



## ENTREPRENEURS FOR NORTH TEXAS

a program of Communities Foundation of Texas

### **Creating and Integrating a Community Brand**

Building a *brand* for a corporate community investment program and ensuring that brand is aligned and integrated with the business can have positive effects on the program's outcomes and business reputation. Brand, as defined by the American Marketing Association (AMA), is a "name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers." Based on this definition, EFNT suggests that a community brand is a combination of symbols and terms that identify a company's community involvement platform, its spirit of social investment; build a program brand. Of course, it is more than creating a fun logo. Community brands that are in fact representative of the corporation's brand are most credible, sustainable and authentic; integrate corporate and community brands.

#### **Program Branding**

Think of successful community campaigns/fundraisers and businesses and it's likely the first thing that comes to mind is the logo/symbol/image. Or, look at a prominent logo/symbol/image and one is likely to immediately associate it with a value proposition, cause or enterprise. A red ribbon, cupped hands, and a red cross immediately translate to AIDS relief, United Way, American Red Cross Disaster and Emergency Response. These are strong brands. Consider creating a brand that represents the company's community involvement efforts. Then, utilize that brand in a variety of ways to increase exposure, association and trust across the stakeholder ecosystem. For example:

- Create a visual image unique to the company's philanthropic investments
- Establish a tag or phrase, a mantra for giving
- Collaborate with internal marketing professionals to incorporate the company's name or logo into the community brand
- Use this new image or phrase on materials that market volunteer opportunities, giving programs or events
- Provide employees and other stakeholders with assorted keep-sakes - shirts, caps, posters, magnets, and other collectible items that reinforce the brand
- Include the image or refer to the phrase in all of the company's program documents
- Define the brand – that is, tell stakeholders what it means, how it was created, how it is revered within the enterprise
- Consult with EF about ways to develop and enrich a community brand

## **Corporate Branding**

Meaningful corporate citizenship requires identifying the core truth about what a company stands for, then integrating it into your brand so that people see, understand and relate to the connection between a company's head and heart. Integrating your socially responsible or environmentally beneficial program as part of your company's core competency is the most authentic and unique method for defining a memorable brand. Recent research indicates that almost 90% of customers are looking for companies that do more than just make a profit -- they must also do good in the world. This is the new brand world in which we live. To see what others are saying about branding, visit the links below:

### Associated Content – “Corporate Social Responsibility: Spotlighting Companies that give back.”

“In today's society, big businesses are frequently blamed for the misfortune and mistreatment of others because they do not take responsibility for their actions. Chemical companies dump waste into the environment; companies do not utilize recycled products to cut costs, and employers pay as little as they can to maximize profit. There is now a demand for what is known as Corporate Social Responsibility.”

[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/172494/corporate\\_social\\_responsibility\\_spotlighting.html](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/172494/corporate_social_responsibility_spotlighting.html)

### PersonnelToday.com – “Corporate social responsibility is more important than salary when choosing a job.”

“Nearly half of young professionals would turn away from an employer that lacked good corporate social responsibility policies research has found. More than one-third of respondents to a survey conducted by communications group BT said that working for a caring and responsible employer was more important than the salary they earned. As many as 44% of respondents said they would discount an employer that had a bad reputation, while nearly half said corporate social responsibility policies should be compulsory.”

<http://www.personneltoday.com/articles/2007/08/02/41767/corporate-social-responsibility-is-more-important-than-salary-when-choosing-a-job.html>

### Cause-Related Marketing.blogspot.com – “IBM’s CEO Survey: Large Increase of Investment in Corporate Social Responsibility Likely Over Next 3 Years”

“CEOs worldwide plan to increase their investments 25 percent over the next three years to better understand and reach socially-minded customers, according to a worldwide survey of CEOs released this month by IBM’s Global Business Service Unit.”

