywhere for that matter (Berkley & Walter 2013, 11).

### 3.2.1 Blog

Blog is everyone's personal webpage. Blogging is viewed as a grassroots form of journalism and a way to shape different views of life, written by ordinary people for small to bigger audiences. Blogging is also a form of personal communication and expression of one's knowledge and emotions (Nardi, Schiano, Gumbrecht & Swartz 2004, 41). Attachment 2 presents the statistics how online blogging has increased its power within the last ten years. Between 2006 to 2010 there has been 137,2 million new blogs created, and the number keeps on rising (Statista 2015).

Blog is good to be positioned as the hub of the social media activity. Content posted on a blog is the core information that can be promoted throughout other social networks. By posting ideas and news to a blog, there is more space to express and develop ideas, when compared to a 140-character tweet or a post on Facebook. It also gives an easy

way to communicate with target audience but also provides added search value and longevity of products information, as blogs are text based and therefore gain free search traffic (Berkley & Walter 2013, 29,60). After the blog is posted, Twitter and Facebook can be used to post a link to the blog and provide a glimpse of what the entry is all about by crafting a slightly different headline to incentivize to click (Scott 2010, 60).

It takes much effort to start and maintain an active blog, as there has to be a signed blogger who creates the content regularly, but it also requires blog readers to visit, or better yet, frequently interact with it.

*“With blogging, it creates a conversation and the campaign gets feedback. If there is interest in a topic, then the campaign can change quickly. People can get involved because it is two-way instead of just one-direction. You can grow when there is a dialogue”* (Kevin Flynn in Scott 2010, 67).

Attracting blog readers is a hard task. Research done by Hsu & Lin (2008, 66) shows that on average a blog reader spends less than 2 minutes reading a blog. Therefore it has to be visually attractive and content wise intriguing.

Nardi et al. (2004, 43) discovered five major motivations for blogging: documenting one’s life; providing commentary and opinions; expressing deeply felt emotions; articulating ideas through writing; and forming and maintaining community forums. Of course there are other motivators as well, but these are mostly common and therefore good examples.

Blogs are a great tool to share information without intruding anyone’s lives. Several bloggers emphasized the broadcast nature of blogging; they put out information, and no one needs to respond unless they wish to. No one is “forced to pay attention”, reading is voluntary, when convenient (Nardi et al. 2004, 43). It is widely known that blogs are designed to be commented on and therefore it is recommended to encourage people to give opinions. Sometimes being a little controversial is a great way to spark comments and make your blog go viral (Berkley & Walter 2013, 61). Whenever a comment is received, it is polite to respond directly and publicly to that person. This also helps keep the conversation going (Scott 2010, 90).

As Armbruster (2012, 191) indicates, people love to give an input, which sometimes can be very helpful and other times should be left alone. It is important to develop a thick skin. It is good to be aware that not everyone will love all the ideas and opinions. Appearance on the social web can open one up to public scrutiny. And once in awhile, comments will

be unflattering. The temptation of hiding all the negative comments will arise, but in social media that would be a big mistake. Purpose of social media is to get everyone's voices heard. If this will not happen, people will stop reading. Having few negative comments might cause minor emotional pain but responding with grace and knowledge shows honesty, concern and helps build trust (Scott 2010, 90).

### **3.2.2 Social Media**

Social media is on the rise among consumers as well as companies. A single tweet or post is not only quicker than traditional forms of communication, but can reach more people faster and in a wider perspective. (Berkley & Walter 2013, 4) New social media channels are opening all the time. Social media is the new method of statement, which enables everyone to express his or her beliefs and ideas. Social media stimulates participation, open conversation and sense of community. Companies can establish communication platforms for their customers, where faithfulness of clientele is boosted with brand-to-consumer communication. Marketing products and services, as well as building brand equity is made easy with social media, but only if effort is put into it and communications maintained well. In order to achieve successful social media presence, it should be aligned with regular marketing strategy where target audience is located and focus given to right channels (Dr. M. Saravanakumar, Dr.T.SuganthaLakshmi 2012, 4444).

Twitter is the most open and one of the most popular social media tools, which enables registered users to send a 140-character "tweets" for others, even for unregistered users to read. It is becoming the go-to place for breaking news (Miller 2013, 333). For businesses it is a great tracking tool to find potential customers interest and opinion as well as it is a place to monitor competitors' actions (Berkley & Walter 2013, 60).

Berkley & Walter (2013, 57) advise to follow companies and persons related to your field of interest. Tremendous amount of insights is gained by just listening what others have to say. It might be time consuming but well worth it. In Twitter it is easy to find potential target audience by searching for keywords or hashtags related to their interest. Hashtags are useful for listening and they are also great way to gain more visibility to your tweets. To gain more ideas, Berkley recommends finding competitors and seeing who follows them and whom they follow.

*“ Because online communications are more measurable and trackable than traditional forms of communication, the more you listen and engage on different social*

*networks, the more you will be able to refine your efforts to maximize efficiency and attain your desired goals” (Berkley & Walter 2013, 12).*

Scott (2010, 181) advises, when setting up a Twitter profile, the most important aspect from the marketing and PR perspective is that it should not be used as an advertising channel to talk up one's products and services, it is about socializing online. In social media it is important to be the down to earth friend who shares helpful information (Miller 2013, 103).

Facebook is the market leader of all the social media networks. It was the first social network to surpass 1 billion registered accounts, when microblogging network Twitter has over 284 million monthly active accounts. In 2013, Finland had 2.4 million active Facebook accounts. While most social media networks are most appealing to those internet users aged 18-29, the biggest user group of Facebook (28%) is aged between 25 and 34 years. (Statista 2015) Facebook also has a big number of users of over the age of 50 and regardless of race, income, education, or urbanity, Facebook is globally popular (Miller 2013, 329).

In the field of charity, marketing professionals argue with fundraising staff which age group to target. Fundraisers would rather give their focus on the older generation, as it is known that the average amount of money people donate, increases with the age. Then again marketing people see the potential in younger consumers, as there is still value in other forms of engagement (Miller 2013, 49).

*“While a 5\$ donation from a twenty- or thirty-year-old may not seem like much today, what’s more important in the eyes of nonprofit marketers is that the person is now potentially available as a volunteer, advocate, peer fundraiser, event attendee, or other kind of program participant, supporter, or influencer. If it’s a good match, and the nonprofit can keep the person engaged, perhaps that 5\$ donation will grow into something much more significant as that person ages” (Miller 2013, 55).*

Armbruster (2012, 165) recommends thinking prior to launch of how success will be measured and metrics gathered and to generate a baseline so the awareness of the starting point is clear. Miller (2013, 55) argues that whether the success is measured in money or in people, social media is a good place to market the cause and see how far it travels. Whether the call to action, is to “vote” or “advocate” or something totally different, the network effect is the same: people participate in the work of the nonprofit by cooperating to achieve its mission, and that altruism — unselfish regard for or devotion to the welfare of others, spreads to others, further building support for the cause (Miller 2013, 55).

People prefer to stay informed, therefore they are attracted to join Facebook groups and follow different pages, but they wish to do it on their own time. Therefore it is advisable to maintain Facebook page like a blog, delivering valuable information in authentic form, which is suitable for the brand (Scott 2010, 177). Providing some incentives for liking the pages might bring more eyes on the site, as long as it reflects the brand and gives value to followers.

Miller (2013, 9) argues, that unless your social media followers are motivated enough to act on your behalf in some way, there is no point in having thousands of them. Therefore it is good to create content which generates emotions and response. One-way, traditional form of communications is not enough anymore. People expect engagement and relevance, which can be achieved through social media, as it is all about creating dialogues between individuals to create the feeling of community.

When it comes to creating content on Facebook, Miller (2013, 102) indicates, it should be down to earth, making creator look friendly and thoughtful. Taking a humorous approach, telling stories by using emotions and keeping the conversation as genuine as possible, will win out the corporate communication, which usually pushes out standard press releases and mission statements without creating an environment where people feel comfortable sharing or reacting. As Berkley & Walter (2013, 21) continues, if one is simply posting press releases and announcements, the point of social networking is missing. Listening to what audiences are saying and responding in a timely manner is what gives social media such powerful reach.

Berkley & Walter (2013, 52) imply, that visually appealing posts naturally attracts more eyes to your message. Therefore it is recommended to use photography or graphics of some sort when posting on Facebook. Miller (2013, 43) continues, that photos can appeal readers' emotions and how people feel matters. Hearts usually overrule heads all the time and therefore to create an approachable environment, it is recommended to bleed into human emotions. Miller argues that engagement is sometimes measured in one-time actions. The cause might become ones favorite, after seen one shared post on friends Facebook (Miller, 2013, 4).

Studies have shown that one update on Facebook per day is optimal, when again tweet can be send up to seven times through out the day on Twitter. Too many updates will be the quickest way to loose fans, followers and friends. Similar studies have found that the right time gain some momentum to your post is to share it first thing in the morning, at

lunchtime or in the late afternoon and evening. These are the most active times on Facebook (Berkley & Walter 2013, 45).

Berkley & Walter (2013,55) share how Facebook prioritizes the visibility of posts on followers' feeds in three different ways:

- 1) How recent the post was made
- 2) How recently a user interacted with it
- 3) How many likes the post received

(Berkley & Walter 2013,55)

To maintain the visibility, it is advisable to purchase Facebook Ad space or Sponsored Stories, which makes the posts shelf life longer (Miller 2013, 329). In case financial resources prevent using paid advertisement, it is beneficial to ask questions to encourage comments or keeping the conversation otherwise active. This increases the longevity of the post. Otherwise consistent posting is necessary (Berkley & Walter 2013, 55).

### **3.3 Sponsorship**

Sponsorships are identified as a part of event marketing, which combines advertising and sales promotions with public relations (Mayo & Hausler 2015). Meenaghan (1983 in Speed & Thompson, 226) defines sponsorship as "provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organization for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives". Sandler and Shani (1998, in Jarge, Watson & Watson 2001, 439) say that corporate sponsorships are used to reach customers and awaken their awareness. It is an important and cost- efficient element of the communication strategy.

Alaja (2001, 23) describes sponsorship as a mutually beneficial relationship, from which both parties gain something. The sponsored object gives his or her image for the company to use and identify with while gaining financial or material assistance.

Cornewell and Maignan (1998, in Jarge, Watson & Watson 2001, 439) explain two main activities related to sponsorship:

- 1) An exchange between a sponsor and a sponsoree whereby the latter receives a fee and the former obtains the right to associate itself with the activity sponsored
- 2) The marketing of the association by the sponsor.

(Jarge, Watson & Watson 2001, 439; Alaja 2001, 23).

Sponsorships are meant to increase awareness of a company or product, build loyalty with a specific target audience and to help differentiate a product from its competitors. It is recommended for companies considering sponsorships to also take in calculations of the short-term public relations value of sponsorships and the long-term goals of the organization (Mayo & Hausler 2015).

Armbruster (2012, 45) implies, that a reason why company seeks out charity partners to sponsor might be due to a simple need of publicity or goodwill appearance. Some find it to be a way to engage their employees or customers in causes that are meaningful to them. And, in some cases, the company sees potential financial benefits in sponsoring object target audience. The benefit and motivation can be based on the positive image, improvement of brand awareness or proving responsibility for society the sponsoring gives to the company (Bartsch 2013; Alaja 2001, 26-27). In a research conducted by D'Alessandro (1998, 296), he found out that customers gives credit for companies who perform public services and embraces a good cause. 80% of respondents would think better of a company who endorses a benefit for children.

