

The Business of CSR: How to Make Effective Sponsorship Choices

November 3, 2011

Presenters

- Jaya K Bohlmann, APR – Corporate Communication and Design Consultant
 - Jaya.bohlmann@verizon.net; www.linkedin/in/jayabohlmann
- Diana Mayhew, President, National Cherry Blossom Festival
 - diana@downtowndc.org

The Issue: Today, CSR is a business must-have. Stakeholders expect organizations to live up to their stated values and to act on those values, especially in their communities (local, national, global). Social media has changed the nature of communication for all of us. Audiences demand instant response; that their feedback be used and if that doesn't happen, viral activism could mean the difference in your survival or failure! Corporate Social Responsibility has been linked to brand loyalty, increased consumer base and a wider recruitment pool. It's not enough to talk about it – organizations MUST *DEMONSTRATE* their mission and values.

Ask Yourself:

- ✓ How is your CSR program different from others?
- ✓ How are you embodying your CSR programs as an organization?
- ✓ Are you for real? Does your CSR program align with your corporate mission?
- ✓ Are you *involved* with your causes or just writing checks?

ELEMENTS of a Good CSR Strategy

- Targeted cause or issue (make a difference) that aligns/makes sense with your business
- Internal buy-in (executives, employees)
- Realistic budget, resources and timeline
- Clear goals (what difference do we want to make? Who do we want to impact?)
- Roadmap for tactical accomplishment
- NGO/influencer/third party partnerships
- Cause marketing and outreach
- Measurement, metrics, effectiveness
- Consistent, creative, targeted communication

Cause marketing is a partnership between a nonprofit and a for-profit for mutual gain

- ▶ *Can increase sales*
- ▶ *Sponsorships are a popular and effective cause marketing tool*
- ▶ *Companies will spend \$1.5 billion on cause-related sponsorships in 2011 (Source: IEG)*

The Business of CSR: How to Make Effective Sponsorship Choices

November 3, 2011

Effective Organizations to Sponsor: Checklist of Qualities

- Respected and established
- Board of Directors and Executive teams are experts, have a track record in the cause and organization
- Financials are stable
- Have a donor and supporter base
- Are able to attract funds and additional supporters
- Shared values (authenticity)
- Access to desired markets and audiences
- Are sponsor-savvy and friendly
- Desirably located (present in your key business geographies)

Gain additional value from sponsorships:

- Choose program areas in your sponsorship that are yours exclusively
- Send your executives to events, especially those attended by media
- Host sub-events and planning meetings when possible
- Negotiate speaking opportunities for your organization at events
- Do your part to help make the overall event successful (sell tickets, reach out to your network, provide testimonials)

Create your own media relations program related to the sponsorship. Include a robust social media aspect.

- Send press releases about your sponsorship; follow up with more information as the event date gets closer
- Create corporate blog posts about your involvement; get guest bloggers to support and enhance your posts
- Take photos and videos of all events and post them to your organization's Facebook, Twitter, corporate blogs and other social media platforms
- Invite your media contacts to attend events

Engage your employees as volunteers and publicists

- Publicize internally via newsletters, intranet, company blogs
- Ask/coordinate employee efforts on various related online communities and blogs; give them tools, photos, videos, message guidance, encouragement to do so

Success Story: National Cherry Blossom Festival

(<http://nationalcherryblossomfestival.org>)