



The Power of Consumer Giving

Introduction

Vision impairment due to the inaccessibility of glasses is one of our time's largest, fastest-growing, and most overlooked global health crises. According to the World Health Organization, 1 billion people globally have vision impairments that could have been prevented or are yet to be resolved. Of that, 826 million individuals have presbyopia (age-related near vision loss) and only require reading glasses to correct their vision. Ninety percent of these individuals live in low and middle-income countries and face barriers to accessing this 700-year-old tool simply because their communities are impoverished and lack vision services and eyeglasses distribution channels. Even when vision resources are available for this population, they are often prohibitively expensive. As a result, hundreds of millions of impoverished people worldwide needlessly suffer the entirely avoidable disability of vision impairment, which causes drops in their productivity, ability to maintain a livelihood and pursue educational opportunities, personal safety, and independence. Thankfully, this condition can be remedied, and RestoringVision's mission is to do just that.

Founded in 2003, RestoringVision (RV) works to ensure that people living in impoverished communities worldwide have equitable access to the eyeglasses they need. In doing so, they can remain productive, sustain earning potential, continue learning, prolong their independence and remain contributing members of their societies. We primarily focus on addressing age-related near vision loss (presbyopia) with vision screenings and the delivery of reading glasses. In smaller volumes, we address nearsightedness (myopia, etc.) with the provision of eye exams and prescription glasses and offer UVA/UVB sunglasses to protect vision for those living in regions with hazardous UV index levels.

Today, we are one of the largest non-profits creating equitable access to glasses for people living on less than \$2 per day, at no cost to the beneficiary. Since our inception, we have reached over 20 million people in more than 144 countries. We currently reach over three million people each year and are positioned to scale to reach 10 million on an annual basis. Our expanded reach directly responds to the growing poverty rates brought on by COVID-19, which put 100 million people into extreme poverty worldwide.

Like all non-profits, RV relies on philanthropy to support our mission. Specifically, we receive funding from corporations who provide direct gifts and advance their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agendas through cause marketing or one-for-one programs. We also receive funding from foundations and major gifts from individuals.

In 2021, RV rolled out our first-ever consumer-giving program to invite more corporations and individuals to be part of our charitable giving community. In joining our cause, they participate in helping us ensure we reach many more people living on less than \$2 per day with the eyeglasses they need. RV is now looking to expand our portfolio of consumer-giving partners to accelerate our solution to resolve one of the most overlooked global health crises of our time.

The Power of Consumer Giving

Consumer giving is one of the most impactful and straightforward give-back programs in which a business can engage. This practice has long been popular, but it has recently reached phenomenal

heights among retailers, both brick and mortar and e-commerce. Corporations such as eBay, Walmart, Pottery Barn, and Best Buy have all weaved consumer giving into their business models; even food chains like McDonald's have incorporated this practice. In today's world of the altruistic-focused consumer, it is no longer an option for businesses not to include a consumer giving program as a part of their corporate culture. Giving programs like consumer giving are an easy and exciting way for corporations to engage in doing good for the world while generating significant revenue in support of a cause or causes they believe in with the help of their customers. eBay, for example, is one of the corporate world's leaders in consumer giving and is about to reach \$1B raised for the charities it supports since integrating this philanthropic program into its business in 2003.

In 2019, Engage for Good conducted a survey which found that in 2018, more than \$486 million was raised in the United States by a group of 79 point-of-sale fundraising campaigns that each garnered more than \$1 million in contributions. Together these programs have raised more than \$5.3 billion over three decades.

YEAR SURVEYED	2012	2014	2016	2018
NUMBER OF PROGRAMS	78	84	73	79
DOLLARS RAISED	\$389 MILLION+	\$422 MILLION+	\$441 MILLION+	\$486 MILLION

The survey also found that this increase in customer giving demonstrates that consumers are willing to partner with trusted retailers to support good causes both in-store and online.

According to a Forbes 2019 article, "If you're targeting a younger demographic, you need to embrace corporate charity programs. Your customers expect nothing less. Both millennials and Gen Zers grew up in a world that encouraged recycling and social good. Instead of donating money directly to causes, they care about, shoppers under the age of 40 prefer to give back through where they shop." This young generation relies on the brands they align themselves with to guide their philanthropic giving, placing companies in a new and exciting role! Despite its extraordinary benefits and growing presence in many retail sectors, consumer giving has not yet penetrated the optical industry. Therefore, this sector's businesses are missing a significant opportunity to improve the world on a grand scale by raising millions of dollars for social causes they believe in. They are also missing the chance to elevate and amplify their corporate identity and tap into the generosity of a growing group of consumers who deeply care about corporate social responsibility and want to donate to support causes at the point of sale.

Benefits of the Consumer Giving Program for Brands

Research shows that in addition to raising money to support doing good in the world, consumer giving programs also increase brand loyalty, even among customers who decline to give. Businesses are quickly joining in on corporate giving because the practice is a triple win for the company itself. These programs:

- **Create a strong internal culture:** The best way to foster employee happiness, engagement, and retention is by having a mission. When you have happy, motivated employees, your brand thrives.
- **Encourage purchases:** Consumers prefer to buy from charitable companies with a social mission because it makes them feel good. They know they're part of something bigger than themselves and that their purchase is changing the world. This sense of pride upon purchase encourages further purchases. If a customer is torn between your brand and another brand that doesn't give to charity, they'll likely pick you over your competitor. 81% of millennials say they want to support brands that demonstrate corporate citizenship.

- **Foster long-term loyalty:** Loyalty is a powerful tool that sells while you sleep. When customers feel good shopping with you, they'll continue to do so, and they'll also advocate on your behalf to their social networks.

Invitation to Partner with Us

Today we invite your company to be part of our community of corporate philanthropists working to ensure that people living in poverty have the clear vision needed to remain independent and productive members of society. Together, through a corporate partnership and a consumer giving program, we can raise significant dollars to help solve one of the most overlooked global health challenges. At the same time, you can initiate or accelerate your corporate philanthropic giving program while driving greater brand loyalty among your consumers.