Bartch (2013) argues that traditional sponsoring often happens in a "donation mode", which is very risky for the sponsored object. Traditionally companies consider the following motivations when deciding whether or not to engage in sponsoring opportunity:

- personal preferences
- social feelings
- geographical proximity
- personal relations (good old boys network)

(Bartsch 2013)

Bartsch (2013) presented the result of his study that only 10-30% of all corporate sponsors are actually measuring the effects of their sponsorship. According to this fact the sponsored object could get the sponsorship deal easier if offering help, ways or ideas to measure the effectiveness. Common ways to measure the effectiveness of a sponsorship deal are measuring attention, understanding, engagement, appreciation, commitment and awareness.

D'Alessandro (1998, 287) shares the results received in one study, where sponsors return on investment was measured. Reebok spent a fortune for sponsoring Olympic Games in Atlanta and 55% of the respondents correctly identified Reebok as an Olympic sponsor at

the Atlanta Games. But the conflict arises, as 70% thought non-sponsor Nike was in fact a sponsor due to a very successful ambush marketing campaign. (Burton & Chadvik 2008, 3) Johar, Pham and Wakefield (2006) share results of one research where 50% of the British attending or watching, on average, 13 matches of the Euro 2000 soccer competition, were not able to recall any event sponsors. Keeping these results in mind, the importance of measuring the effects of sponsorship arises, as it might save some money for companies and give the chance to improve their marketing strategy.

Different elements to be considered in value-oriented sponsoring are the company's objectives, which event/team fits the company, operational factors such as budget and a possible sponsoring program (Bartsch 2013).

To create a successful sponsorship relationship and ensure that both parties benefit from the deal, three elements need to be put in place. These elements are the appeal of the sponsoring object to the target group of the company, the fit between the object and company and differentiation (Bartsch 2013; Alaja 2001, 27). The fit between the sponsored object and the company are based on aspects such as values, style and behavior of them both.

As Armbruster (2012, 61) implies, creating a database of suitable contacts gives a great advantage when reaching out to potential sponsors. Finding the right contact person facilitates the process of getting a favorable answer from the potential sponsoring company. This can happen through many channels, contacting a person because of their title, researching internet and other material provided by the company and getting advice from friends (Alaja 2001, 63-64). By joining different groups on social media, reading articles and magazines related to the topic of interest and learning from peers, gives a possibility to collect information of the possible sponsor. When seeking possible sponsors, objective of the project is good to keep in mind as like-minded companies and individuals will better help with achieving the final goal. Whether sponsoring companies objective is either on increasing brand awareness or enhancing financial performance, the relationship with the event must be a good fit for it to provide a way to fulfill both parties needs (Kim 2010). Therefore, looking internally existing supporters and engaging them, might help on finding a suitable candidates. An overview of projects' competitive advantage is suggested to be prepared to provide for the possible sponsor to ease the decision making process (Armbruster 2012, 58,61).

## **4 Experiential Charity Events**

Experiential marketing is a new form of advertising. As services and products are increasing their marketplace competition, brands need to differentiate themselves to stand out and make a statement. By providing meaningful and emotional experience to the consumers, brands can influence the purchase decision regardless one's previous knowledge and experience of the product or service (Thibodeaux 2015). Experiential marketing is a way to immerse the consumers within the product or service by offering memorable and emotional connection between the consumer and the brand (Attack! Marketing 2013).

Fundraising events are a way to open up new channels simply not possible to other methods. Events can be physical, where participants engage in the activity or virtual, where donors immerse themselves in an online environment. In experiential marketing, also charity events can be used to raise awareness and create publicity for the cause. In this chapter we introduce three different experiential charity events before discussing the findings and implementation of project Cycling Summer 2013.

All these three fundraisers presented below share a feature of relying strongly on social media in their communications. 24 de cure by project 3000 and Autolla Nepaliin used blogs as a means to keep the followers engaged and interested, whereas Jari Hämäläinen relied almost solely on Facebook of the different social media channels. Another mutual characteristic for these fundraisers is one man's or small group's desire to take the initiative and do something to raise awareness and money for their chosen cause. They show that we can make a change even if it's only one person starting with the vision for a better tomorrow.

### **4.1 24 de Cure by Project 3000**

A senior biology major student of James Madison University (JMU), Navid Attayan, has his heart set on helping to find a cure for pediatric cancer. His first fundraising event was Project 3000, where he cycled 3000 miles across USA in summer 2013. He gained over 12,000 followers and raised over 20,000\$ for pediatric cancer research. His quote "These kids don't get to quit. So I won't quit", keeps him going and he is determined on raising more funds for the same cause (Grahammb 2014).

His latest fundraising even, 24 de Cure, was a 24-hour cycling marathon on a stationary bicycle, which was organized in April 29 - April 30, 2014 at JMU Commons, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. All donations were collected for Smashing Walnuts, a non-profit organiza-

tion founded by 10-year old Gabrielle Miller after diagnosed with a walnut sized brain tumor (Smashing Walnuts 2015). After Gabrielle passed away in October 2013, Navid Attayan announced his upcoming event for her memory.

Volunteers, performers and sponsors were recruited for the event through Project 3000 Facebook page and in February 25, 2014 an individual Facebook event for 24 de Cure was created. Objective for the event was to raise 2000\$ with a small incentive; Navid would shave his head if target would be met. To motivate followers and encourage them the spread the word, Navid shared journalogs - personal video diaries, in Facebook event site, showing his training and talking about his motivation.

During the event, food and other activities were lined up. Detailed schedule of the day was announced as well as directions were drawn for people coming out of town. Event reached over 35,000 audience. Not all of them were physically attending; instead, over 29 countries were viewing the event virtually through Ustream, a live streaming service. Online donation channel was set up where people were able to either donate money or purchase a 100% hand crafted t-shirt for 10\$. Through that channel, 24 de cure was able to raise over 5000\$ for Smashing Walnut (Grahammb 2014).

#### **4.2 Autolla Nepaliin - an adventure fundraiser**

“Autolla Nepaliin” is a fundraiser planned and executed by three men in their early twenties. Photographer Juho Leppänen, video photographer Mikael Hautala and student Rico Pircklen started their 20 000km journey from Tampere to Kathmandu in August 2012. The aim was to drive down to fill up the van with jewelry crafted by Nepalese residents of a women’s shelter to help them make money to finance their own studies. The jewelry brought back to Finland was distributed to Store of Hope – boutiques and sold to Finnish crowds. The funds raised were donated to Nepalese disadvantaged and unprivileged communities through Fida International (Fida International).

The idea for the trip was born in Leppänen’s mind while he was photographing different attractions in Asia. After keeping the idea to himself for a couple of years, Leppänen and the rest of the crew started working on the project together about half a year before embarking on the journey. They set up “Autolla Nepaliin Oy”; a limited liability company to sell advertising space for companies. The three young men shared the expenses of the trip by themselves. They sold advertising space for both, their blog and the car, for companies

interested in the good cause but refused to use these finances for compensating the expenses of the trip.

Communication was done by blogging from the road and updating the Facebook page. They had over 1600 followers before embarking on the journey and the amount of followers rose to over 15 000 by the end of the trip (Autolla Nepaliin).

The actual trip to Nepal was followed by over 10 000 in social media, and even more publicity for the cause and the trip was achieved when the crowd financed movie was released during the winter 2014. Autolla Nepaliin crew stated that the project reached over 2 000 000 people by different means and the donations from companies and individuals with the advertising funds all together enabled the construction of 5 school buildings in Nepal. The crew raised 61 000€ without counting the revenue from the movie.

### **4.3 Jari Hämäläinen rollerblading for Lastensairaala**

Jari Hämäläinen, a 62-year-old pensioner, took on a challenge in 2013 to raise funds for Lastensairaala (the new children's hospital currently under construction) by rollerblading 1000km. The following year Jari engaged in rollerblading challenge again, this time increasing the mileage to 1200 km and this year, 2015, he is planning to rollerblade 1644km for the same cause.

The donations are collected through Lastensairaala's online donation channel, where anyone can support the cause by starting their own fundraiser. Jari's fundraiser has been running from 3.3.2014 and so far he has raised 767€. The aim of the fundraiser is to reach 1 000 000 € by the end of 2015 (Lipas.uls2017.fi).

Jari's main communication channel to his followers is Facebook, where he currently has two pages with 1165 and 618 likes. He has a separate Facebook page for himself as a public figure and another one solely for this coming year's rollerblading fundraiser. He posts links to interviews as well as different kinds of tests such as What kind of eyes do you have?, Which two words best describe you? and What does your birthday say about you?. He communicates with his followers by posting post card like pictures and asking for their support in forms of likes and donations (Facebook.com/jari hämäläinen).

There is a clear shift in Jari's communication via Facebook: in the beginning of Jari's fundraiser his Facebook posts were about his route and other details related to the actual

event whereas the latest posts are about pleading for donations and sharing his event and cause.

## 5 Cycling Summer 2013

Project Cycling Summer 2013 started in January 2013. From the beginning it was clear this trip was meant to be done for a bigger cause than just our own experience. After weighing a few options, the target of the charity was decided to be UNICEF and within UNICEF the world's children. There was roughly half a year planning and preparation phase, when the focus was on training, marketing and searching for sponsors for the upcoming journey. From May to August 2013, we cycled across the USA, from San Francisco to New York in 56 days and raised almost 1000€ for UNICEF. Our project clearly had different stages from the brainstorming to the project closure, as seen from the figure 6 below.

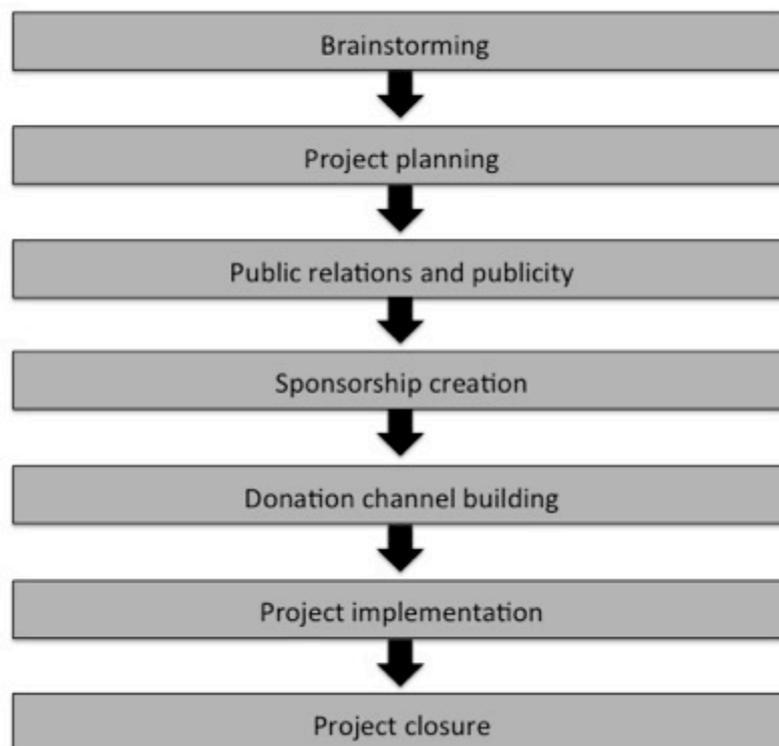


Figure 6. Project framework

When describing our project, we focused on the charity and marketing communications aspects leaving out physical, mental and practical perspectives and preparations. We narrowed our focus down to fundraising and marketing communication in order to keep the thesis within reasonable limits. The abovementioned limitation enables this thesis to be used for any kind of an experiential fundraising event and not only a physical one.

## **5.1 Brainstorming**

The initial idea for the Cycling Summer 2013 project was born when we were introduced to different theses done by other Experience and Wellness Management students. Hearing about a possibility to do a project type of a thesis with a strong emphasis on the practical side got us thinking of a different kind of a project that no one else had done before.