<http://causerelatedmarketing.blogspot.com/2008/05/ibm-ceo-survey-large-increase-of.html>

### Ethisphere Magazine – “The Growing Importance of Corporate Social Responsibility.”

“Once a niche investment strategy, Responsible Investment (RI) has become a priority for individual and institutional investors globally. In the wake of corporate scandals, and the tightening of carbon emissions standards over the past decade, investors have begun to seriously evaluate the environmental, social and corporate governance risks within their portfolios. In turn, companies are responding to investor demands by re-examining the way

they do business—from the reduction of emissions and energy conservation to fair trade and labor standards.

<http://ethisphere.com/the-growing-importance-of-corporate-social-responsibility/>

Meetings Industry Megasite – “Survey Shows CSR Acceptance Growing Fast.”

“A survey published this week by the Association of Corporate Travel Executives and travel and expense management solutions provider KDS shows that the number of travelers and companies embracing environmental awareness and corporate social responsibility initiatives has more than doubled over the past year.”

[http://www.mimegasite.com/mimegasite/news/article\\_display.jsp?vnu\\_content\\_id=10037069](http://www.mimegasite.com/mimegasite/news/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=10037069)

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### Cause Related Marketing

Just how does a company connect its brand promise or value proposition to a specific social impact? Cause Related Marketing (CRM) strives to do just that – tie brand to cause. More than just marketing a company's community investment practices and efforts, CRM makes a direct purposeful and market driven connection to a social concern. The Foundation Center (<http://foundationcenter.org/>) states it this way:

“Cause-related marketing (CRM) is defined as the public association of a for-profit company with a nonprofit organization, intended to promote the company's product or service and to raise money for the nonprofit. CRM is generally considered to be distinct from corporate philanthropy because the corporate dollars involved in CRM are not outright gifts to a nonprofit organization, hence not tax-deductible.”

Different than *philanthropy*, or even *strategic philanthropy*, cause related marketing (CRM) is about positioning; positioning a company's brand, products and or services as a vehicle for the betterment of a social cause. In fact, CRM is not philanthropy. That is, because CRM is intended and seen as delivering benefit to the company, expenses attributed to a CRM program are seen as a marketing partnership and are not considered a charitable (tax deductible) donation.

In some cases, the brand-to-cause association is very clear: Home Depot to building homes, McKesson to healthcare for children, or Kaiser Permanente to healthy kids. In these cases, each company invests considerable resources in the association and partnership. The investments are seen as delivering value back to the business, and the community.

Yet, numerous enterprises have been able to draw connections based more on value alignment. In Cambell's Soup to Education, Pizza Hut to Literacy, or Wendy's Restaurants to Adoption the brand-to-cause association may be less obvious, but successful nonetheless.

For many corporations, CRM is a reasonable step in enriching brand and driving social impact. Explore this possibility with your internal colleagues; participate in a strategic planning exercise to explore the alignment of your corporate goals, social concerns and marketing investment. Determine if your community programs and CSR efforts can relate to such a strategy and if you are able to commit the resources to these often long-term partnerships. Take note, CRM efforts can scale as your business and CSR strategies grow. An emerging early stage company can engage in CRM just as much as a mature late stage business; it's all about the intent and approach. For further reading on this topic consider the following examples and resources:

The Home Depot Housing Impact Grants

<http://corporate.homedepot.com/wps/portal/!ut/p/.cmd/cs/.ce/7 0 A/.s/7 0 121/ s.7 0 A/7 0 121>

McKesson's Corporate Citizenship

[http://www.mckesson.com/en\\_us/McKesson.com/Corporate%2BCitizenship/Corporate%2BCitizenship.html](http://www.mckesson.com/en_us/McKesson.com/Corporate%2BCitizenship/Corporate%2BCitizenship.html)

Kaiser Permanente Community Benefit

[http://info.kp.org/communitybenefit/our\\_work\\_3.html](http://info.kp.org/communitybenefit/our_work_3.html)

