The Executive Guide to Digital CSR Fundraising

TEN KEY STRATEGIES
2nd Edition: Mike Phillips MBA

Corporate Social Responsibility has never been more vital

CSR HAS NEVER BEEN MORE VITAL

All charities are in crisis. Covid-19 has taken away all physical events and connectivity with supporter donations has been lost, leaving millions of charity service users in high anxiety. The corporate world is no different. Since March 2020, many major bankruptcies have recently occurred and significant furloughs, layoffs, or redundancies are daily news.

"The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats it's most vulnerable members."

-Mahatma Ghandi

For every company, a good strong corporate image, the product of business performance, media coverage, and its activities, is now key for a competitive advantage. A positive image attracts customers, shareholders and business partners; a negative one can possibly lead to higher employee turnover, decreased revenue, and losing important customers.

Numerous academic commentators including Maria Gonzalez-Perez, Universidad EAFIT and Michael Porter from Harvard argue that historically CSR has developed from two principles.

Firstly, the principle of charity which involves how firms use their corporate power and resources for the good of society. Secondly, the principle of stewardship suggests that firms have an obligation to serve society's needs as their wealth is generated from operations performed within that said society. And now a third principle may be added - the guardianship of society's natural resources.

"We're removing the planet's biodiverse re-sources at a rate which is as fast if not fast-er than the world's last great extinction."

-Sir David King , Former UK Chief Scientist

CSR clearly helps the charity or community. Besides the general public, many British companies contribute towards the RNLI, the UK's only charity dedicated to saving lives at sea. It receives no government subsidies and would struggle without CSR project monies.

CSR improves a company's profit margins by highlighting that it uses social and ethical practices in conducting its business. Consumers are increasingly aware of local, national and global issues and their buyer behaviour is significantly influenced by them. As an example, the deforestation of Asian forests to grow palm oil used in many common food products is causing international anger and UK retailers such as Iceland are urging a boycott of all palm oil products.

55% of global online consumers say they're willing to pay more for products or services from companies that are committed to positive and social-environment impact
-Nielsen Study (2020)

Anita Roddick started a hugely successful global retailer, the Body Shop, purely on the premise of complete social responsibility and sustainable sourcing of raw materials.

CSR enhances brand image. Getting good PR from good works is one of the best ways to advertise the company. Top brand perception by the public is a highly valued asset, and by showing that you take social responsibility seriously encourages the public to take you seriously too. Ben and Jerry's, celebrated for their delicious ice cream, have made corporate responsibility the centre of their overall business strategy. They serve nothing but fair trade, GMO-free ingredients and were the first to offer all employees equal benefits

CSR improves company dynamics. Company employees have better morale and productivity when they know they are contributing to a better and fairer society or local community.

51% of employees surveyed said they wouldn't work for a company that doesn't have a strong social and environmental commitment

CSR increases a company's attractiveness to investors.
A positive social profile is a key investor criteria. Boohoo, a major UK Internet fashion retailer took a massive share price bashing when the public were made aware of worker abuse in its' Leicester (UK) factories.

FOUR PRIMARY CSR PROJECT METHODS

Once a company has decided to embrace a CSR project, questions then surround the method and how the project objectives will be met. There are four primary methods.

Volunteering
This is a great way to help charities or good causes because it means hands-on work with that organization; volunteers get really involved and receive a brick-to-the-head immersion of that charity's work. There's a strong bond built up which will probably be lifelong. Unfortunately, the downside in a time-poor and self-focusing society is that gaining volunteers is hard work. Not many want to do it.

Physical Events

Being part of a physical charity event is now common. To many it creates that serotonin bursting moment in the fundraisers mind after running the London Marathon, being part of a Midnight Walk event or going through a Toughmudder obstacle course. There's a warm glow of contentment from the actual exercise and the fact that a favoured charity has benefited financially.

Collecting Money

Shaking the tin in a busy office is nowadays considered somewhat archaic and is rarely done. People believe there has to be a more sophisticated solution.

Digital Fundraising

Pandemic busting digital fundraising can easily brings together all continents and national office networks. By linking up everyone in the organization, all information is seen at the same time 24/7 and competition between offices is simple to construct and implement.

Rentaballoonrace.com, the world's only 100% eco-friendly virtual balloon race platform offers corporates a seriously easy option for digital CSR and Citizenship projects. For example, you will see that in Key Strategy 4 to follow, internalising

rivalry between office locations to increase revenues can be simple. Similarly, budgeting or setting sales targets mentioned in Key Strategy 7 is common practice too.

