

Get More Bang for Your Charitable Buck

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by Kristen Luke

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Do you support a charitable organization? Give a monthly donation? Attend the annual gala? Serve on the board or a committee?

Whatever your level of involvement is, you can probably still do more. This is especially true when it comes to incorporating your charitable support into a marketing strategy for your own business.

You don't support a charitable organization for your own personal or professional benefit; you support the organization because of your connection to its mission. That doesn't mean your business can't benefit from your generosity as well. In fact, by examining your charitable involvement from a marketing perspective, both the charity and your business may reap greater benefits than from your individual support alone.

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Here are six ideas to boost your business and increase donations to your favorite charity at the same time.

Host a reception at your office

To support your favorite charity, host a wine and cheese reception at your office and invite the executive director or founder of the charity to give a 20 to 30 minute presentation about the work they do. Invite your clients, prospects and centers of influence (COI) to attend and encourage the charity to invite their board members and major supporters as well. After the presentation, leave time for mingling so that guests can speak to the charity's representatives to learn more about the organization. The end goal is to have your guests eventually volunteer with the organization or make a donation. Position the event as an orientation so that guests don't feel pressured to make a donation. State that your purpose is to introduce them to an organization that is making worthwhile changes in the community. This event will create goodwill with your clients, prospects and COIs, strengthen your relationship with the charity, provide introductions to the charity's top supporters and possibly raise money for the organization.

Invite clients & COIs to fundraising events

Does the charity you support host an annual fundraising event? If so, purchase a table or group of tickets and invite some of your “A-list” clients and COIs to join you. This provides an opportunity to nurture your relationships while supporting the charity at the same time. If your guests are well connected in the community, they may also be able to provide you with introductions to other guests in attendance. If you are already planning small client appreciation events, purchasing a table at a fundraiser can be considered one of these events.