



Nite Lites Christmas 5K Fun Run/Walk and RunSignUp

The Nite Lites 5K organizes a successful first-year fundraising 5K by partnering with a unique local attraction and keeping things simple.

About The Nite Lites Christmas 5K:

The Nite Lites is a Jackson MI seasonal attraction of Christmas lights owned and operated by John Spink, and sponsored by Tripp's AutoShop Collision centers. The attraction is usually only viewable from a vehicle; this year, they agreed to a partnership with Christine LaRock Gorton to offer visitors a unique on-foot experience in the form of a 5K Fun Run/Walk benefiting the Miss Jackson Crossroads and Outstanding Teens Scholarship Pageant, an affiliate of Miss America.

This fundraiser was Chris's first opportunity as a Race Director, and having never participated in a race, she began as a complete novice to the industry.

Getting Started

Although she has experience in event planning, once Chris decided to organize a Run/Walk, she contacted another local race to discuss partnering to cross-promote their events, and to get some advice on organizing a running event. This is where she got her recommendation for RunSignUp; after a few questions and clarifications from her RSU Rep, Jordan, Chris was ready to get rolling.

Year 1 Registration Goal:
300 Runners/Walkers

Year 1 Final Count:
900 Runners/Walkers



"I really believe that RunSignUp was the magic sauce that helped us to be successful. Yes, I did work hard, but it was the easiest fundraiser that I've ever done in terms of labor. All the information I needed was there—I'm not technologically savvy at all, but the tools were all easy."

- Christine LaRock Gorton, First Time Race Director



Keep it Simple: Play to Your Strengths

The Christmas Nite Lites display is a unique attraction in it's own right, and the opportunity for local families to see it on foot is a better selling point than any gimmicks. Chris recognized that the venue was a star, and built a simple run structure to feature it.

Selling Points:

- The Run/Walk was not timed; this limited costs, and matched the family-friendly, celebratory atmosphere.
- The Run was organized for the evening before Thanksgiving to capitalize on families coming into town for the holidays. In fact, the first family to register was from Chicago!

RunSignUp Setup

- \$25 price point for all participants over 5
- Free for Under-5 (set up as a \$0 price point under Financial -> Pricing -> Age-Based Pricing.)
- A Giveaway for all participants (with size options for adults and children.)
- Simple donation collection option within registration



Planning for 2015

The Nite Lites Christmas 5K has big plans for 2015: tripling runners from 900 to 3,000! To do this, they are relying on a few things:

- Word of mouth. There was a 98% turnout of registered runners in year one, and they are expecting those runners to pass on their good experience to others.
- Mile Markers: The owner of the Nite Lites is planning to build light-up mile markers to match the display
- Stagger the start of runners & walkers, and mark a clear path for runners
- Bring in a timer as incentive for more serious runners to participate (in addition to casual runners/walkers)
- Utilize the Giveaway Inventory tool on RunSignUp, and explore more options with the system

