



POP Report Register Round Up

Key Insights

- Round up is an extremely successful, simple way of collecting donations for partner organizations.
- Making the ask mandatory is the best way to ensure cashier compliance and consistency.
- Incentivizing cashiers and making goal achievement fun and rewarding can make a difference in buy-in and outcomes.
- Co-ops may want to try every other month or quarterly round ups to test shopper and cashier fatigue before going monthly.

Food Conspiracy Co-op Round Up

Kelly Watters, Education and Outreach Coordinator

Between \$600-800 is collected every other month during round up. Currently the marketing manager decides who the recipient will be, but the co-op is working toward a process that will allow the members to vote on applicants. The goal is to choose recipients that have goals that are relevant to something going on locally, or is connected to the co-op or a member. Two examples of past recipients are a local, grassroots group devoted to desert and wild food education and an organization dedicated to non-violent youth training. The co-op publishes information about the groups and the amounts raised.

There's no formal training, and sometimes getting cashiers to remember to ask has been an issue, though managers post reminders in the logbook and the marketing manager is working on a staff newsletter similar to Chico's that can also serve as a reminder. Cashier buy-in is not an issue and overall the program has been well received, though there have been some minor rumblings from a few staff and members about some of the particular choices of recipients (e.g., legal assistance for migrants and a group that identifies human remains in the desert).

Shopper fatigue hasn't been much of an issue either. "You go to a regular supermarket, maybe it feels not very genuine. As long as you're coming from a genuine place, we can do more together than the individual, that's what it's really about."

Common Ground Food Co-op Round Up for Good Joy Rust, Former Marketing Manager

The co-op's round up program began in 2010 following the earthquake in Haiti. Every fall during board elections, owners may nominate organizations they would like to see supported through the program the following year. There is a staff committee that reviews the nominations and chooses the organizations based on factors like local, how many nominations, the impact they have in the community and alignment with the co-op's Ends.

The chosen organizations are assigned a month in which customers may round up their change to the nearest dollar or more all month long. They are also invited to come in and table one day during the month. In 2015, the co-op raised over \$28,000 for local organizations through the program.

The cashier asks the customer directly to round up. There were always a few owners who did not want to be asked, so front end put in a prompt for cashiers that said not to ask that particular customer if they wanted to round up.

The front end manager is a big fan of the program and works with cashiers on techniques that help them feel comfortable asking shoppers to round up, like providing language to use and role-playing the interaction at the register.

Since front end staff are on the committee to choose the organizations, buy-in is not difficult. At all-staff huddles, the following month's organization is announced and when they will be tabling in the store. Amounts raised are reported during OBM, which also helps build staff excitement.

A couple of years prior to expansion in 2012, cashier fatigue from other register asks prompted the front end manager to request that cashiers stop asking customers to ask for round ups. However, after expansion was complete and the program was refreshed, fatigue diminished and dollars raised increased substantially. The "refresher" to the roundup involved celebrating the cashiers, being knowledgeable about the month's round up organization, "and taking pride in the fact that the act of rounding up is so fundamentally cooperative—that everyone giving a little of what they can adds up and makes a big difference." First a chalkboard, then later a screen was installed to show live updates of how much money was being raised for that month's organization.



Shopper fatigue is managed similarly to cashier fatigue. The more knowledgeable and enthusiastic the cashiers are, the more customers want to support the organizations. The round up screen builds excitement around the program and gives customers and cashiers a visual reminder and conversation starter.

Lexington Co-op Round Up

Tim Bartlett, General Manager

The co-op participates in the local Food Bank's annual "Check Out Hunger", which is a roundup at the register program that is implemented at all local supermarkets. The campaign runs 3-4 weeks during the busiest time of the co-op's year. This year, the co-op raised \$15,000 in four weeks. The cashiers didn't want to have to put the shoppers in the position of having to say "no". Despite the success of this annual drive, the co-op has decided not to implement an ongoing round up program.

Monadnock Food Co-op Round

Emerald Levick, Marketing Manager

The co-op began doing month-long round up drives once per quarter starting in December 2015. An A frame outside the store, a register screen image on each register and a sign across the back of each register screen facing the customer heighten awareness of the program. A newsletter blog post, once-a-week feature on social media, and a slider image on the website homepage for the month boost external visibility. The co-op also puts out press releases in local newspapers and asks the partner organization to raise awareness with their own networks.

About two weeks before each round up, a packet with talking points and FAQs for cashiers is put in cashiers' mailboxes. If the organization has a brochure, they are available at the registers. The co-op also has invited Executive Directors to speak at Open Book Management meetings. It takes one or two passionate influencers on the front end team to get staff interested and be a resource in the department. At the first run, expectations for giving were set fairly low (they were told one in 10 customers will actually give). When three out of every four customers actually gave, everyone was very excited and felt like they were succeeding far past expectations.

A very well known and close community partner was chosen for the first run, launched during the holiday season. For following drives, a group of cashiers helped evaluate the applicants and Levick took their feedback into consideration when picking recipients for this year. "If buy-in decreases, I plan to pick one or two influencers to get on board and train them up so they can spearhead the effort for other folks."