Cambell's Soup

<http://www.labelsforeducation.com/default.aspx>

Pizza Hut

<http://www.yum.com/responsibility/bookit.asp>

Wendy's Restaurants

<http://www.davethomasfoundation.org/Our-Work/Wendy-s-Wonderful-Kids>



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## **Reporting Community Outcomes**

Sharing the outcomes of a company's community investments through a reporting process offers multiple benefits: stakeholders learn about the company's investments, employees can be recognized for their contributions, community benefit organizations (non-profits/NGOs) gain exposure, and the company has the opportunity to connect its social programs with business goals and performance. Such reporting also increases a company's accountability, measurement capability and overall social performance. And, the upward trend in overall reporting also raises the bar for increased community investment and the standardization of reporting mechanisms.

The form and venue for reporting can vary from informal and brief to highly structured and detailed. When determining the reporting process most appropriate for your business consider the following:

- How does the company report quarterly and or annual financial performance?
- How mature are the company's community investment programs?
- Does the company measure (track) cash, in-kind, volunteer, and product donations for inclusion in such a report?
- Does the company have a "story to tell" in regards to community investment?
- Will the company report community investments within its existing reporting process, or will it produce an independent report on corporate social responsibility?
- Has the company done any analysis to evaluate stakeholder interests in such a report?
- Does the company have resources to produce quality reports?
- Will the report focus solely on philanthropic outcomes, or will it include content regarding sustainability, environmental performance, diversity, human resources, products, shareholder interests, public policy, human rights, etc.?
- If the company produces a formal CSR report, will it seek outside assurance?

At a minimum, EFNT encourages the inclusion of a general statement about the company's community mission statement, and a few brief examples of social investment, within the content of the company's annual report or corporate backgrounder.

As community outcomes mature, a company may choose to produce a brief independent supplement (a few pages) articulating its mission, programs, outcomes and goals.

For mature programs in corporations with the capability and commitment to produce an independent CSR reports, there are many examples to follow.



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### **Media Outreach & Coverage**

Some community investment activities and outcomes are worthy of media outreach and coverage. More than static press releases and annual reports, active media coverage delivers real time value across the participant spectrum – the community, the non-profit, the media outlet, the CSR movement and the company. In addition to more traditional media outlets (news, print, etc.), ever expanding on-line tools and resources enable companies to engage a global audience immediately. Like all marketing communications efforts, you will certainly want to evaluate the options and make media decisions that are in the best interests of the company and your strategy, collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that messaging is appropriate, accurate and balanced, and communicate your outcomes and programs authentically and transparently. From very simple to the more complex, alternatives for media outreach and coverage are boundless. Contact EFNT for some specific ideas or explore these examples:

- Invite local media. If a majority of your corporate staff ventures out to a local school to completely refurbish their playground, encourage the local media to cover the fun. If your company is collaborating with dozens of other local enterprises on a regional issue such as homelessness or hunger, encourage the local media to cover the fun.
- Tell your story. If your company is consistently named to the Fortune Best Place to Work list, or your company tops the Corporate Citizen List, grant an interview and tell readers, viewers or listeners why.
- Share your knowledge. If you have recently been recognized for your expertise in the field of philanthropy or CSR, grant an interview and share your knowledge with others. If your company has experienced key learnings about the benefits of community investment, produce a report or study and share your findings with others. If you or your company has a specific approach to strategic philanthropy or you have discovered an innovative way to engage employees, consider writing an article for a periodical or website to share it with others.
- Utilize the internet. With today's tools and technologies you don't always need a traditional media outlet to get your message to the world. Take video of your community service activity and post it on YouTube – your employees will love it! Create a blog about your CSR efforts or post an item on EFNT's social network (<http://efcommunity.ning.com>) or one of the many boards dedicated to increasing community and corporate benefit through CSR.