As both of us have our hearts set on traveling and event planning, we decided to plan a trip of our lifetime. After considering multiple different destinations in the world, both of us having experience in living in the United States and the desire to travel more of the country, the destination was set. The process of making this project interesting and attractive enough for others got us thinking alternative ways for traveling. Also considering the financial aspect of a project this size, the idea evolved into a bicycle ride across the country, where also the need for financial resources would be lower. The fact that both of us have always wanted to help others in need, it was obvious to include the charity part for this adventure as well.

After five months of brainstorming, we were thrilled to announce our intentions to others. The fact that we were able to combine our main interests: sports, travelling and helping others gave us tremendous motivation to start the proper project planning process.

## **5.2 Project planning**

Wolf (2010) listed six aspects, what, why, where, who, when and how, as successful pillars for fundraising events. The planning phase of our project focused mainly on the how-aspect of the W's and H. Neither of us had previous experience of long distance cycling or executing fundraising events of this size, so we started to research the topic. We joined multiple groups on Facebook and that way got an insight of the cycling community.

Talking with multiple people who had experience in executing similar trips was of a great help making us consider things we wouldn't otherwise have even thought of. There is a common attitude of helping others and especially new-to-the-sport within the adventure travel community, which helps in networking and getting useful tips.

Making a route plan (attachment 3) and a project plan (attachment 4) including accommodation possibilities, estimated biking days, distances, rest days and safety features were a vast part of the planning phase of our project. By planning ahead we were able to use

different accommodation channels such as couchsurfing and warm showers to contact people on the way.

Creating and later on launching our social media channels was an immense step in the progression of our project. Due to the limited budget we listed all possible free channels, which could be used for promotional purposes, such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Instagram. We found a free website development platform, wix.com, where we created our own web presence. We created an account to blogger.com which we were able to link to our website. After getting Rantapallo on board with our project, we started using Wordpress, another widely used platform. In addition to the appearance being more aesthetically pleasing, we had the advantage of Rantapallo linking our blog, which now was acting as our personal website, to their site as one of the travel blogs. Moving our blog underneath Rantapallo's listing got us more followers especially from likeminded people. Cycling communities, magazines and platforms as well as Finnish communities abroad led to increased publicity within these groups.

We decided to have all our social media channels in English. This was affected by many factors but mainly by the destination country and the possibilities to get international visibility as well as English being the language of our degree program.

When we opened our Twitter account, it was mainly used for information gathering. As mentioned earlier advices from Berkley & Walter (2013, 57), it is a good idea to follow companies and persons related to your field of interest. It helped us find multiple people who were about to do the same as we did, cycle across the United States to collect funds for charity. We started to network, shared our ideas and helpful tips how to gain more audience and how to successfully complete the ride. Following other athletes gave us information of nutrition and proper training. Useful information of potential attractions along the way we got by following destinations and cities own twitter feed. Of course since we were raising money for UNICEF, by following them enabled us to get some insights of people who are passionate about the cause. And as Miller (2013,55) mentioned earlier, social media is a powerful tool as it can be used in so many ways, depending of the call-to-action. We became UNICEF's advocate by spreading the word by re-tweeting their news on our twitter feed.

On Facebook, we created a page, instead of a profile, for our project. This gave us the possibility to monitor and analyze the traffic as well as enaled search engines to find our page more easily. Setting up a Facebook page took only few minutes, as it is very straightforward. The obstacle we came across surprisingly fast, was how to direct the traf-

fic toward our page, and better yet, how to raise people's interest high enough for them to "like" our page.

### **5.3 Public relations and publicity**

As mentioned earlier by Lavigne & Steiner (1961, 137), creating a proper long-term event marketing strategy, where target market is located, leads to sufficient communication. With limited time and financial resources it turned out to be harder than expected. Goal was to reach as many people as possible within short time period. Multichannel marketing was chosen, where same message, content and call to action can be shared in different channels. Our time and resources ran out to do a proper market segmentation's to drive for integrated marketing communications, and therefore this tactics was the best option. As seen from the attachment 5, we crafted a small marketing plan to give us some guidelines throughout the project. Aim was to raise everyones' interest toward the cause through different marketing channels, which were free of charge.

In the social media side, to get our page noticed, we started the approach by using a friend-to-friend communication at firsthand. By sharing our page on our own Facebook profile, we were able to invite our friends to take a look and to give us some comments on the matter. As we had already been members in many different cycling related groups on Facebook, international as well as domestic ones, the second approach we took was to share our own page and drive the cause and spread information to those group members. It was acceptable as we had been active members for quite some time and we had done some networking.

Public relations being the most commonly used free marketing communication process, it was obvious for us to use it as well. We knew we had to get the word out more widely and it has been said that publicity is the most powerful form of marketing communication. We took a chance with media as we believed in our project and the objective behind it. It required a great amount of effort and it was time-consuming, but from the financial perspective it was the best way to gain free visibility. What helped us a great amount was that current Prime Minister of Finland, that time Minister of European Affairs, Alexander Stubb kindly offered to be the patron of our project.

Visiting Travel Expo in Helsinki to promote our event at the beginning of January helped us to discover The League of Finnish American Societies. Our first story was published in their Suomi- USA magazine in February 2013. In this article we had a possibility to affect

the content as they wanted us to write it. Being featured in a printed magazine gave us a tremendous advantage when seeking sponsors to our project, which will be discussed later on.

A press conference was executed at Haaga-Helia UAS, Haaga campus in the beginning of May 2013, where invitation was sent to multiple organizations (attachment 6). The objective for this was to attract media and offer them interviews to Radio and TV news programs. Press conference was successful as YLE Suomi - radio channel came to do an interview and a reporter from Pyöräily & Triathlon -magazine was there to collect information for their online publication.

In addition to the flyers distributed around Helsinki (attachment 7), to better gain media's attention, press release was written and modified with the assistance of a reporter from Rantapallo.fi (attachment 8). As the tone of press release positions the product, we wanted to make sure our event was given the needed credibility, therefore it was inevitable for us to seek professional assistance on crafting the press release. Our press release was published in an open platform - epressi.com, for all media professionals in Finland to see. From there they choose the most interesting topics to write about. All press releases published should contain enough information for media to be able to publish it as it is, but it also has to contain contact information for additional information request.

When Rantapallo Oy published our press release in May 2013, phone calls were received from multiple media sources who wanted to interview us. As seen from the attachment 9, Cycling Summer 2013 was featured in many magazines, radio shows as well as in TV. Media articles and their message is perceived as being more objective than paid advertisement, this third party endorsement gave a vital boost to the marketing message, giving the needed credibility. After being heard on the radio or seen on TV, we were able to paint a better picture of our project, which led to people giving us some praise for our professionalism and courage. This led to more followers for our project, which likely meant more donations for the charity.

#### **5.4 Sponsorship**

When started considering possible sponsors, we thought it would be appropriate to promote Finland along the way and therefore we wanted to have Finnish companies as our sponsors. We crafted a database of all Finnish sports related companies as well as organizations that had something to do with UNICEF or children's wellbeing. We had also iden-

tified the uniqueness of our project, two girls cycling without any backup troops, which we were able to use as an asset to attract event sponsors. We sent approximately 120 emails (attachment 10) and did callbacks but were only able to receive 50 responses which most of them were very opinionated. We did receive 6 positive answers but none of them were from Finnish companies, instead they came within our own network. At this point, we had to give up with the aim of marketing Finland.

One of our biggest collaborators from the communication point of view was Rantapallo Oy, who maintains the most famous online travel site in Finland. Their weekly traffic to Rantapallo.fi domain is almost 200 000. Rantapallo Oy took care of our public relations at the beginning which abled Cycling Summer 2013 to receive more visibilty in media. This gave our project more credibility, which led us to use it as an advantage to receive more sponsors.

We set up a face-to-face meeting with every company interested in hearing more of this project. During the meeting we specified our needs and what benefits we were able to offer them. Even though we did receive some national media coverage, we could not promise this in advance, as we were not incontrol of the outcome. We discussed in which stage our project was in, and what our goal was. Once they had shared their ideas of this partnership, including their expectations, we were able to seal the contract. Once one contract was established, we got another contact to reach from the existing sponsor. At the end, we were able to get all needed apparel and accessories sponsored for the adventure by different brands, seen in attachment 11.

## **5.5 Donation channel**

To get the donation channel launched, we contacted the police to get the collection permit but ran into unexpected difficulties when the permit was denied. The denial turned us to different organizations and after discussing what cause we personally wanted to support, we contacted a few of them offering our project as a means of fundraising. After a couple of phone calls a meeting was set up for us to meet the corporate case officer of UNICEF. She provided us with a short introduction to UNICEF as an organization, their collection methods, distribution of funds raised, and facts about the cause of our upcoming fundraiser. We wanted to be on top of the things and have the latest information to be able to confidently argue our case and fundraiser's purpose and mission. Not having massive financial assets to give away, we wanted the trip and thus our time to be our way of contributing to the wellbeing of our world and taking on the responsibility to help the underprivi-

leged. Therefore all the donations were to go straight to UNICEF and not even partially to financing the cycling. This was also a convenient argument when possible donors wanted to know where the money was going. Not wanting to use any of the funds raised for financing the cycling, the need for sponsorship grew even stronger.

During the discussions on the phone UNICEF had already mentioned the possibility for us to engage in and be a pilot project for their new online donation channel. The aim of the online channel is to enable anyone and everyone to start up their own fundraising project by making the process as easy as possible. What is needed to launch an online fundraiser is deciding the cause, creating a profile on UNICEF's webpage [oma.unicef.fi](http://oma.unicef.fi) (attachment 12), and sharing the profile where you see best fit.

We were relieved not having to worry about keeping cash donations or keeping safe while cycling due to all donations going through the online channel straight to UNICEF and us not being a part of the process in any way. We directed everyone interested in supporting the cause through us to the donation channel, but after finding out the unfortunate incident of it not functioning properly in the USA, we did accept a few cash donations and transferred them into online donations ourselves.

## **5.6 Project implementation**

On May 24th 2013, the implementation of our project started from San Francisco. We had drafted a travel plan to follow (attachment 4), but due to a multiple complications, we fast noticed we are unable to proceed as planned. We had to use our problem solving skills and adapt to fast changing situations.

Once we were finally able to kickoff the cycling on May 24th, it brought us more followers to our social media sites. Awareness of this event had been spread for five months in different channels, therefore peoples' knowledge grew and now it was their time to show their liking and preference. Unfortunately, due to many issues we faced along the way, we did not have enough resources to maintain all of our chosen marketing tools, better yet increase the amount of exposure. Therefore we had follow the advice from Berkley & Walter (2013) and let go of few chosen channels (Flickr and Instagram) to give focus and increase visibility in most active social spaces. We chose Facebook, Twitter as well as our blog, and noticed that Facebook was the best channel for us. We also discovered that without this combination, we would have not gained the amount of followers. Every channel was important in its own way; they helped us to promote our message efficiently.

