Money.
It isn’t everything.
But it helps if an ill child needs a hospital bed.
Or a young boy wants a bicycle.
Or a preschool girl needs glasses.
Or inner-city children need school supplies.
Or struggling students deserve recognition.
And it can buy meals for shut-in seniors.
And sponsor Key Leaders, Key Clubs, Circle K, Builders, K-Kids, and Aktion clubs.
And buy warm coats for needy families.
And cover camp fees for young burn patients.
Money, generated by impressive, inventive, impactful fundraisers, makes many Kiwanis stories come true. Learn how three Kiwanis clubs increased their net profits to increase their service prowess.
Not bad. In fact, that’s downright good. But how does a Kiwanis club move from raising a few thousand dollars a year to tens of thousands? For one club, it’s all about cranking up members’ excitement for what they are doing—and why.

“We have nine Key Clubs, so we get involved with a lot of kids and parents,” says Fred Yun of the **Kiwanis Club of Indiana, Pennsylvania**. “Children stay involved from kindergarten through college, and so, too, do their parents. They join our Kiwanis club because they see how their kids benefit.”

As the club has grown over the past decade from 60 to 95 members, so, too, has its annual fundraising, soaring from US$16,000 to $70,000.

Bingo is the most lucrative of the club’s 50 projects. The game draws 150 players every week, but the club doesn’t take the game’s popularity for granted.

“We’ve made a conscious effort to increase our publicity so everybody in town knows who we are,” Fred says. “Every time we do a project, there’s a picture in the paper. If we give your organization money, we ask you to do some publicity for us. People get to know who we are and what we do.”

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$75,000. That’s more than $3,000 per member.

Four years ago, the **Kiwanis Club of Downtown Sparks, Nevada**, had 15 members and a $7,500 service budget. Since then, the club has doubled its membership and multiplied its profits 10 times.

The club’s fundraisers are designed to reach large numbers, says member Ellen Jacobson. Instead of soliciting co-workers and family members, Sparks Kiwanians sell their candy in a storefront at a local mall. The store raises about $25,000 annually.

“We get whichever store isn’t rented and staff it with volunteers,” Ellen says. “It’s a place where we find new members and new people to help us.”

A similar phenomenon occurs in the club’s bike shop, where members refurbish bikes for at-risk youth. And once a year, the shop goes on the road to sell bikes at the Burning Man festival in Nevada’s Black Rock Desert. In one week, the club raises $14,000.
Fundraising takes on a competitive edge in the Kiwanis Club of Evansville-Greenriver, Indiana.

“At the start of our year, we’re divided into teams, each with its own captain. Individuals and teams earn points for their involvement, whether it be attending a meeting or taking part in a service project,” explains club president Tom Slade. “At the end of the year, the top four or five teams get a certain amount of money to give to a charitable organization of their choice.”

Tom says the friendly competition keeps the club’s members interested.

“It’s just good accountability. If you haven’t seen someone on your team in a couple of weeks, you have a reason for calling them.”

The club raises about $20,000 a year, largely through the sale of poinsettias. Each member is encouraged to sell 10 to 15 plants.

“We have quite a few who sell 300 or 400,” Tom says. “But we have people who sell 700 by themselves. Our income from poinsettia sales has at least doubled in the past five or 10 years.”

**Sparks’ dollars go to:**
- Conduct a bike-safety program
- Sponsor Terrific Kids
- Support a Boys & Girls Club

**Evansville’s dollars go to:**
- Operate a kids’ farm at the county fair
- Organize a Halloween parade
- Build a baseball field