

How Your Business Can Get Involved in the Giving Season

8 min read



You've probably heard about the season of giving or giving season. You also likely know that it's associated with the holiday season, but do you really know what it is or how your business can get involved and benefit from the season of giving, too?

Key Takeaways

- **What Giving Season Is:** Giving season, also called the season of giving, is a time of the year when we collectively focus on generosity and supporting those who are in need. For many, giving season involves...
- **10 Ways Your Business Can Participate:** Instead of asking your employees to spend their free time volunteering for a local nonprofit, you can make it easier for them to give back by...
- **How Your Business Can Benefit From Its Own Generosity:** Philanthropic activities and expenses thankfully offer many benefits and returns – beyond their intrinsic reward – to the businesses that participate in the giving season...

What Is Giving Season?

Giving season, also called the season of giving, is a time of the year when we collectively focus on generosity and supporting those who are in need. For many, giving season involves supporting nonprofit organizations that help the community or a cause about which we care deeply.

Giving season is generally considered to take place over the fourth quarter of the year (October, November, and December) and really ramp up throughout the holiday season until New Year's Day. This is the time of the year when nonprofit organizations of all kinds receive the most support (financial and otherwise) from individual and commercial donors alike.

In many nonprofits, fundraising campaigns at this time of the year are referred to as year-end fundraising initiatives. According to Charity Navigator, 31% of total annual charitable gifts are given in December, and a whopping 10% are given between December 28th and 31st [1].

10 Ways Your Business Can Participate in the Season of Giving

1. Sponsor On-the-Job Volunteer Opportunities

Instead of asking your employees to spend their free time volunteering for a local nonprofit, you can make it easier for them to give back by allowing them to spend company hours volunteering for a nonprofit. Whether you sponsor a business-wide Habitat for Humanity Build or volunteer your crew for a few days of serving meals at a soup kitchen, this is a great way to give back to the community while helping to strengthen the bonds of your own team members. You'll also increase how fulfilled your employees feel in their jobs by giving them the opportunity to do more than make sales on behalf of the business.

2. Donate Your Own Expertise

Yes, monetary donations are always appreciated in nonprofit organizations, but you might find that donating your own time, expertise, and/or services could be even more valuable to a nonprofit in need of an experienced professional or advisor. Depending on your own professional industry, your help with a new logo design or rebrand, web design, or social media marketing plan could provide a nonprofit with a lot more value than a simple monetary donation from your company.

Read More: [Why Your Company Should Sponsor Volunteer Activities](#)

3. Talk With an Executive Director About Adopting Their Nonprofit Organization

While all gifts are well-intentioned and most are always appreciated, there are some items that certain nonprofits might need more than others. To ensure your company and its people are helping in the best way they possibly can, we recommend "adopting" a nonprofit organization.

Find a local nonprofit that has a mission that really resonates with you and your own company's values. Then talk with the organization's executive director (or another giving representative) to find out what they really need to further their mission. For example, if you run a pet supply store, your surplus inventory would be greatly appreciated at the local animal shelter or even at a pet-friendly homeless shelter but would not hold much value to a career-coaching nonprofit.

4. Host a "Buy Local" or Donation-Based Secret Santa

A fun way for your business and all of its employees to contribute to your local economy or to spread your monetary love around many organizations is by hosting a secret Santa in your office. Start by giving each of your employees \$50 (or some other sum) to spend. Next, if you choose the buy local route, ask them to spend that money locally to purchase a gift for their secret Santa (bonus points if they purchase a fundraising item from a local nonprofit). If you go the donation route, ask them to donate the money to a nonprofit in their secret Santa's name.

5. Match Donations During a Fundraising Drive

Team up with a nonprofit organization and match the donations they receive over a certain period of time, for a particular fundraising campaign, or up to a certain capped amount. This can be a fun way to participate in the season of giving while raising awareness about a good cause and also getting your business's name out at the same time.

6. Choose an NPO That Aligns With Your Mission and Values

While any form of giving is basically good. Some nonprofit giving choices are better for your particular business than others. Instead of choosing a nonprofit organization out of hat, it's best to

choose one that has a mission that closely aligns with your business's own mission and values – or a nonprofit that, perhaps, helps to negate some of the harm your business might inadvertently do.

For example, if you run a restaurant, then helping to support a soup kitchen would make a lot of sense. If you have a trucking or shipping company, then you might consider purchasing trees to be planted, partnering with a nonprofit that plants trees, or giving to a city park initiative to help reduce your carbon footprint.

7. Discount Your Services for Local NFPs

If you own a service-based business, then you might find that a local nonprofit (or several) is in need of your services but unable to afford them at the regular price point. If this is the case, you can contribute by discounting your services to nonprofit organizations. How much you discount and whether you offer a discount just during the giving season or all throughout the year is ultimately up to you. The decision will depend, though, on how many nonprofit clients you have and how much your business can afford to shrink its profit margins on nonprofit clients.

Read More: [Nonprofit Spotlight: Helping Children Live Life To Their Fullest Potential](#)

8. Use Your Social Media Presence to Spur Giving

If your business has a fairly strong social media presence and a large audience, you can do a lot of good for a cause by helping a nonprofit with your significant reach. There are a lot of ways to go about using social media to help raise money for a nonprofit. For example, you could partner up with a nonprofit to help them run an online fundraising campaign, sharing links on your pages that lead to their donations page, or you could adopt a unique hashtag and donate a dollar every time it's used.

9. Organize a Food Drive or Another Philanthropic Event

Another fun way and unique way to give back while also raising awareness about a nonprofit's cause and helping your business to benefit from the "free" advertising is to partner with a nonprofit to sponsor or help organize a fundraising event. This can come in the form of a gala dinner, the performance of a play at a children's theater, a 5K race, or an online scavenger hunt that challenges participants to gather and donate items needed by a local nonprofit. Get creative, have a good time, and have fun giving back.

10. Give Back All Year by Adopting a Give-Back Business Model

While most giving occurs during giving season, some businesses find that giving back is so beneficial (to their companies, employees, communities, missions, and workplace culture) that they decide to adopt a give-back business model within which they contribute to a special cause all throughout the year. This often takes the form of regular paid volunteer days for employees and/or contributing a percentage of the company's profit margin on every sale to a relevant cause.

Read More: [Why Business Leaders Should Serve on a Nonprofit Board](#)

How Your Business Can Benefit From Its Own Generosity

Of course, the purest of gifts is given without the expectation of receiving anything in return. That doesn't mean that business isn't still business, and your business's profit margins still matter – no matter how much you enjoy being generous and participating in the season of giving.

Philanthropic activities and expenses thankfully offer many benefits and returns – beyond their intrinsic reward – to the businesses that participate in the giving season. The activities listed above are all great advertising for your company and create countless networking opportunities. Philanthropy also makes the jobs of your employees more fulfilling, rewarding, and purposeful. Giving back can build up and strengthen your community which will, in turn, strengthen your business. Plus, money, time, or other non-monetary gifts to nonprofit organizations can be used as a tax write-off in your company, improving your tax planning initiatives, as well.

So, we encourage you to find a nonprofit with a mission that aligns with your company's own values and mission and get ready to bask in the spirit of generosity all throughout the season of giving.

[1] <https://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=content.view&cpid=1360>