



How to Address the Funding Crisis? A Proven Option Lies Right Before Your Eyes

In changing times, look beyond your usual funding to embrace a new approach.

By Bruce Burtch

The underserved are getting hit even harder. Donations to nonprofit organizations have been declining, and safety nets all across the country are being compromised.

The questions must be asked: What are nonprofits doing differently to address this crisis? How are they making up for the downward spiral in individual, foundation, and corporate giving?

The answers don't come from writing more grants or asking past donors for more money. The answers come in realizing that nonprofits must find new approaches and new funding streams.

There's one place where increased contributions are just waiting to be scooped up. It's a place few nonprofits consider—the for-profit sector.

Private-sector partnerships offer many funding opportunities and sup-

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portive linkages. Nonprofits can participate in such collaborations without risk of losing their mission or independence. Such cross-sector partnerships draw on the assets of each partner, creating a sum much greater than its parts.

Cause marketing programs (a subset of cross-sector partnerships), such as those of breast cancer research fundraising activist Susan G. Komen, have proven phenomenally successful in raising awareness and funds. Such campaigns (also called cause-related partnerships) are “the fastest growing area of corporate marketing spending,” according to *Advertising Age*.

Why? Because studies show that

the public wants to buy products and services from organizations that support a worthy cause. Smart companies know this. Nonprofits need to learn it.

Nonprofits represent the “cause” in cause marketing. And cause marketing works best when it involves small, local campaigns.

Such marketing partnerships are just the beginning. Loaned executives, pro bono services, in-kind donations, and many more opportunities are available for nonprofits willing to think outside of conventional wisdom and reach out to the for-profit sector.

The time is past for believing we can operate as we always have, un-

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This is new territory for the nonprofit sector.

der “normal” circumstances, because “normal” doesn’t exist. Now is the time to learn new techniques and build sustainability for the nonprofit world through for-profit partnerships. As one who knew a bit about survival, Charles Darwin said it best: “In the long history of humankind, those who have learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively will prevail.” ■



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Reaching Out for Support

Many past articles in *Nonprofit World* provide guidance on partnering with for-profits. See, for example, the following at www.snpo.org/members:

- **Nonprofits Must Take the Lead in Business Alliances** (Vol. 20, No. 2)
- **Corporate Partnerships for Nonprofits: A Match Made in Heaven?** (Vol. 30, No. 2)
- **High-End Alliances as Fundraising Opportunities** (Vol. 19, No. 5)
- **Increase Donations from Local Businesses** (Vol. 23, No. 4)
- **Take the Money But Don't Run** (Vol. 19, No. 6)
- **Cause-Related Marketing: 10 Rules to Protect Your Assets** (Vol. 17, No. 6)
- **Building Bridges with Businesses** (Vol. 13, No. 4)
- **Learning Institute Programs On-Line: Strategic Alliances, Resource Development, and O for Opportunity: Exploring New Revenue Opportunities for Nonprofits** (<http://www.snpo.org/lino>).

Coming Up in *Nonprofit World*

- Uncovering Hidden Profit Centers
- Six Tips for Better Pricing
- Developing a Great Fundraising Plan
- Common Mistakes in Hiring a Consultant – and How to Avoid Them
- A Powerful New Tool for Change
- How to Cut Overhead Costs
- Get People to Reply to Your E-Mails: Here's How
- The Value of a ZIP Code
- Five Steps to a Well-Balanced Board
- How to Write Effective Anti-Bias Policies