On Facebook we basically posted everything, which was related to our project and what happened during our trip. We took an approach of documenting our life, i.e. Travelogue. Facebook statistics below show how press releases shared on May 18th and 20th, have reached multiple individuals, but then again, engagement has not been favorable.

| Published              | Post  | Type  | Targeting   | Reach | Engagement |
|------------------------|---|---|---|-------|------------|
| 07/20/2013<br>7:44 pm  |  Greetings from the Governor of Nevada; Certificate of surviving the Loneliest Road of   |    |    | 1.2K  | 195<br>189 |
| 07/20/2013<br>12:01 am |  Oh man, 56 days, 26 flats and 4 falls later we are finally here!!!! It is just unbelievable feeling, must   |    |    | 5.8K  | 742<br>964 |
| 06/15/2013<br>6:02 am  |  170km ride today and we are in COLORADO!! <3 Laura fought long with her saddle sores and right  |    |    | 751   | 188<br>20  |
| 05/20/2013<br>3:57 pm  |  Tonight at 21.00 turn on YLE Fem. After the show you can join live chat at their web site if you want   |    |    | 1.5K  | 245<br>118 |
| 05/19/2013<br>7:34 am  |  This is what we did yesterday - having a bit sore legs today :D   |    |    | 465   | 35<br>2    |
| 05/18/2013<br>8:24 pm  |  <a href="http://www.helsingin uutiset.fi/artikkeli/237561-naiset-tekevat-hyvaa-fillaroimalla-jenkkien-halki">http://www.helsingin uutiset.fi/artikkeli/237561-naiset-tekevat-hyvaa-fillaroimalla-jenkkien-halki</a> |    |    | 1.3K  | 132<br>26  |
| 05/18/2013<br>3:04 pm  |  Wohoo, we did it... This is how we feel after the experience!!! :-)  |   |   | 598   | 112<br>31  |
| 05/18/2013<br>10:51 am |  Ready for extreme run (16km with over 20 obstacles) any guesses for our time?? :-)  |  |  | 478   | 85<br>6    |

Image 3. Facebook statistics (Facebook.com/cyclingsummer2013)

Our lowest engagement happened one day prior our departure when we shared a blog post of Extreme Run what we completed. Highest reach and engagement was created with a picture posted from New York once we completed the ride. Our picture reached over 5000 Facebook members.

Photos were used a lot for appealing to readers' emotions. Sometimes it was obvious we were able to connect with our followers on a human level and getting their attention by sharing our physical and emotional pain as well as happiness. Hearts usually overrule heads and therefore to create an approachable environment, it is recommended to bleed into human emotions (Miller 2013, 4). Our main conversations with our followers were based on our bike related issues. We were able to engage them by asking advice and questions, and raising some concern to appeal their compassion. Not all comments were positive; therefore the advice on developing a thick skin applies. We always responded in a polite way, no matter what type of comment it was. Followers were cheering us, giving advices, sometimes good, sometimes not as positive. However, as long as they find the

interest to comment, means that something has caught their eye and raised certain amount of interest to create a response.

We wrote a blog post once a week, which we shared on Facebook and Twitter with an alluring headline to get people click on the link. Also YLE Suomi –radio channel wanted to follow our journey from the beginning all the way to the end. Phone call interviews were conducted once a week from the road, and broadcasted the next day to all Finnish listeners.

We were able to share our story across the Atlantic through Social media channels. Some of our followers invited us to stay at their houses, even though we had never met in person. Most of the time we felt like we knew those people already, and this was only due to the prior interaction in social media. The only way for us to gain additional exposure within USA was to rely on the traditional communication form and the resources what we had; our presence and ourselves. We talked with local people who we met along the way and told our story face to face. After hearing it, they shared our story with their friends, giving Cycling Summer 2013 more and more visibility. We were interviewed in a small town called Mount Ayr in Iowa and our story was published in a their local news paper, Mount Ayr Record News (attachment 13).

Figure 7 below shows the growth of our follower base. In mid August we reached the maturity stage, where no more new followers were joining.

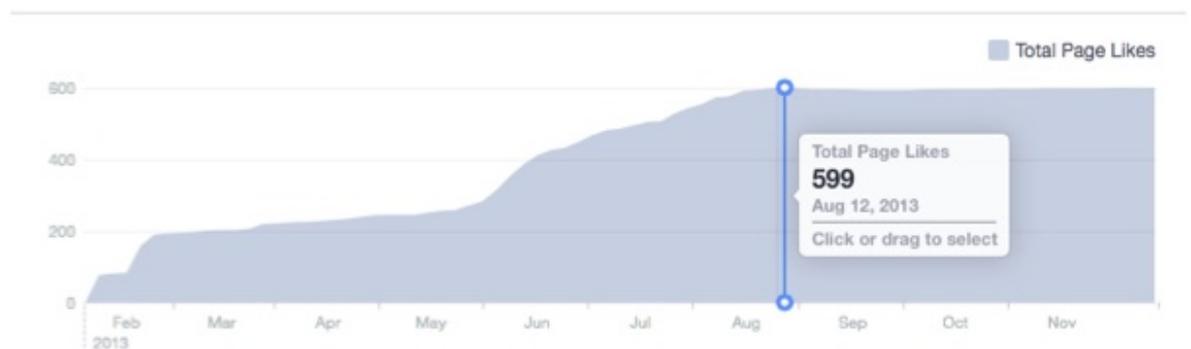


Figure 7. Facebook page likes

We started cycling from San Francisco on May 24<sup>th</sup> and reached our final destination, New York City on July 19<sup>th</sup> 2013. Within 56 days, we travelled across the North American continent, collecting 5161 km on a bike. 48 days were used for cycling and 8 days were spent on getting some rest, maintaining our bikes and take care of the event marketing communication in a form of blogging.

## 5.7 Project closure

We tried to prolong our project closure as our donation channel was open until end of September 2013 by bleeding viewer's emotions. We wrote a blog post to pay a tribute to all the people who we met along the way, and their amazing selfless acts to help us achieve our goal. What we also should have done is a blog post of a proper summary of the journey to wrap up the event. But instead, we were invited to close the story in a final radio interview with YLE Suomi. We were also asked to come and share our experience in a Cocktail hour in Helsinki organized by the League of Finnish American Societies. We invited people to join through our Facebook page.

We were invited to talk about our project in many different occasions, ranging from our bike sponsor's seminar to a project management course and a tourism seminar arranged by first year students in Haaga-Helia UAS. These presentations helped us to organize and analyze our own thoughts by forcing us to put feelings to words and to explain what we went through to people who didn't have same experiences. We neglected our followers by not composing one last blog post to wrap up the entire project, but at the same time got our own closure with the presentations mentioned before.

It is unavoidable for the event to end but how you end it, depends on you. We shared everything related to this project on our Facebook page until September 30<sup>th</sup>, when our donation channel was closed.

## **6 Discussion**

In this chapter we explain and critically analyse the differences between our project implementation and existing theories. We discuss about our success as well as give improvement suggestions for future use. In the end we reflect our own professional and personal development.

### **6.1 Fundraising**

As seen in the data collected by CAF, people are more likely to donate to rebuilding after disruptive events and different catastrophes than for general good. This might have had an impact on the funds we were able to raise during our project; had we picked the cause differently, the end result could have been different.

Unfortunately the online donation channel we were piloting did not work properly outside of Finland during the execution of the project. This led to the remarkable decrease of the potential donation target group as not being able to use the advantage being in a country that is known for their willingness to help and donate quite generously (World Giving Index 2011, 2014).

The reason why we wanted to use an online donation channel was the ability to collect funds from different countries as social media spreads worldwide. Keeping this in mind and roughly calculating each of our followers giving 5 euros, we set the target quite high, up to 20 000€. Once the target would be reached, the donation channel would close and no more donations could have been received. Therefore we wanted to ensure the channel staying open until the closure of the project and set the amount quite high.

The decision to have all our social media channels in English was affected by many factors but mainly by the destination country and the possibilities to get international visibility as well as English being the language of our degree program. Taking into consideration the unfortunate fact that our donation channel only worked in Finland we might have been more successful in raising funds having some of our material in Finnish. The age group most likely to donate funds is older people (CAF) and according to the feedback we got, they would have been more eager to follow us had some of the material been in Finnish. That being said, we were fortunate to have YLE Suomi - radio channel call us once a week to provide our older generation Finnish followers updates of the trip.

## 6.2 Marketing communications

From event marketing communications we covered most of the practises and tactics by using the power of public relations to receive sponsors and to get eyes on to our website and social media channels. Our blog received over 30,000 viewers and Facebook page had almost 600 followers. With the help of these people, we were able to raise almost 1000€ for UNICEF.

We were able to raise people's awareness and increase their knowledge as far as to get into their liking. Some of the followers we were able to guide through the whole hierarchy of effects model mentioned earlier, all the way to the purchase, in this case meaning the donation.

What we should have taken into consideration was the time spent on a bicycle vs. the time writing a blog consumes. We feel like we could have been able to collect more money for UNICEF, if tools given for us would have worked properly and if we would have had external person taking care of our communication.

However, the kind of a blog we wanted to keep (travelogue) might not necessarily be the kind of a blog drawing most followers. We did not want to spend all our time off bikes writing the most intriguing blog but rather find the balance between writing and acquiring adventures.

In our case blogging took way too much time and became almost a duty instead of a pleasant way of sharing our experiences while advancing on the epic journey. We struggled with the technical aspects of blogging as well as not being familiar with the new platform. We can recommend having technical support available especially if one does not feel very confident with the platform.

Creating some extra content before embarking for the adventure could have been helpful. Writing about sponsored products, seeking historical information of intended destinations, or creating emotional content of the targeted charity organization and posting these time to time might have helped keep the audience attracted and engaged. We could have provided some incentives for liking our page or from sharing our content. For instance we could have asked some discount codes from our sponsors, which our followers could have used in purchases from their websites. This would have added some extra value for both parties.

We knew we had done some communication right, as we noticed the existing set of followers were interacting with each other by helping newcomers to keep up where we were going. Some followers noticed our lack of interaction on Twitter and they kindly directed others to join our Facebook page. Our focus got lost on searching right people with whom to network instead of searching the appropriate keywords to use. Dividing tasks between us would have been helpful but as we noticed, Twitter is not as popular in Finland as it is for instance in the United States. We decided to shift our focus where our target audience was most active and let Twitter get the least of our attention of all of the used social networking sites. We did not want to abandon it fully, as we knew we had few followers and it was a helpful source for us as well.

We failed to write a blog post to close up the entire project once returning back to Finland, instead we only paid a tribute to all the people who we met along the way. If a decent project summary would have been drafted, it would have given a proper closure not only for us but also our followers and provided us with a chance to direct the donors to different ways of engaging further with the charity. However, we still do have the opportunity to close the project with finishing this thesis and distributing it to the followers who were interested in reading through it.

If time had been on our side, we would have built a feedback system or a questionnaire to measure our success. It would have been great to find out what our followers thought about this experiential charity event. However, we trusted on the data provided by Facebook and metrics collected by wordpress.com where our own website and blog was present. We did get some occasional comments to our blog and on Facebook, which allowed us to adjust our strategy as best as we could while on the road.

We measured that our lowest engagement happened one day prior our departure when we shared a blog post of Extreme Run what we completed. Many might have seen it as irrelevant to our project even though for us it was another way of marketing our upcoming adventure.

### **6.3 Self-evaluation**

Working in a big project like this for such a long time teaches a lot of different skills, from patience to problem solving. Implementation part of this project from brainstorming to project closure was greatly enjoyable. It took a lot of scheduling and working with time man-

agement and personal chemistries, but as we were passionate about completing this project, we were able to work under a lot of pressure.

Eight months after the cycling was done, we hit the wall when we faced the fact that this project had to be put on an academic paper. In our minds we had a clear picture how we wanted this paper to look, but it would have made this project too big and unsuitable for a Bachelor thesis in our degree program. Narrowing down the most important aspects of this project was hard. Thankfully we were in no rush to complete the paper as we still had one year of studies to complete. We were positive about getting the thesis done while on exchange and work placement but soon found it to be too much. It took us about six months to get the first draft done and then the obstacles arose. This led us to find out that we were running out of time. We should not have left anything to the last minute, instead we should have started working on this paper immediately after the cycling was done and kept working on it every day until the paper was accepted by our supervisor. As a whole, we think we were able to conquer those obstacles and put together a fairly good paper in a limited time.