WHY DIGITAL CSR IS GROWING SHARPLY

- Covid-19 means physical fundraising events are not possible
- Digital projects bypass all environmental, wildlife protection and climate change issues
- Only the Internet can seamlessly link all manufacturing sites and office locations
- The resources cost of a project is extremely low
- The financial cost of a project is similarly very low
- Multiple languages and currencies are possible
- Some systems, for example the Rentaballoonrace.com 100% eco-friendly virtual balloon race, create lots of fun for all the staff, friends and family.
- Unlike physical events and volunteering activities, digital projects are all-inclusive, young/old, active or sedentary, able or disabled.

In 2020, 76% of Britons used Internet banking, up from 30% in 2007.

-Find.com

And it's likely that the pandemic has pushed this figure even higher. Such startling numbers should push every company with a brand or image to protect to introduce digital processes into every facet of their sales and marketing. Importantly too, every digital project creates an audit trail and legacy information.

Comprehensive electronic data largely eliminates the past laborious administration allied to CSR projects. So gone are the long days of counting money from collecting tins, fiddling with raffle ticket stubs or writing letters to staff begging for volunteers.

Communications Are Easy
In a Pandemic, a group email allows every-one to know what's happening. In milliseconds, Buenos Aires to Boston to Brisbane are informed that results from a CSR project are good, bad or indifferent. No effort required. Social Media too such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp offer another kaleidoscope of options and opportunities.

Similarly, educating and mentoring others less fortunate is also an easy online CSR project to operationalise. With Harvard and other top universities producing Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) online mentoring opportunities are everywhere.

One Size Fits All
Pre-digital era, CSR projects, especially those embracing multi- site and multi-continent, needed lots of careful and time-consuming planning to encompass all the staff and country variants.

The Internet and digital-only projects reduce that at a stroke. Now you can have one website and one database that harmonises and aggregates all staff wherever on the globe. Plus, the huge modern advancements in payment technology of recent years means that multi-currency options for any digital CSR fundraising project are simple and straightforward.

For example, the Rentaballoonrace.com™ 100% eco-friendly virtual race system can take up to 180 different currencies. Having home-page links to other language versions is easy too.
http://www.rentaballoonrace.com/brochure/espanol.

With Charities, Transparency is Key
With so many recent scandals surrounding the misuse of charity funds, knowing that donated company or public money is going to where it should be is key information.

All digital information is recorded in a database, so retrieval is not an issue for well coded and properly structured software.

For example, any Rentaballoonrace.com™ race website has the number of virtual balloons sold highlighted on the homepage. The client therefore knows exactly how much money to expect from their CSR fundraising project. Finally, transparency can also benefit the company's or not-for-profit organisation's reputation. Being seen to have honesty and integrity is crucial to future donations and survival.

Maximising Employee Engagement

Not everyone is fit enough to run the London Marathon, nor tackle an assault course. Nor does each employee or manager want to work in a midnight soup kitchen either. There is no doubt a great sense of pride and achievement raising £500 of sponsorship from a marathon, say, but it's not for everyone.

A virtual balloon race is different – a desk or home lounge chair event that everyone can take part in, old or young, fit or infirm, able or disabled. The web-based CSR project comes straight into their PC, laptop or mobile. No effort is required and absolutely everyone is included. The race is a 7day computer simulation race where everything is real except the balloon. The software uses current live weather data to determine the progress of each virtual balloon and each entry can be tracked on Google Maps and Satellites once launched.

You can change different features of your balloon - such as helium content - which will determine its flight performance & duration in order to enhance your chances of winning. Adding even more fun, race balloons can be decorated with stars and stripes, coloured pink and contain your name or that of a loved one.

The wholly web--based system is climate change positive, creates no litter, nor harm to wildlife or farm animals.

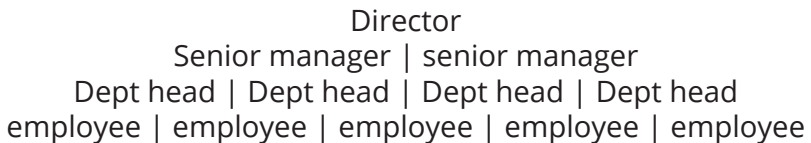# TEN STRATEGIES FOR GREAT CAMPAIGNS

ONE: Transparent Senior Management Buy-in
It might be a cliché, but employees are hardworking and pressurised like the rest of us, so getting their buy-in or engagement to a CSR / citizenship project can be difficult.

