

FOUR KEY BENEFITS

to cause marketing

it pays to get involved



Most businesses get involved with causes in their community (local or global) because they truly care about the interconnected world around them. They feel a sense of responsibility, given their access to resources that many do not have. “Giving back” is enough reward in itself. That being said, they understand that getting involved also builds favour with consumers.

Business icon Richard Branson lives (and operates) by the mantra that doing good is good for business. Currently dedicating about 80% of his time on catalyzing non-profit ventures—he is certainly an authority on the matter. But you don’t need to run a multibillion dollar enterprise to make an important contribution to the community and reap the rewards. 84% of Canadians claim they would switch brands to the one affiliated with a good cause if price and quality were similar. That statistic is telling enough, but the opportunity of cause marketing doesn’t stop there.

How Cause Marketing can Equal Big Success for Your Business

1. Builds **Positive Brand Awareness** on a New Marketing Channel

When your business aligns with a charity it gains a new marketing channel. That marketing channel is managed by the charity. The channel includes its media connections, websites, social networks, and events that they put on to build awareness for their cause. Because of the non-profit nature, the channel is deemed to be more valid in the eyes of consumers. By connecting your business to it, your brand is better validated with your customer base. Positive brand awareness follows. Thus, it is important to remember that when your business partners with a charity, your resources are at work in this new marketing channel. Sponsor their events, help them with media acquisition financing, boost their social media efforts, and anything else that helps them spread the word about their cause, and sequentially, your business.

2. Attracts **Positive Media Attention** to Your Business

Outside of the non-profit’s own dedicated channel, your altruistic efforts will be picked up by other forms of media. Local news (TV, print, radio, and online) loves feel-good stories. They attend and report on cause-related events. They proactively look for stories that relate to efforts in support of their local and national community.

When your business is involved in a **highly visible cause**, media is more likely to address your brand when reporting on it. They may even consider you the primary point of contact, and seek a quote from you. Once again, you can see the importance of increasing your visibility when connected to a worthy cause. If you’re on the fence about whether you should opt for that proverbial “bronze” or “platinum” sponsorship status, the latter will equate far greater exposure for your brand.

3. Attracts the Staff You Want in Your Organization

The brain-drain phenomenon is set to strike again Canada. Canadian businesses are scrambling to find talent to help their business grow. Skilled professionals, especially Millennials, want more than good pay and three-weeks vacation. Research shows that people want to work for companies that contribute to the communities they care about and help to fix social concerns of today.

Another reputable study from Stanford Graduate School of Business states that graduates want to work for caring and ethical employers. Given that human resources are a key to your business' success, involvement with a cause is most certainly a necessity. The more visible your alignment with a non-profit, the more likely you are to attract the talent your business needs to stay relevant.

4. Increases Sales

Half of "cause marketing" is marketing. Some 97% of marketing executives consider it a literal strategy. As with any sound marketing initiative, you need to prove ROI. The good news, is that you can do good while increasing sales of your product/service. A recent IPSOS poll shows that 40% of Canadians claim that a business being affiliated with a good cause plays an important part of their purchase decision making process. Consumers are also willing to spend above retail when a business ties itself to a good cause. Also of note is that 35% of Canadians claim that they are willing to reward companies that give back to society by paying more for their goods and services. Factor in the aforementioned study showing that 84% of the country would switch brands to one affiliated with a good cause, and you've got the ROI you're looking for.

The next step is to find a cause that you, and your customers, care about. The IPSOS poll referenced above notes which types of causes Canadians think companies should support. Among the top five are poverty (60%), child-specific (57%), environmental (56%) and physical health (56%).

All of these concerns are at the forefront of Plant a Seed & See What Grows' causes that they work at across Canada.

Learn more about how you can get involved with Plant a Seed & See What Grows Foundation today.

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