Focusing on different aspects of the trip when writing the first version of our thesis and then changing direction and emphasis affected both our motivation to complete the paper and the time we still had left. Abandoning an interesting aspect of the trip and focusing on another very important part yet something we are not academically as educated about did affect the motivation and outcome of the thesis. After the initial disappointment and realization of the new short timeframe, we got our minds set onto the new goal and started working towards it.

This project gave us better understanding of marketing communication practices, and how to apply it in the future projects. Also knowing who would be the best potential donors and how they would best be targeted will help in planning and executing the next project.

We struggled with the research having quite fixed mindset after the practical experience and an idea of what works and what doesn't. The mentioned mindset definitely affected the scope of our research and made us critical towards certain theories. Having done the theory first we would have been more open to different theories and frameworks.

Narrowing down the subject was another struggle for us. We still feel like the theory is more of a glance of what we wanted to write but going deeper would have made the thesis too long. Had we decided on only one perspective to focus on, we could have gone deeper in exploring the subject.

We both learned more about and got a chance to put our interests to use in this project mainly in the forms of marketing, charity and sport. Seeing how all the little things came together in a project and also in the academic side gave us a front row seat to a project management rollercoaster – with the guaranteed bumps.

#### **6.4 Improvement recommendations**

We stated helping others create better experiential charity events as one of the purposes of this thesis and thus want to provide a short list of advice for future projects. These are issues that we see as potential topics for improvement based on our own experience.

First of all, we would recommend anyone doing a project like this with the aim of writing an academic paper of it to start with the theory and only then proceed on to the practical part and executing the project. We found it hard to go from practical and partially fixed mindset to researching the theory objectively.

We would recommend anyone to do sponsorship agreements in writing and be clear in what they require from both parties and what the benefits to each are. We had misunderstandings with one of our sponsors but not having anything on paper made it hard to argue our case.

It would be recommended to direct the fundraising money straight to the desired charity and cause using sponsors and/or own means to finance the trip. This will help in explaining the followers where the money is going to and clear all doubts of misuse of the money and fundraiser. Furthermore, knowing the facts and a fair share of the details of the cause will help in building trustworthiness in the eyes of donors.

Consider outsourcing communication while on the journey. It takes a lot of time and effort and can be frustrating to do on the road. Outsourcing communication would enable the participants to focus on the journey itself instead of stressing about blogging not being frequent enough. On the other hand outsourcing communication might make it lose the voice of the participants/organizers, but it is something to consider.

Moreover, consider the possible effects of being a “pilot” for something – in our case the online donation channel. Being a pilot can bring publicity and awareness but can also backfire as seen in our project.

Do not get offended or take comments too personally. People will always comment and criticise – even more if publicity is involved. Develop a thick skin but remember to answer to the nastier comments in a polite manner.

Always follow through and close the project properly – you owe it to your followers!

## **6.5 Conclusion**

Overall we do feel that we succeeded in what we set out to achieve: we did finish the cycling trip while raising funds for the world's children. Even though we did not get that much money we got eyes on the charity. This being said, we could have been more successful knowing what we know now and without having run into few unlucky difficulties. We consider our project a pilot version of an adventurous fundraising event that can be used as a foundation to be developed into more successful projects.

All in all we learned that even though it is possible - and in some way very hardwired in our personalities - to do first and later on think and reflect back to theory, doing it the other way around would save a lot of time, trouble and effort. We do believe that an appropriate project and communications plan would have made a difference in the follower and donation numbers. Having the practical experience first certainly affected the selection of theories and sources used in the thesis and gave us a critical mindset towards the theories we wanted to use.

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## Attachments

### Attachment 1. Top 20 countries in World Giving Index

Table 2 Top 20 countries in the 5 year World Giving Index, with score and participation in giving behaviours

|                          |  World Giving Index 5 year ranking |  World Giving Index 5 year score (%) |  Helping a stranger 5 year average (%) |  Donating money 5 year average (%) |  Volunteering time 5 year average (%) |  World Giving Index 1 year score (%) |  Difference between 1 and 5 year score (%) |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| United States of America | 1   | 59  | 73  | 62  | 43   | 64  | 4   |
| Ireland                  | 2   | 58  | 64  | 74  | 37   | 60  | 1   |
| New Zealand              | 3   | 58  | 68  | 65  | 40   | 58  | 1   |
| Australia                | 4   | 57  | 66  | 70  | 36   | 56  | -1  |
| Canada                   | 5   | 57  | 66  | 66  | 39   | 60  | 3   |
| United Kingdom           | 6   | 55  | 61  | 75  | 28   | 55  | 0   |
| Netherlands              | 7   | 54  | 53  | 72  | 36   | 53  | -1  |
| Sri Lanka                | 8   | 51  | 54  | 51  | 47   | 54  | 3   |
| Qatar                    | 9   | 47  | 67  | 58  | 17   | n/a   | n/a   |
| Hong Kong                | 10  | 47  | 57  | 68  | 15   | n/a   | n/a   |
| Malta                    | 11  | 46  | 44  | 70  | 24   | 49  | 3   |
| Denmark                  | 12  | 46  | 52  | 63  | 22   | 47  | 1   |
| Thailand                 | 13  | 45  | 43  | 77  | 16   | 44  | -1  |
| Turkmenistan             | 14  | 45  | 57  | 21  | 57   | 43  | -2  |
| Liberia                  | 15  | 44  | 78  | 10  | 45   | 38  | -6  |
| Indonesia                | 16  | 44  | 38  | 63  | 30   | 51  | 7   |
| Austria                  | 17  | 44  | 51  | 54  | 26   | 48  | 4   |
| Finland                  | 18  | 43  | 55  | 45  | 29   | 43  | 0   |
| Germany                  | 19  | 42  | 55  | 46  | 26   | 42  | -1  |
| Cyprus                   | 20  | 42  | 53  | 47  | 25   | 43  | 2   |

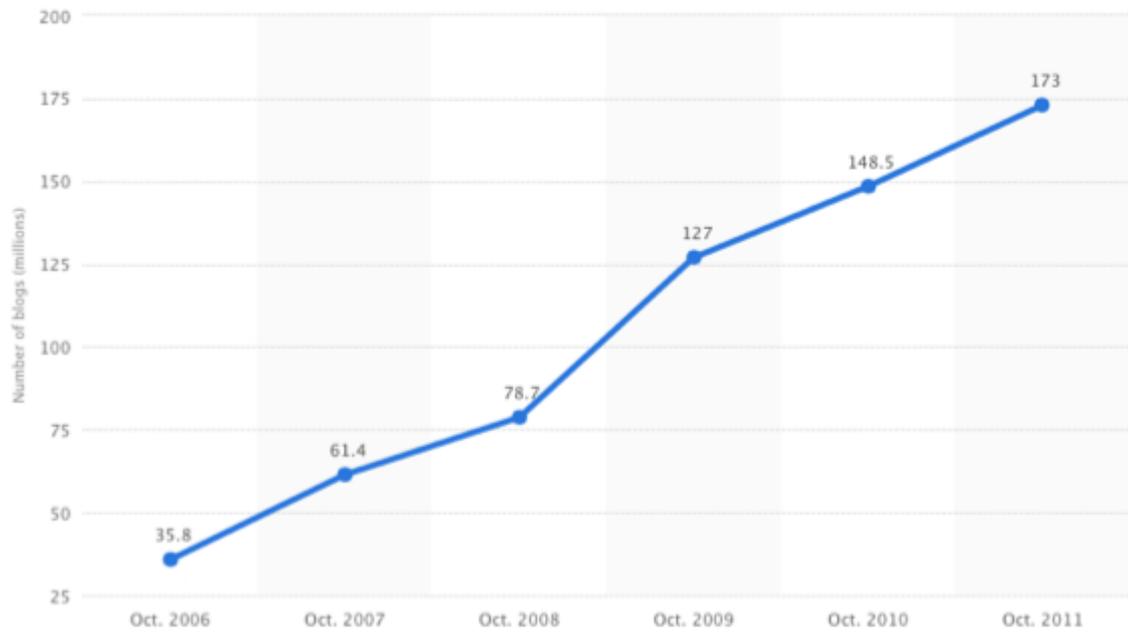
Five-year score and averages: data represents average participation in countries surveyed in three or more different calendar years in period 2009–2013.

One-year score: only includes countries surveyed in 2013.

Data relate to participation in giving behaviours during one month prior to interview.

World Giving Index and difference scores are shown to the nearest whole number but the rankings are determined using two decimal points.

**Attachment 2. Number of blogs world wide 2006 – 2010 (Statista, 2015)**



### Attachment 3. Route plan



## Attachment 4. 90 day Project plan



### MAY / JUNE 2013



| SUNDAY   | MONDAY                                     | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY   | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY   |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|
|  |  |   | 22) Departure HEL- SFO<br>Arrival 4.15pm<br>Shopping (check list)<br>1 <sup>st</sup> night????? | 23) Through Oakland to Brannan Island<br>Recreational area | 24) Towards Sierra Nevada, stop Le Mulet Rouge Winery<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> night in Eldorado National forest | 25) Carson City, NV  |
| 26) Loneliest road in USA<br>Fallon, NV<br>Back WATER for the next day | 27) 120miles without service to Austin, NV | 28) AUSTIN, NV<br>Hot Springs                             | 29) Eureka, NV  | 30) Ely, NV  | 31) Ward Charcoal ovens, 10 <sup>th</sup> night at Great Basin National Park                               | 1) Sevier Lake, NV   |
| 2) Salina, UT  | 3) Greenriver, UT                          | 4) Fruita, CO   | 5) Colorado National Monument.<br>15 <sup>th</sup> night in Grand Junction, CO                  | 6) Glenwood Springs, CO                                    | 7) Black Lake, CO  | 8) Breckenridge, CO  |
| 9) Breckenridge, CO  | 10) 11 Mile canyon reservoir, CO           | 11) Woodland Park, CO                                     | 12) Colorado Springs, CO  | 13) COS  | 14) COS  | 15) COS  |
| 16) COS  | 17) Estes Park, CO                         | 18) 28 <sup>th</sup> night between Greeley – Sterling, CO | 19) Julesburg, CO   | 20) Ogallala, NE   | 21) Gothenburg, NE   | 22) Kearney =mid point 1733 to east and west, 32 <sup>th</sup> night Windmill State Park, NE |



### JUNE / JULY 2013



| SUNDAY   | MONDAY              | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY                         | SATURDAY                      |
|--|---------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 23) Branched Oak State Park, NE  | 24) Omaha, NE       | 25) Winterset, IA<br>(Bridges of Madison Co., John Wayne Bldg.) | 26) Elk Rock State Park or Wallaschuck recreational Area, IA | 27) Along Iowa River                                | 28) Davenport, IA              | 29) Along Hennepin Canal, IL  |
| 30) Kankakee, IL   | 1) Warsaw, IL       | 2) Bryan, OH  | 3) Fremont, OH   | 4) INDEPENDENCE DAY<br>Tinkers Creek State park, OH | 5) Lagrange, OH                | 6) West Branch State Park, OH |
| 7) Elk Rock, OH  | 8) Beaver Creek, PA | 9) S.B. Elliot State Park, PA                                   | 10) Bald Eagle State Park, PA                                | 11) Danville, PA                                    | 12) Hickory Run State Park, PA | 13) Stephens State Park, NJ   |
| 14) Morristown, NJ<br>(Eosterfields living historical farm + National historical park) | 15) NEW YORK!!!!    | 16)   | 17)  | 18)   | 19)                            | 20)                           |
| 21)  | 22)                 | 23)   | 24)  | 25)   | 26)                            | 27)                           |



## JULY / AUGUST



| SUNDAY                      | MONDAY                 | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| 28)                         | 29)                    | 30)     | 31)       | 1)       | 2)     | 3)       |
| 4)                          | 5)                     | 6)      | 7)        | 8)       | 9)     | 10)      |
| 11)                         | 12)                    | 13)     | 14)       | 15)      | 16)    | 17)      |
| 18)<br>DÉPARTURE<br>NYC-HEL | 19)<br>Back in Finland |         |           |          |        |          |
|                             |                        |         |           |          |        |          |



## **Attachment 5. Marketing plan**

### **Objectives**

#### **Sell**

The idea of our journey is to help Unicef to get more donations. Donating will happen with electric donation tool where we will provide a link from our website. Most of the people are using internet daily and that is the only channel how people can follow us in a real time. While being online, we can reach more followers, where ever, when ever, with zero budget and that hopefully gets new donators for Unicef.

