

WHEN
**CORPORATE
COMPETITIVE
CROWDFUNDING**
GOES TO THE DOGS



A Case Study in 7 Barks

1st Bark: The Context



“ I LOVED THE FACT THAT OUR COMPETITIVE EFFORTS WERE ULTIMATELY IN THE SERVICE OF A GOOD CAUSE. COMPETITION GETS A BAD RAP (THINK “REALITY SHOWS”, “CLIMBING THE CORPORATE LADDER” AND “PARTISAN POLITICS”), BUT OUR ENTIRE OFFICE WAS AT WAR TO PROVIDE A BETTER LIFE FOR DEFENSELESS ANIMALS. THAT’S SOMETHING I FEEL GOOD ABOUT. OF COURSE, THE PRIZES WEREN’T BAD, EITHER. ”

— CHRISTOPHER PULEO

Corporate volunteer and giving programs can conjure grandiose images. Earnest employees at global conglomerates working in lockstep to address Big Difficult Issues. Senior sustainability and CSR executives crunching sophisticated, save-the-world data and matching it against employee initiatives with the precision of Swiss watchmakers. Fancy fundraising events involving caterers and tickets.

Last year, Microsoft employees raised \$100 million for more than 18,000 U.S.-based community organizations doing work in the U.S. and around the world. Meanwhile, Wal-Mart made its logistics staff members available to help food banks, as part of a \$2-billion pledge to fight hunger. The year before that, 20,000 Kraft volunteers in 56 countries dedicated time to volunteer with hundreds of nonprofits, and helped raise nearly \$3 million during the company’s annual week of service.

These are amazing efforts worth emulating in any capacity. But getting your company involved in impactful community service doesn’t have to be complicated. In fact, workplace giving campaigns can be as instantaneous and social as a coffee break. And sometimes the feeling of “easy” actually makes these campaigns more fun and, therefore, more engaging.

Something else that can spice up a workplace giving campaign: a little competition. Gamification is a hot buzzword these days and for good reason; Gartner analysts predict that by 2015, more than 50 percent of organizations will add game mechanics to their innovation processes. These days, every business application imaginable is being gamified - from frequent flyer miles to online diet plans, from employee engagement initiatives to check-ins with friends on Facebook and Foursquare. Good gamification turns users into players, immersing them in rewarding experiences that not only simplify how they interact with programs but keeps them hooked.

So why should fundraising be any different? What happens when you gamify giving?

2nd Bark: The Company

Causecast is a Los Angeles-based technology firm that develops tools to help organizations engage with their members by supporting the causes they care about. Leveraging its years of experience in supporting the philanthropy efforts of organizations ranging from AARP to Virgin Mobile, in addition to thousands of nonprofits, Causecast recently launched a comprehensive online system that helps organizations to manage community volunteering, donations, matching, rewarding and cause campaigns such as disaster relief. The all-inclusive Community Impact Platform allows organizations of any size to easily launch unique social change initiatives that engage their members while positively impacting their communities. Most importantly, the platform makes it easy and fun for employees to feel more connected to their companies.

One of the flagship features of the Community Impact Platform is the ability to customize and manage so-called competitive crowdfunding campaigns. These campaigns function as workplace giving initiatives with a fun competitive twist, and Causecast decided there was no better way to spice up the summer than with a little game for good. With only 25 employees, Causecast certainly didn't have the infrastructure to support a manpower-and-time intensive campaign. Fortunately, the company's own tools make it possible for a company as small as Causecast to wage a sophisticated campaign with automated tracking, reporting and social media technology, keeping everyone informed, engaged and empowered in real time.

The first step was assessing which cause would best rally the troops and put them in the giving mood. So the volunteer committee in charge of organizing Causecast's fundraiser broke out the national cause calendar to see which holidays or issues naturally presented themselves in June.

You'd be amazed to know the daily volume of "causes" that flood the national holiday book; Ball Point Pen Day, anyone? National Clown

“ I'M A BIG ADVOCATE OF ADOPTION AND REALLY APPRECIATE THE WORK THAT ANIMAL RESCUES AND SHELTERS DO, SO I WAS HAPPY TO CONTRIBUTE AND SPREAD THE WORD ON FACEBOOK. MY FAVORITE PART WAS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF MY MATCHED DONATION AMOUNT FOR THE YEAR! ”

— PAMELA SZETO





FORTE
ANIMAL RESCUE

angel city
ACPB pit bulls

College Month? Penguin Day? The choices were overwhelming. But there was one cause holiday that spoke to us as loudly as pink plaid: National Take Your Dog to Work Day. Who couldn't get on board with that? This canine celebration would provide an excellent excuse to raise awareness and support for a dog-centric non-profit or two, cap it with a day for the staff's pooches to roam free at the office, and, hopefully facilitate increased employee engagement.

The plan was in motion. Next step: selecting which worthy nonprofit to support.