If those at the lower organisational levels are willing and able to make a determined and prolonged effort to raise money for the company's hand picked charity or cause, it means that Senior management must be on board with the project and be transparently seen to be vigorously championing the cause by effective top-down leadership.

There should be an inverse funnel or top-down effect to campaign communications.

Director
Senior manager | senior manager
Dept head | Dept head | Dept head | Dept head
employee | employee | employee | employee | employee

The director should explain to senior managers what is the purpose of the project and secondly why the support of the managers and all employees is vital and goes beyond just giving money.

The senior managers then trickle down the same information to department heads and so on and so on.

TWO: Recruit Local Champions

Having senior management transparently waving the CSR flag is vital for sure. But so is the need for everyone in the organisation and beyond to be on board too.

Asking and seeking volunteers to be local champions is crucial. Head office cannot possibly drive sales to remote offices or manufacturing plants on it's own. There needs to be some local connectivity pushing and cajoling their colleagues into greater sales activity.

All staff and employees should be encouraged to distribute the e-brochure to all the people they know including friends, relatives and acquaintances for example.

THREE: Great prizes do matter

Whilst great prizes do matter, but they do not necessarily have to cost anything. Aspiration can come from the desire to own an iconic Apple iPad - that's well recognised.

However, arranging dinner for two with the local Premiership football manager or star player for example or lunch with the A-list star of a Hollywood movie can be an even bigger motivation.

The general public buys into the Health Lottery not because they overly care about the health bit or even that only an outrageous low figure of 20.4% of the monies raised goes to good causes. No, they just want to win that one million pounds prize. To maximise participation, make sure everyone knows about the amazing prizes on offer.

FOUR: Internal Competition Multiplies Results

Whilst it's wrong to generalise, empirical evidence suggests that most people are competitive in some way. So, internalising any campaign by creating an extra layer of incentivisation / rivalry is crucial to maximising participation and revenues.

There should be a prize, plus their name in company lights for the individual selling the most balloons to friends and family. Similarly, if the campaign has been split into locational teams, the winning sales team within the company should also be rewarded in some fashion.

FIVE: A Holistic Approach

Sometimes a CSR campaign can have smaller and oblique objectives attached to the main narrative of raising money for a good cause. For instance, there is a paradox regarding hotel fundraising. Stressing that the monies raised are for the local community is great but the local community generally doesn't stay in the hotel.

What the CSR project is really about underneath is employment and quality of work available to that hotel's community. The higher the esteem of the hotel and better connectivity will ensure it is easier to recruit the best local staff.

Microsoft Philanthropies enthuse that "every day we donate nearly $2 million in products and services to non-profits". Subtly this can convert and lock in even more organisations to their ubiquitous product range.

SIX: Ease of Information distribution

If every employee needs a four-hour seminar to understand the proposition, the project will fail for sure. Similarly, if you have to go around every office or workplace with a tin to rattle, that's probably not going to work either.

A special 100% eco-friendly virtual balloon race with all profits to BBC Children in Need and their lovable Pudsey Bear

www.rabr.co/pudsey

One of the very first marketing or campaign tactics should be to email everyone with an E-brochure which sets out the story. The RABR BBC Pudsey Bear Race brochure is highlighted on the previous page www.rabr.co/pudsey/brochure. Being an email it's so simple to distribute and no privacy issues either.

SEVEN: Set Sale Targets

Setting a *suggested or soft* sales target of say, 5 virtual balloons per individual or 200 per local office is always a great idea because everyone is used to the concept of budgets and sales figures.

And this tactic works even better still when overlaid with what the money raised can buy. As an example, if your company CSR funds go towards building schools in Uganda, then telling staff that selling 5 balloons each builds one primary school, but selling 10 each builds three, that notion can be truly aspirational.

EIGHT: Emotion creates the very best buy-in

Parents of Downs Syndrome children are far more likely to be keen and working supporters of a Downs Syndrome charity than parents with unaffected young children.

In a regional and/or global CSR project, maximum emotion and sales can be generated from choosing one global charity, say UNICEF, and one large national charity per country such as Agir Pour L'Enfant in France - a high profile charity close to most French people's hearts.

