



# The ROI on Corporate Giving

**Companies are always looking for a competitive advantage; an innovative product, efficiencies in production and productivity, developing better processes for delivering goods and services.** And, these competitive advantages are measurable and are expected to have an ROI.

But, when it comes to corporate giving, or philanthropy, it's not

always apparent why it's good for business. Most companies treat giving as an afterthought – what to do with some of the profits – but in today's world of Corporate Social Responsibility, philanthropy is becoming a strategic position with clearly defined goals and expectations for an ROI.

Corporate Strategic Giving begins like any strategy – research, planning, careful execution, analysis of the results and revisions if the company isn't seeing the results it is looking for. Therefore, companies are looking to form mutually beneficial relationships with the non-profit world where the corporation increases its reputation, brand awareness and recognition by being affiliated with the cause of the non-profit. The non-profit benefits through the obvious increase in revenue, but also by leveraging its association

*"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."  
- Winston Churchill*



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- Snack Food
- Packaging
- Aluminum Siding
- Glass and Glazing
- Industrial and Automotive Tools



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with community business leaders who can give a higher level of awareness of the cause and help to attract additional donors and volunteers.

Here's an example from Doug Conant, former CEO of Campbell Soup, who writes about [Philanthropy as a growth strategy in a McKinsey Insights blog post](#).

"During my decade as CEO of the Campbell Soup Company, we created the aspirational mission of 'building the world's most extraordinary food company by nourishing people's lives everywhere, every day.' Along the way, we launched several ambitious philanthropic initiatives. In 2010, we committed to cutting our environmental footprint in half by 2020. We announced a special partnership with the American Heart Association to address

consumer concerns over heart health, particularly as it related to diet. In partnership with the Campbell Soup Foundation, we built a long-term program to directly address childhood obesity and hunger in communities where the company operated major facilities. I observed that the more we leveraged our business resources to deliver social value to the communities around us, the more engaged our employees became and the better we performed in the marketplace."

A well-planned Philanthropic Strategy also includes employee engagement. Because today's employees want more than just a paycheck, it has become increasingly important to engage employees in the core mission of your business. Employees want to believe in their company's initiatives and invest personally into the work they do. A good Philanthropic Strategy can provide opportunities for employees to invest their time and energy into the company's mission and reap the benefits of giving to others in ways that work best for them.

When people are passionate about a company's mission they want to be engaged and, as a result, they are much more productive and

## JEFF BLEACHER



*"Clients who give strategically benefit in many ways, including tax benefits. But, we find that our clients give from their hearts and are intent on making our community a better place to live. That thinking is part of our culture here at RBF, as well. We give both time and money to the community because we care about the greater good of all."*

## KEN FALK (on the right)



*"We appreciate the giving nature of our clients and business leaders who understand that a vibrant community comes from everyone's participation. As an accounting firm we look to maximize and leverage our client's philanthropic giving, but we know that there is so much more to giving than the accounting side. Our clients benefit by helping to build a community that cares for everyone. It's true that "doing well comes from doing good."*

*"When people are financially invested, they want a return. When people are emotionally invested, they want to contribute."*

*- Simon Sinek*



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happier with their work and are more loyal to the company. The Millennials are adamant about Corporate Social Responsibility and want to work for leaders who value giving to social concerns and organizations who have a mission to create meaning, not just money.

Customers are also more engaged with a company that executes well on a Philanthropic Strategy. Meeting your customers' needs

and making a profit are key to running a successful business, but customers also want to know that a company cares about the community. Customers can engage in a more meaningful way when a Philanthropic Strategy includes a greater customer experience that links them to the community building done by giving resources of time and money. Knowing that your company is intentional about being a good corporate citizen helps customers feel better about the products and brands they choose to buy and work with.

In summary, corporate philanthropic giving reaps benefits far beyond an ROI. It builds community, engages employees, creates loyal customers and helps companies become stronger, sustainable and focused on significance.

## LARRY REICH



*“Every business wants to be successful and make money and without profits there is no philanthropic giving. So we help our clients to become stronger and ensure their longevity and that trickles down to their ability to give more to the community and to encourage and support their employee efforts in giving of their time.”*

## PATRICK GENDRUE (on the left)



*“Passion for a cause gives a company energy and enthusiasm beyond the daily work of commerce. We see our philanthropic clients enjoy a greater sense of mission and commitment through their passion. That enthusiasm impacts their employees, their vendors, their customers and everyone is better off because of their commitment to the community.”*

*“There are only 3 measurements that tell you nearly everything you need to know about your organization’s overall performance: employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and cash flow. It goes without saying that no company, small or large, can win over the long run without energized employees who believe in the mission and understand how to achieve it.”*  
- Jack Welch, former CEO of GE

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