#### **Serve**

Followers can donate 24/7. We are trying to add value at the pre-sales stage, during and post-sales after our journey. If they have questions, we promise to answer within 24h. They are welcome to present ideas where we should go on our trip and what should we do. They can find us from multiple channels, providing different type of information depending of the place and target audience.

#### **Sizzle**

After we start cycling we hope to get propositions where to go and what to see so we can deliver what followers want via videos. Adding an on time GPS- map for people to see where are we going would be suitable but not practical for security reasons. We will be posting every morning our yesterday's route.

#### **Speak**

We want this project to serve followers and hoping them to communicate with us. We have asked help from others and surprisingly we did get quite a few tips what we should do to get this started. We try to activate our followers but since we have not started our trip yet, we do not have that much to offer, we have to wait and hope to get more interaction with our videos what we will be posting along the way. Hoping to see some viral marketing which would increase our followers.

#### **Save**

Since our budget is zero, e-marketing suits best for us. Cooperation with Rantapallo.fi is a huge benefit and saving for us. Also other sponsoring companies will be promoting us at least on social media and we will be promoting them in many different ways. Buying an ad space from the newspaper would have cost quite a lot of money to us and of course to those companies who we are working with, so it is savings for all of us. While studying

during the day, training at night and doing homework on weekends, we also save time while being online. We would not have possibility to go to promotion tours every weekend. Also followers save time since they can reach us where ever they are using internet. No need to switch location.

### **Strategy and tactics**

Cycling summer 2013 is not a service, it is not anything tangible. It is the feeling what you get after a good deed. We are trying to inspire people to donate while following our exiting journey. We want to get followers participate on our tour by making suggestions what to do and where to go. People can follow us from many different distribution channels but mainly Youtube with the videos and Blogger with longer stories of our days, giving information of different attractions where to visit.

### **Price**

There will not be any set price. Everyone can decide what they want to donate. We want to make people to understand value of the money. It is different all over the world. With 5 € in Finland you do not get that much but the same amount of money can give a lot to a child for example in Syria. Because of the economical situation we are not expecting anyone to make a huge donation by themselves so we will be satisfied to any kind of donation.

### **Place**

We are marketing our project in many different ways online and offline. We have our own website, using SEO for Google and where we have widget to Blogger where we write little bit about our planning but mostly we will be writing about our journey when it starts. We are promoting our blog in Google + and RSS feed will be installed in our blog. We also have widgets to Facebook page and Twitter account where we post different things about our interest. In Twitter we mostly have American followers and cyclists who understands what we are about to go through and in Facebook our followers are from different target group, so the postings have to be different.

In Youtube we will be publishing videos from our ride and attractions where we visit. Interviews of people we meet and extra things we do.

Flickr will be our photo sharing channel, where we can do folders of different days and places. Instagram will work also as a photo sharing channel but to a different target group of photos taken from different angle.

Wikipedia could work as an information channel of our project to find new followers and LinkedIn could be information sharing channel for news about the Children of the world. Mobile app with sponsor's ads including their offers by showing it at the store where followers could track our journey live with GPS would be good addition.

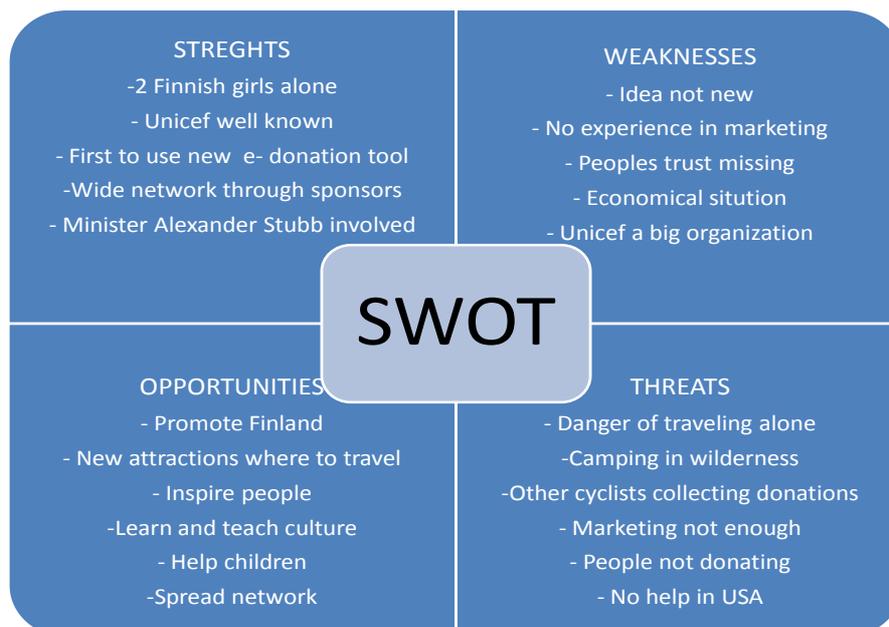
## Promotion

One of our Unique Selling Point is new donation tool what Unicef starts using. We will be the first to test it. When it will be launched, we will be marketing it in many places.

Link to our Facebook page can be found from other companies Facebook pages. For example Greendoor Oy has liked our facebook page, so our Facebook is linked to theirs. YFU is promoting us on their website and Dare2b will also link our blog to their site. Viral marketing is working somehow time to times and that is one of our most important resources to get more followers. Sponsorship with Rantapallo.fi will bring us more publicity since they have 200 000 visitors on their webpage and they will also do offline marketing with other media partners for us. We will be using direct e-mail to send a newsletter especially to companies in United States, to get in touch with them and spread the word. In offline marketing we will be posting leaflets in different places with QR-code in them, leading to our website. Mixing different marketing methods will hopefully help Unicef to get a lot of donations.

## Actions and Control

### SWOT



SWOT analysis above shows our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats what we have with this project. There are many things what we need to consider making this project as successful as possible.

### Responsibilities

We have divided our tasks to prevent mistakes and to equalize responsibilities. When on the move, it is easier for both of us to maintain media channels and start good interaction with followers.

|                   |               |                 |               |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| JAN-FEB           |               | MARCH           |               |
| Webpage           | PIPPU         | Flickr          | LAURA (pippu) |
| Facebook          | LAURA (pippu) | Instagram       | LAURA         |
| Twitter           | LAURA         | Couchsurfing    | PIPPU         |
| Blogger           | PIPPU (laura) | Warmshowers     | PIPPU (laura) |
| Business cards    | PIPPU         | USA hospitals   | PIPPU         |
|                   |               | Facebook groups | LAURA         |
| APRIL             |               | MAY             |               |
| Webpage           | Rantapallo    | Youtube         | PIPPU         |
| Donation tool     | LAURA         | e-mail          | LAURA         |
| Media USA         | LAURA         |                 |               |
| Leaflets/ QR-code | PIPPU         |                 |               |
| RSS-Feed          | Rantapallo    |                 |               |

Fig. Schedule and tasks

### Monitoring

We have installed a visitor tracker to all of our pages in our website. It tells us the geological location of the visitor, browser used, reference page etc.

Also from Facebook we can see our weekly update of new likes, how many is talking about us and how many we reached in that week. That way we can analyze what posting got people's attention, did they saw it from our page or through viral marketing.

# Kutsu

## Tehdistötilaisuuteen

Kaksi opiskelijatyttöä nousevat pyörien selkään kerätäkseen varoja UNICEFin mailman lasten hyväksi. 5000km matka vie heidät San Franciscosta New Yorkiin, mukanaan vain teltta ja makuupussit.

Cycling Summer 2013– projektin suojelijana Ministeri Alexander Stubb.

Päivämäärä: 08.05.2013  
Aika: 11.00-12.00  
Paikka: Haaga-Helian ammattikorkeakoulu,  
Valopiha  
Pajuniityntie 11, 00320 Helsinki



**RSVP 03.05.2013 mennessä**

Cycling Summer 2013 / Facebook  
Cyclingsummer13 / Twitter  
[www.rantapallo.fi/cyclingsummer2013](http://www.rantapallo.fi/cyclingsummer2013)

Laura Kähkönen 044-7289784  
Pippu Ahvenainen 050-4665011  
[cyclingsummer2013@gmail.com](mailto:cyclingsummer2013@gmail.com)

**Rantapallo**

## SUOMALAI SOPISKELIJOIDEN HYVÄNTEKEVÄISYSTEMPAUS



## KILOMETRIÄ POLKUPYÖRÄLLÄ

Pippu Ahvenainen ja Laura Kähkönen, Haaga-Helian opiskelijat polkevat kesällä kolmessa kuukaudessa Yhdysvaltojen länsirannikolta itärannikolle kerätäkseen varoja Unicefille nukkuen vain teltassa ja luottaen uusien tuttavuuksien vieraanvaraisuuteen. Seuraa tyttöjen matkaa Cycling Summer 2013 -blogista ja osallistu keräykseen maailman lasten hyväksi!

Facebook: Cycling Summer 2013

<http://www.rantapallo.fi/cyclingsummer2013/>

<http://oma.unicef.fi/lapset/aloita-keraeys.aspx?col=2-2763>



# Suomalaistytöt polkevat 5000 km keräten varoja Unicefille

Tiedote. Julkaistu: 03.05.2013 klo 13:28 - Rantapallo

<http://www.epressi.com>

## Pyöräillen San Franciscosta New Yorkiin

Erikoinen kesätempaus vie Haaga-Helian opiskelijat **Laura Kähkösen** ja **Pippu Ahvenaisen** 5 000 kilometrin matkalle halki koko Pohjois-Amerikan.

Matkallaan he keräävät varoja Unicefin hyväksi ja tekevät samalla Suomea tunneksi. Mukaan pakataan polkupyörien lisäksi vain teltta ja makuupussit - matkan varrelta löytyy toivottavasti paljon uusia tuttavuuksia ja vieraanvarainen vastaanotto kaukaa tulleille matkaajille.

Pyöräilyprojekti on Laura Kähkösen (28) ja Pippu Ahvenaisen (20) lopputyö Haaga-Helian ammattikorkeakoulun Experience and Wellness Management -ohjelmassa.

## Tien päällä toukokuusta elokuuhun

Matka alkaa 22. toukokuuta San Franciscosta ja päättyy elokuun lopussa New Yorkiin. Reitin varrelle jäävät niin Nevadan autiomaat kuin Coloradon Kalliovuoret. Edessä on kansallispuistoja ja rauhallisia maissipeltoja maalaismaisemassa, mutta myös kaupunkien ruuhkaisia teitä.

- Tällainen road trip on ollut ainainen haaveemme ja olemme myös halunneet päästä tekemään hyväntekeväisyystötä, kertoo Laura Kähkönen.

- Koulutusohjelmamme antoi meille mahdollisuuden toteuttaa molemmat haaveet samaan aikaan. Keräämme matkan aikana varoja Unicefille ja vieraillemme myös lastensairaaloissa.

Suunnitelmana on yöpyä koko kolmen kuukauden ajan pääasiassa teltaillen.