In the future she plans on employing some tricks used at Whole Foods: one day competitions, setting a limit for staff to reach in order to get an extra 15 minute break coupon they can redeem during the shift of their choice, a team prize for reaching a goal, breaking the department into three teams who work together to compete against each other (and hold one another accountable) for a prize and having theme days.

Levick feels that keeping round up to just one month per quarter will mitigate shopper fatigue and so far customers generally react favorably, but she'll make it exciting for shoppers just like cashiers when and if the time comes, like at Whole Foods. "We had a woman who did henna tattoos for her second job, so we took her off the register on some busy Saturdays and if people rounded up over \$15 beyond their total, she would do henna for them, and asking vendors to donate prizes or buy something like a pint glass from a local brewery which customers could receive if they rounded up over \$10."

Central Co-op Round Up

Susanna Schultz, Marketing Director

In 2015 the co-op partnered with three local food banks and raised more \$10,000 through their round up program. To keep cashiers up-to-date, the marketing department sends background information on the round up partner whenever there's a partner switch up. Cashiers ask shoppers directly. The co-op is exploring moving toward making the ask a required part of the transaction, i.e., written in the job description. To manage cashier fatigue, they have tried various things like mini-games, personal rewards, and regular reminders and also announce results at OBM meetings from time to time.

Wedge Change Matters

Brianna Darling, Outreach and Event Planning Coordinator

Cashiers at the Wedge have the choice to ask if customers want to round up and the majority choose not to. The marketing team feels strongly that staff should be required to ask to create consistency for customers. The co-op currently raises \$2,000--4,000 per month. It's the co-op's hope that in the future all leadership will support the program and encourage a transformation that embeds the round-up program into the culture of our company.

Someone from the round-up organization comes every month to team meetings. Additional training is very basic and is simply folded into learning the cash register.

There is currently not a lot of cashier buy-in. Cashiers are invited to be on the committee that chooses organizations. The co-op hosts quarterly happy hours with free drinks and food for customers, staff and round up partners to connect. These events have been successful in connecting people, but have not resulted to creating an energy that allows us to raise more funds.

Hanover Co-op Pennies for Change

Amanda Charland, Member Services and Outreach Director

Since few shoppers pay with cash and even fewer carry coins, round up replaced the co-op's Community Partner program, where shoppers donated spare change in coin boxes at the registers to a local non-profit each month. Donations had dwindled to under \$100.

Pennies for Change is round up with a twist: shoppers can round up their bill to the next full dollar and Hanover will donate the difference. The program started in July 2016 and has already exceeded its goal of collecting \$10,000 in the first month.

Every year the co-op will designate three Food Access Partners that align with the Cooperative Principles and its Cooperative Ends Statements. Food Access Partners will remain the same throughout the year and each will receive 20 percent of what the co-op collects.

The co-op will donate the remaining 40 percent to two Community Partners, split 30 and 10 percent, respectively. The Community Partners will change each month, allowing the co-op to donate to more Upper Valley non-profit groups each year.

The cashiers were given the choice of program design and decided on credit card terminal prompts over verbal ask (A verbal ask is required in the case of cash.). There is some inconsistency in execution across the stores, though people have started to get excited about how much they've raised and every day cashiers compare their amounts with one another.

They've asked community partners to let them know what the money is used for to have stories to share with the membership. "It's a homerun. People really love it. It's doing a lot of good."

Good Foods Co-op Give Where You Live

Sheryl Gray, Operations Manager

For the first time this year, the co-op made its bi-monthly donation program monthly, and eligible charities were put up for a vote by the owners. The co-op started its round up program three months ago and has raised \$5636. The first month was by far the best, the second month dropped off precipitously, and the third had a modest comeback.

Based on conversations with staff, Gray thinks the variance was due in part to the popularity (or lack thereof) of the charities themselves, and more so, to cashier fatigue. There was "a progression from a rollout in a training meeting where everyone was excited and engaged to an "oh, you mean we're supposed to keep doing this" response. Now we're in the stage where our work is to both encourage the cashiers and hold them accountable for continuing to promote the program."

Originally, rounding up was a requirement unless cashiers felt that asking would result in a negative customer service situation. "That got re-interpreted relatively quickly into "Well, I don't like to ask if it's most of a dollar" and other various personalized judgments about the different situations cashiers found themselves in. So as of this month, we adjusted the requirement to be that they had to ask if there were less than three people in line; otherwise, they needed to focus on moving the line along." The co-op introduced more signage with more specific information about the charity, as well as a monthly dollar goal for the cashiers to reach, with a group prize (i.e. a pizza party). They also started posting individual cashiers' totals weekly to raise awareness and hopefully inspire some healthy competition. "We'll see how all of that goes. So far we're on track to do better than the last two months, although not to reach our goal. I imagine there will be further adjustments as we progress."

As for shopper fatigue, there have been a few instances of customers either rejecting the charity for the sake of the charity itself, or of wishing they weren't asked because they give elsewhere, or of responses along the lines of "I already gave" from customers who are in frequently. "The best approach I can think of in such cases is for the cashier to simply apologize and change the topic."

- August 2016
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