Staff must feel connected with the CSR project, whatever it is. The Rentaballoonrace platform, for example, allows tracking of every virtual balloon sale – that way, those countries / regions / zones

that work the hardest and raise the most money, get that money back, pro rata, for their favoured causes.

NINE: Provide Ongoing Commentary through Social Media
Try and involve everyone from the start and keep them in the loop at every available occasion with sales figures, emails asking how things are going, for example. You could set up a race Facebook page if there is not already a general use one and / or a Twitter account for publishing sales figures and motivational comments.

TEN: Don't forget your suppliers
All suppliers have a strong vested interest in keeping you, a major client, happy. So don't be shy in asking them for some sponsorship in return for promotion. Rentaballoonrace.com race packages include a stunning e-brochure, so have a look at rabr.co/pudsey/brochure for some ideas as to how to promote a supplier sponsor.
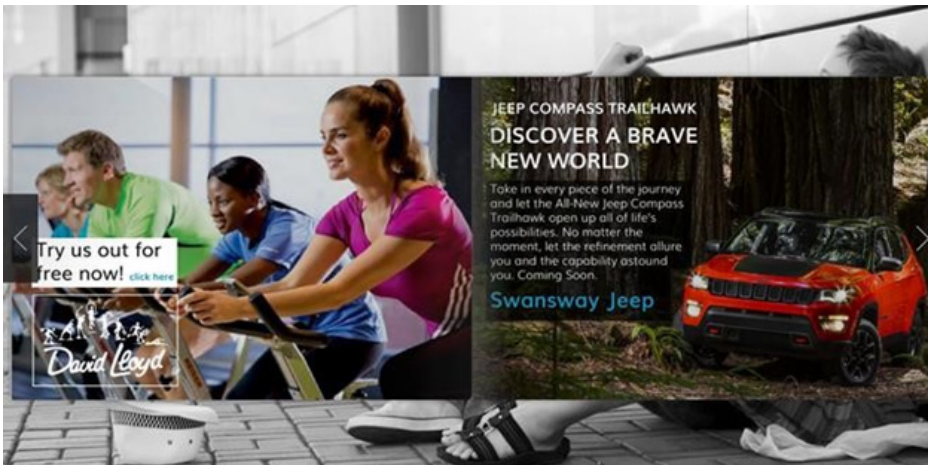
CASE STUDY: INCENTIVISATION FOR RETAIL CHAINS

All larger retailers have many operating locations, offering massive opportunities to expand the sales team and build in competition
- For the retail shop that sells the most balloons provide a nice box of chocolates, say for everyone in the shop, plus photographs and PR exposure in the company newsletter.
- The retail shop employee who sells the most balloons – dinner for two.
- The management staff member who sells the most balloons – dinner for two.
- The supplier who sells the most balloons receives an extra promotion on one product.
- The e-brochure has the ability to promote any brand.

So why not auction space in the brochure to maximise advertising revenue. The advert could plug a current supermarket promotion, say Cathedral Mature Cheddar 340g at £2.49 / €2.90

## CASE STUDY: INCENTIVISATION FOR A GLOBAL MANUFACTURER

For a global manufacturer there are four main drivers of sales:
- Internal competition with global recognition for the plant that does the best in terms of per capita sales.
- Accept the parochial nature of humans by creating local prizes
- Creating a local choice of charity as well as a global one.
- Make it clear that all monies are spent geographically pro-rata. So if Mexico raises 45% of the total revenue, then Mexico gets 45% in return

The **Rentaballoonrace.com™ 100%** eco-friendly virtual race platform can help your company raise serious money for your favourite charity. A great, fun 7 day race where you can decorate all your balloons, change flight parameters & track it 24/7 on Google maps.

You'll be wowed by the small amount of admin time necessary, plus it's not gambling either.
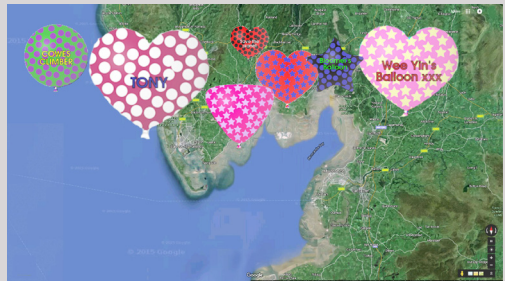
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