- Toivomme pääsevämme noin kerran viikossa sisätiloihin nukkumaan ja peseytymään lämpimässä suihkussa. Majapaikkojen etsinnässä luotamme sohvasurffaukseen ja paikallisten ystävällisyyteen, suunnittelee Kähkönen.

## Matkatunnelmat välittyvät Suomeen blogin kautta

Cycling Summer 2013 -projektin suojelijana toimii ministeri **Alexander Stubb**. Yleisö voi seurata tyttöjen matkan etenemistä ja lahjoitusten kertymistä Rantapallo-matkailusivuston [Cycling Summer 2013 -blogista](#) koko kesän ajan.

- Kerromme matkan etenemisestä niin usein kuin olosuhteiden puolesta voimme, ja tarkoituksena on kuvata matkan varrelta myös videomateriaalia. Tämä tulee olemaan sekä henkisesti että fyysisesti vaativa kesä, mutta odotan sitä jo kovasti ja toivon yleisön tervetulleeksi seuraamaan projektia kaikkine ylä- ja alamäki-neen!

### **Lisätiedot:**

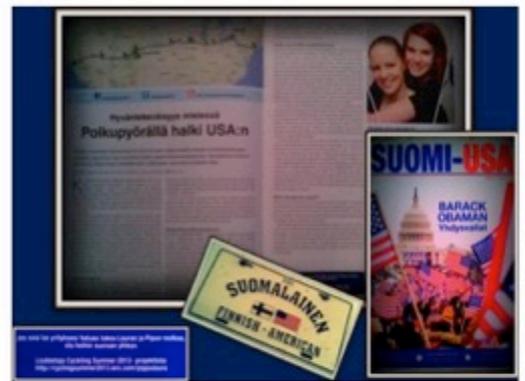
Laura Kähkönen 044-7289784  
Pippu Ahvenainen 050-4665011

[cyclingsummer2013@gmail.com](mailto:cyclingsummer2013@gmail.com)

<http://www.rantapallo.fi/cyclingsummer2013/>



Attachment 9. Collection of publicity channels



## Attachment 10. Email to sponsors

Hei!

Olen Experience and Wellness Management -opiskelija Haaga-Helian Ammattikorkeakoulusta. Olemme tekemässä päättötyöksemme hyväntekeväisyyspyöräilyn Yhdysvaltojen halki, San Franciscosta New Yorkiin 21.5.-20.8.2013 luokkakaverini kanssa. Reissullamme keräämme varoja Unicef-organisaatiolle sekä Maailman Ruokaohjelmalle. Ministeri Alexander Stubb on ystävällisesti lähtenyt projektimme suojelijaksi.

### **Nyt etsimmekin yrityksiä lähtemään uskomattomalle matkalle yhteistyöhön kanssamme.**

Projektimme tarkoituksena on varojenkeruu hyväntekeväisyyteen, tietoisuuden levittäminen sekä myös Suomen markkinoiminen kansainvälisesti. Olemme suunnitelleet pysähtyvämme kansallispuistoissa, eri nähtävyyksissä kuin myöskin muutamassa lasten sairaalassa lukemassa Muumi- kirjoja ja viemässä heille hyvää mieltää Suomesta.

Matkastamme tekee erikoisen se että vaikka olemmekin kaksi tyttöä, emme tule yöpymään hotelleissa vaan pakkamme teltan ja makuupussit mukaan sekä luotamme tuttujen että tuntemattomien vieraanvaraisuuteen sekä haluun auttaa. Ja toki Ministeri Alexander Stubbin mukana olo tekee siihen vielä mukavan lisän.

### **Mitä tästä olisi teille?**

Ihmisten kiinnostus on nopeasti herännyt ja olemme alkaneet saamaan näkyvyyttä. Suomi-Amerikka Yhdistysten Liitto SAYL julkaisi meistä jutun 15.2. ilmestyneessä lehdessään. Kotisivumme ovat siirtymässä piakkoin Rantapallo.fi alle ja heidän kauttaan saamme lisää näkyvyyttä. Heidän sivuillaan vierailee viikottain 200 000 uutta kävijää. He tulevat myös hoitamaan lehdistö puolta. Tarkoituksenamme on järjestää pieni lehdistötilaisuus ennen lähtöä.

Sosiaalisen median jakelukanavat on hyvin käytössä. Tulemme matkalta jakamaan valokuvia blogissa että Flickrin kautta ja Youtube toimii videoiden jakelijana reissun ajan. Matkan päätyttyä teemme matkasta yhteenvedon "dokumentin" muodossa. Keskustelussa on myös artikkelin kirjoitus Pyöräily +triathlon- lehteen.

### **Kuulostaa hyvältä, eikö?**

Jatkaisimme mielellämme keskusteluja kanssanne kasvotusten jolloin voisimme myös käydä läpi yhteistyön etuudet mikäli teillä olisi jotain muuta mielessä.

Ystävällisin terveisin

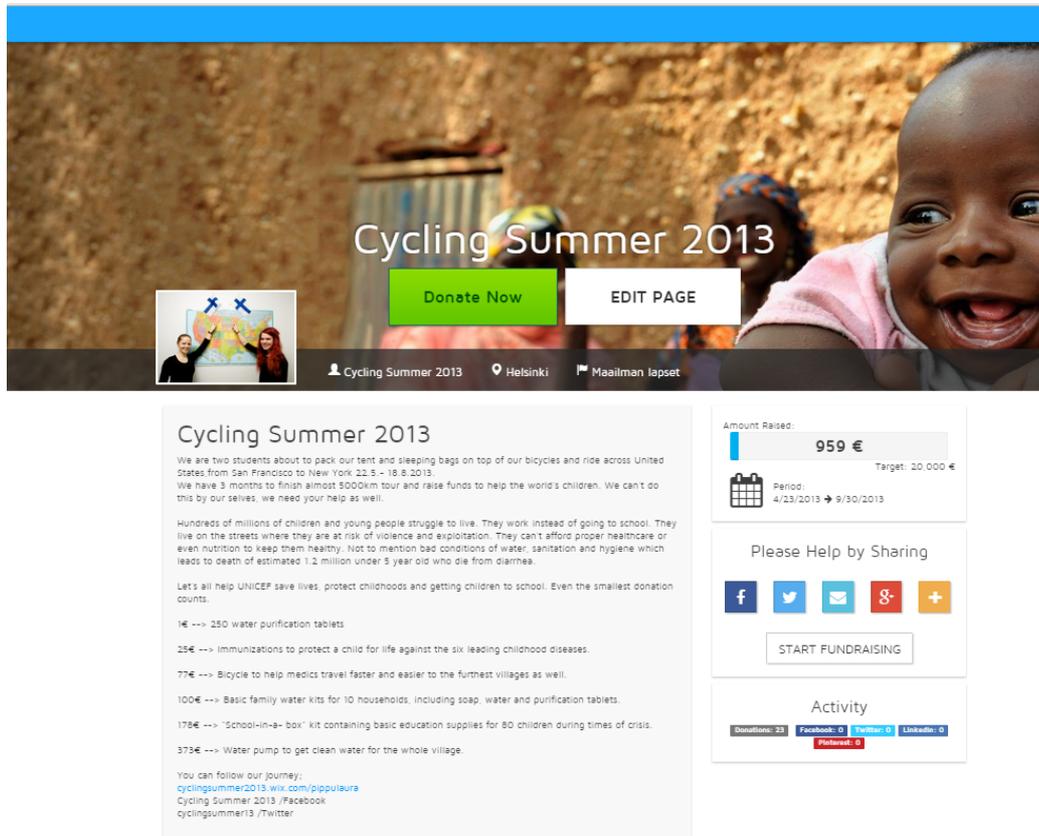
#####

**Käykää tutustumassa kotisivuihimme; <http://cyclingsummer2013.wix.com/pippulaura>**  
Sieltä löydätte myös linkit **Facebook-** ja **Twitter-**profiileihimme.

Attachment 11. Sponsoring brands



## Attachment 12. Oma.unicef.fi



### Cycling Summer 2013

[Donate Now](#) [EDIT PAGE](#)

Cycling Summer 2013 Helsinki Maailman lapset

#### Cycling Summer 2013

We are two students about to pack our tent and sleeping bags on top of our bicycles and ride across United States from San Francisco to New York 22.5. - 18.8.2013.  
We have 3 months to finish almost 5000km tour and raise funds to help the world's children. We can't do this by our selves, we need your help as well.

Hundreds of millions of children and young people struggle to live. They work instead of going to school. They live on the streets where they are at risk of violence and exploitation. They can't afford proper healthcare or even nutrition to keep them healthy. Not to mention bad conditions of water, sanitation and hygiene which leads to death of estimated 1.2 million under 5 year old who die from diarrhea.

Let's all help UNICEF save lives, protect childhoods and getting children to school. Even the smallest donation counts.

- 1€ --> 250 water purification tablets
- 25€ --> Immunizations to protect a child for life against the six leading childhood diseases.
- 77€ --> Bicycle to help medics travel faster and easier to the furthest villages as well.
- 100€ --> Basic family water kits for 10 households, including soap, water and purification tablets.
- 178€ --> "School-in-a-box" kit containing basic education supplies for 80 children during times of crisis.
- 373€ --> Water pump to get clean water for the whole village.

You can follow our journey:  
[cyclingsummer2013.wix.com/pippulaure](http://cyclingsummer2013.wix.com/pippulaure)  
[Cycling Summer 2013 / Facebook](#)  
[cyclingsummer13 / Twitter](#)

Amount Raised: **959 €** Target: 20.000 €  
Period: 4/23/2013 → 9/30/2013

Please Help by Sharing

[f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [g+](#) [+](#)

[START FUNDRAISING](#)

Activity

Donations: 33 Facebook: 0 Twitter: 0 LinkedIn: 0 Pinterest: 0

# Mount Ayr Record-News

Volume 149, Number 18 • Thursday, July 4, 2013 • Mount Ayr, Iowa 50854 • USPS No. 365-120 • Visit us on the web at www.mountayrnews.com 75¢



Cross-country bicyclists Pippa Alvinainen, 20 (left), and Laura Kahkonen, 28, stopped in Mount Ayr Tuesday on their way from San Francisco to New York. Both are university students from Finland.

## Finnish students stop in Mount Ayr on long cross-country bicycle trip

Two bicyclists stopped for breakfast in Mount Ayr Tuesday on their cross-country trip from San Francisco to New York.

Finnish students Pippa Alvinainen and Laura Kahkonen began their journey five weeks ago and plan to arrive in New York in about four weeks.

Alvinainen was an exchange student in Minnesota three years ago, and Kahkonen worked recently as a nanny in Colorado.

They undertook their long-distance trek both to raise money for UNICEF and to gather research for their university theses.

Both are students in the experience and wellness program at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki, Finland. Alvinainen is majoring in sport and fitness management while Kahkonen is majoring in event management. The two women put their heads together and came up with the cross-country bicycle trip

as an opportunity for field research. Kahkonen plans the routes while Alvinainen focuses on keeping them healthy.

Alvinainen and Kahkonen both said they are not avid bicyclists, and both said they should have trained more strenuously to undertake their journey.

Still, the pair said they would likely try another trip sometime in the future.

"The people have been amazing," said Kahkonen. "If we stop along the road, people will stop and ask if we're OK."

They said the toughest part of the trek so far has been the Nevada desert. The towns are spaced far apart, and the heat caused several tire problems. During one stretch they had to hitchhike to the next town to purchase new tires and tubes.

The pair have a website where people may follow their progress: www.rantapallo.fi/cyclingsummer2013.

## Extraordinary water bills examined by city council

The Mount Ayr city council adopted a temporary policy to address adjustments for extraordinarily high water bills, changed the hours of operation for the city's RV dump station and received an update on repair projects that will be eligible for assistance from FEMA during its regular meeting Monday, July 1.