It bears repeating. If you are want to enrich your communications through media outreach and coverage, be sure to collaborate with your colleagues. Media sources also need your time, attention and cooperation; be responsive to them and they will be responsive to you. Make sure you have a story to tell, if you don't you'll lose credibility. On-line media gets old very quick; you'll need to dedicate some time and attention if you want this to work for you. Don't expect miracles; in fact expect speed bumps along the way. Not every form a media will work for every company, event or outcome.



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### **Community Presence on the Web**

In today's global marketplace, the web is *the* tool for communication. For most enterprises, the question isn't whether *to* post their community involvement strategies on the web, but rather *where* to post this important stakeholder information. The final location within a company's site map varies. Wherever it resides, EFNT advocates that companies utilize this invaluable real estate for business and social good.

#### **Where**

Companies will commonly post their community involvement programs somewhere within the "Company" or "About Us" sections of their internet site. Along with history, executives and careers they will include a link to "social responsibility" or "community." For others, this community link is reflected under "careers" or "culture" or "benefits." Depending on the desired visibility, community may even be a prominent link from the main page, or associated with a feature quote or callout. Others post community within the investor relations pages.

#### **What**

Certainly, web presence may be relative to the maturity of the program. That's understandable. Emerging companies or programs can make a brief statement declaring a commitment to community involvement along with an example or two about an annual drive or volunteer experience. Mature programs and companies may be able to invest greater resources in robust pages with grant guidelines, program descriptions, and summary or detailed reporting. In addition, consider listing the names of any non-profit partners the company may be supporting – this is great exposure for the agency. Quotes from employees also add a personal touch, and the employee appreciates the recognition. Also include contact information so stakeholders know who to contact about the company's great programs.

#### **Why**

Be proud. Small or large, annual drives or monthly service, the company is making an investment in social concerns and can benefit from sharing these outcomes through web presence. Including content on community involvement declares to corporate stakeholders that the company values its contributions, recognizes its employees and supports the good works of local non-profit partners. It also continues to raise the bar for the broader movement of global citizenship. For those still questioning the inclusion, simply ask "why not."



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### **Signature Programs**

In an effort to generate the greatest possible social impact, a company may elect to create a strategic and comprehensive effort that incorporates volunteerism, sizeable financial investment, additional corporate resources, and in many cases products and services for specific social benefit. These community investment strategies are commonly known as “Signature Programs.” They increase the opportunity for the company to generate branding and recognition for these innovative programs and causes. Signature programs are typically major investments for a company and will often be managed for several years – true legacies for the company.

Successful signature programs require thorough research, planning, detail, partnerships and commitment. The most effective signature programs also have a direct connection to the values, market, products and mission of a business (although the use of products is not a requirement). It is worth noting that signature programs and cause-related marketing programs may share similar attributes. A key differentiator however is intent. Certainly, both programs result in positive social change. That said, cause-related marketing is most commonly about the marketing benefits, relationships and business value. Signature programs on the other hand are about combining key community investment practices and business competencies to deliver maximum social benefit.

For example, the Humana Foundation in Louisville, Kentucky, has a mission to help create healthier communities. Recently, the Humana Foundation launched a signature program entitled Wellness Information Zone in conjunction with local libraries and community clinics and health agencies. This program aims to increase health literacy and thus, help promote healthier lifestyles and better understanding of health issues. [www.humanafoundation.org](http://www.humanafoundation.org)

Youth Voices is Adobe System's Foundation's global signature philanthropy program designed to provide youth in underserved communities with the critical skills they need to become active and engaged members of their communities and the world at large. Adobe's creative software products are used in the program, enabling the youth in the program to express themselves through technology and Adobe employees work with teachers to train them on the products.

<http://www.adobe.com/aboutadobe/philanthropy/youthvoices/>

Symantec, a worldwide leader in security software, has a signature program focused on cyber security for consumers, parents and youth. They've developed a family resource website to help parents protect their children on the internet.

<http://www.symantec.com/about/profile/responsibility/cyberawareness.jsp>