From time to time the city receives complaints about extraordinarily high water bills that indicate a resident has used thousands of gallons of water above their normal average consumption. The meters are read and in some cases sent away for testing and the properties are inspected for leaks, but usually the cause for the excessive usage is never found. In some instances when water service has been shut off to a property, usage has shown back on when water service is turned back on.

At Monday's meeting city superintendent Brent Wise recommended the council adopt a temporary policy to deal with such unexplained excessive usage reports until such time he and the city crew can undertake a project to help reduce the frequency of un-

expected usage. Wise recommended all in-ground water meters be replaced with above ground meters to allow easier access to remove the meters when water service is turned off. In addition he recommended the reading of all meters every month. (Currently when water service is temporarily suspended for those residents on extended absences, the meters are not read until service is restored.) Wise said the city also needs to make sure water meters are removed any time service is terminated. "If we do things like that," said Wise, "will we solve every problem? No, but we will take the frequency down."

The council adopted a temporary policy that states in the instance of an apparent abnormal excessive usage in a month, the customer's bill will be figured at the average of the prior six months usage rate plus the average above that amount will be billed at the city's water cost (\$3.75 per 1,000 gallons). In addition, sewage charges will be dropped on the average.

In two current instances of excessive usage, the new policy cannot be utilized due to not having six months' worth of meter read-

ings to establish an average usage. In the case of a property recently purchased by councilman Brent Kieker, the city had reported to Ricker's attorney that water service had been turned off to the property since November 2012 and the property had no outstanding water bills. When water service to the property was recently reinstated, however, the meter reading indicated a usage of 15,700 gallons at a cost of \$388.91 since the time the water service had supposedly been terminated.

The issue before the council was who is responsible for paying the bill. After a lengthy discussion, the council reached a consensus that proper procedures were not followed at the time the water service had been terminated because the meter had not been removed. Citing this negligence, the council voted to forgive the bill.

In another case, Doug Hymbaugh came before the council to question a meter reading that showed 20,000 gallons of usage at a home he is constructing for Helen Schardin. Hymbaugh stated

Continued on page 7

## Independence Day activities continue through Sunday

Fourth of July activities continue through Sunday, July 7.

The Clearfield Lions Club Fourth of July celebration will be Thursday, July 4 in Clearfield. The annual fireworks display at Sun Valley Lake near Eldston is set for Friday, July 5, and fireworks at Loch Ayr in Mount Ayr set for July 6.

**Clearfield celebration**

The Clearfield Lions Club 60th annual Fourth of July celebration will be held on the actual day of the holiday.

Clearfield's first annual "BBQ Blowout" began Wednesday, and the public will be served beginning at 5 p.m. Thursday.

Many other activities are scheduled throughout the day on Thursday, July 4.

Activities begin at 9 a.m. with a sandlot volleyball tournament at the park.

A baby contest will be held at 1 p.m. that afternoon, followed by kids games in the park at 2 p.m. Foot and sack races, egg toss,

tug-of-war and a greased pig contest are planned with cash prizes awarded.

Participants are invited to sign up for a bean bag tournament at Mickey D's between 2-3 p.m.

A pie contest will begin at 3 p.m. at the Clearfield Lions Club hall.

Beginning at 4 p.m. homemade pie and ice cream will be served at the Lion's Hall by the United Methodist Church. This will be served until it is gone.

The pet show will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Tysogold Community Store.

The annual parade with the theme "60 Years of Service - 50 Years of State Fair Shuttles" will begin at 6:30 p.m. Antique tractors are invited to carry state flags in the parade.

All tractors are to line up west of the Clearview Home beginning at 4 p.m.

Following the parade games and attractions such as bingos, from space pillow, dart throw, ring toss,

## County fair readies for opening July 10

Preparations are in full swing for the annual Ringgold County Fair, which is set to open Wednesday, July 10.

A special section in today's Mount Ayr Record-News gives many details of the activities of the fair. This story also hits the highlights of the activities planned beginning next week.

For the first time, passes for admission to all entertainment events will be available. The cost is \$35 for adults aged 13 and over and \$15 for youth aged 6-12. Passes are available at Hilltop Vet Clinic and the Extension office.

Wristbands will also be available for all 4-H and Clover Kid members for admission to all entertainment events. The cost is \$10 and is available on the first day of the fair at the 4-H office.

**Wednesday**

Wednesday, July 10, the 4-H exhibit building will open at 8 a.m. for club booth set up. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the open class exhibits will be set up in the commercial building.

The 4-H exhibit building project judging and 4-H challenge exhibit will be done from 2 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon.

"Check in for dog, pet, poultry and rabbit show exhibitors will be held at 5 p.m. without the animals needing to be present."

From 6 to 8 p.m., state fair selection will be done in the 4-H exhibit building.

The county fair parade is set to begin at 6:30 p.m. The parade will line up in the Mount Ayr Community high school parking lot and then proceed to the fair grounds, exiting through the north gate.

Evening entertainment will be the annual Ringgold County Fair queen and princess contest and Bill Riley Talent show, beginning at 7:30 p.m. At 7:15 p.m. prior to the contest and talent show, the South Central Iowa Community Foundation grants will be presented.

Fireworks presented by the Kellorone fire department will close the evening's activities.

**Thursday**

Thursday, July 11, activity begins at 8 a.m. with the swine weigh-in and stalling. Sheep and goat weigh-in and stalling begins at 9:30 a.m. and beef, horse, rabbit and poultry entries are to be stalled by 10 a.m. Beef weigh-in will be held beginning at 10:30 a.m.

At 10 a.m. there will be games for senior citizens at the commercial building.

At noon the 4-H communications projects, including educational presentations, working exhibits and Share-the-Fun entries will be judged.

The first livestock show of the fair is the 4-H and FFA rabbit show, which will be held at 1 p.m. Thursday afternoon, followed by the 4-H and FFA dog show at 4 p.m.

At 2 p.m. games for Special Olympians will be held in the Commercial Building.

A water balloon fight sponsored by the 4-H county council will be held at 3 p.m. There will be a chili cook-off and salsa contest sponsored by the Crooked Creek 4-H Club from 5 to 8 p.m.

Photos for outstanding junior, considered for state fair and state fair exhibitors will be held at 5:30 p.m. in the Exhibit Building.

At 6 p.m. the Ringgold County Fair coronation queen and princess contest will be held.

Evening entertainment includes mutton bustin' for kids at 7 p.m., followed by the annual rodeo at 7:30 p.m.

**Friday**

Activity begins at 8 a.m. Friday, July 12 with the 4-H and FFA swine show.

At 11 a.m. and again at 1 p.m. the Klobonak Family will provide musical entertainment.

At noon the 4-H and FFA goat show gets underway, followed by the sheep show at 1 p.m.

Also at 1 p.m. the conference judging for the 4-H bucket calf and bucket calf plus one contests will be held.

At 2 p.m. a pedal tractor pull for

youngsters will be held. The poultry show will be held at 3 p.m. The 4-H County Council is sponsoring "Minute to Win It" and other games at 3 p.m.

The 4-H and FFA horse performance show begins at 7 p.m. that evening.

The evening entertainment will be the IAMO Tractor Pull, which begins at 7 p.m.

**Saturday**

A big day of activity Saturday, July 13, gets underway with the County Council pancake breakfast fund-raiser from 8 to 9 a.m.

The 4-H and FFA feeder calf show will be held at 8:30 a.m., with the calves released after the show.

At 9 a.m. the 4-H and FFA breeding beef show gets underway.

The annual baby contest will be held at 10 a.m., but registration begins at 9 a.m. in the commercial building. The check-in for the 4-H challenge recipe contest will be held at 9 a.m. as well in the Exhibit Building.

Judging for the 4-H recipe challenge begins at 10 a.m. The final 4-H bucket calf and bucket calf plus one judging will be held at 11:30 a.m.

The Pee Wee Wrangler show, where youth younger than 4-H age dress up with their calves, will be held at 12 noon.

The 4-H and FFA market beef show gets underway at 1 p.m. and there will be games for kids and adults at the commercial building also at 1 p.m.

An open class feeder calf show will be held at 3 p.m. -- the same time as the beginning of the free ATV rodeo. At 3:30 p.m. the 4-H swine carcass viewing will be held at Commercial Meat Processors.

The evening performance will be a demolition derby again this year, beginning at 8 p.m.

**Sunday**

Activity on Sunday, July 14 begins with release of all 4-H and FFA animals not in the sale from 5 to 8 a.m. An archery shoot begins



at 8 a.m., as well.

The 4-H and FFA horse halter show begins the last judging of the fair at 9 a.m.

Throughout the day, Mt. Nick, a balloon artist, and Gary Keenan, a chinawax artist, will provide entertainment on the fairgrounds.

Sunday's main entertainment feature is a mud run that begins at noon.

At 12:30 p.m. the future 4-Her pet show sponsored by the 4-H County Council will be held.

At 1 p.m. all 4-H and FFA animals not for sale and exhibits from the 4-H exhibit building will be released. The exhibit building exhibits need to be cut by 5 p.m.

Open class exhibits will also be released from 1 to 3 p.m.

An archery shoot-off is scheduled at 1:30 p.m.

Youth pie baking contest entries are due at the 4-H office by 2 p.m. Sunday.

There will be a sale supper at 5 p.m. Sunday sponsored by the Ringgold County Fair Bureau, followed by the annual 4-H and FFA livestock and pie sale at 6 p.m.

## Ayr Days activities planned for July 19-21

The schedule for the upcoming Ayr Days celebration has been finalized for July 19-21 in Mount Ayr.

The theme for this year's event is "We're All In for Sports: Bring Your Team," and the team of organizers has scheduled plenty of entertainment for the three-day event.

On Friday, July 19 from 5-7 p.m. From the Heart will provide musical entertainment on the main stage.

Music furnished by the Ringgold Outdoor Alliance will be on the main stage from 7-9 p.m.

The Kumble Brothers Band will take over the main stage from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

For a younger crowd, a dance will be sponsored by the Upper Limits Teen Center from 7-9 p.m. on the west side of the square.

Music by the Ringgold Outdoor Alliance will kick off Saturday's entertainment on the main stage from 10-11:15 a.m.

Roger Burger will perform on the main stage from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Popular local band Pamptown will entertain audiences from 2-4 p.m.

The evening's entertainment will round out with Outlaw Jim and the Whiskey Benders Band on the main stage from 8 p.m. to midnight.

Ayr Days activities also feature dozens of other attractions including car and tractor shows, the annual running classic, kids games, open houses, a parade and other

performances and competitions.

Great food is also a hallmark of Ayr Days, and the annual Smokin' in the Ayr Barbecue on Saturday begins a number of food-related events.

A complete list of Ayr Days activities will appear in next week's Record-News.

## Road closures listed

The Ringgold County Secondary Roads Department has announced road construction starting the week of July 8 on the following roads:

- County Highway 155 from Decatur County to County Highway P46.
- County Highway P27 from Redding to State Highway 2.
- County Highway J43 from County Highway P27 to Maloy.
- County Highway J20 from US Highway 169 to Tingley.

Road work will require periodic closures of these roads. The public is advised to seek alternate routes during construction.

Each road is expected to be closed two separate times. Each closure will be for a period of a few days. The work is expected to last two to three weeks, weather permitting.

If you have any questions, please contact the Engineer's Office at 641-464-3232.

## Snapshots of Ringgold County

**Remebering school days gone by**

As part of our commemoration of the Record-News' 150th year of publishing, each week we will feature a photo of life in Ringgold County.

"Snapshots of Ringgold County" photos will vary as the seasons and events dictate.

In this photo, the old Redding school bell sits in the park in Redding, reminding residents of school days gone by.

This is the 18th of the photos in our commemorative series.