3rd Bark: The Rescues

The volunteer committee agreed that rescue organizations were a particularly deserving category of doggie do-gooders. After a brief search through the Community Impact Platform's national registry of participating non-profits, two local rescues were selected; Forte Animal Rescue and Angel City Pit Bulls.

In these rocky economic times, the need has never been greater for organizations like Forte and ACPB. As people lose their jobs, lose their homes, downsize to dog-unfriendly apartments, or just run out of resources to feed another mouth (even a cute one), dogs are - more than ever - finding themselves on the streets, in shelters and facing euthanization. Forte and ACPB protect their dogs from ever being euthanized and screen the homes of all prospective adoptees to make sure they're appropriate. If you're a dog, you want Forte and ACPB on your side.

Forte Animal Rescue is an all-volunteer organization run on a shoestring and heartstrings. Founder Marie Atake launched the rescue almost by accident ten years ago, and has somehow managed to keep it going despite her reliance on the kindness of donors, the occasional grant and the commitment of volunteers. There is no facility - all of the dogs are boarded with vets, boarding facilities and foster parents, and every cent Marie receives goes

towards the medical care and shelter of Forte's dogs, many of whom are tough to place cases that other rescues have turned away. In 10 years, Marie hasn't even paid herself a dime; on the contrary, she personally helps provide for the costs of the organization.

But every year, the medical and boarding costs of Forte's dogs usually hover between \$100,000 to \$150,000. The annual adoption fees usually net about \$30,000; after that, Marie must scramble to find ways to fill the shortfall. Large nonprofits can traffic in charity galas that bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars in one night; Forte is grateful for the \$2,000 that its annual garage sale yields (although the event has been so labor intensive that the cost-benefit ratio didn't make sense so Forte discontinued even that income source this year.) With a small organization like Forte, every donated dollar is a godsend, helping to keep the lights on and dogs alive.

Angel City Pit Bulls is another local hero to unwanted dogs. ACPB works tirelessly to promote a positive image of pit bulls as loving family companions through education, advocacy and responsible pet ownership. Like Forte, ACPB does not have the luxury of its own facility and instead runs on the fuel of volunteers, especially foster parents who can board Angel City's dogs until they find forever homes. ACPB provides for all the costs of medical care and boarding, primarily through individual donors, and every dollar that it receives allows the organization to save one more life.

These were two fantastic organizations that could desperately use the extra help of a company fundraiser, especially one that didn't involve any work from the non-profits themselves.

“ IT WAS AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE, GETTING TO SEE MY COWORKERS' DOGS AND HAVING A GREAT TIME HELPING DOGS IN NEED. ”

— MEDHANIE HAPTE

“ NOTHING GOES BETTER WITH MY MORNING COFFEE AND OATMEAL THAN THE MOST RECENT FUNDRAISER SMACK-TALK. THIS ALSO PROVIDED A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SWAP PET-ADOPTION STORIES FROM COLLEAGUES. ”

— KATE STAHNKE

4th Bark: The Competition

Corporate volunteer and giving campaigns can be beautifully conceived with the best of intentions, but their oxygen is engagement. Without employee buy-in, cause campaigns die a slow, embarrassing death, leaving a trail of bitter disappointment in their wake that only makes it more difficult to launch other campaigns in the future.

Causecast was determined to make its own fundraising competition an employee engagement extravaganza; a fun, month-long event that would be impossible to ignore. So Causecast's Account Manager, Michele Bruccolieri, put on her best marketing hat to promote the campaign to the team, anointing the fundraiser with the title "Throw us a Bone" and quickly customizing a campaign page that described the event. The Community Impact Platform made it easy to fill in the details and get the campaign up and running within minutes.

Aside from supporting two worthy rescue organizations and demonstrating team spirit, there was also, of course, another motivation: prizes. We needed to make these interesting; ideally, not something that money could buy but experiences that were priceless in their own way. After some brainstorming, the volunteer committee came up with a selection of awards that we thought would ignite fire in the collective team belly. First prize would be a day off of work, the second top earner would win drinks with CEO Ryan Scott, and the third place winner would get to choose the menu for one of the weekly Wednesday team lunches. As a final incentive, Ryan would treat everyone to a company happy hour if the organization as a whole raised more than \$2500, a number that felt like a steep climb indeed for such a small group.

“ THIS EVENT WAS A FUN AND GOOD TEAM-BUILDING EXPERIENCE. IT WAS FUN HAVING DOGS RUN AROUND THE OFFICE TO PROVIDE SOME EXTRA SPARK AND ENERGY. IT WAS ALSO SATISFYING TO BE ABLE TO HELP TWO LOCAL DOG RESCUE ORGANIZATIONS AND TO TEST OUT OUR COMMUNITY IMPACT PLATFORM. ”

— MIKE SIU

Michele used the system to send out an email blast that made the case for why everyone should participate in this company cause activity, and the campaign was officially launched.



Properly incentivized on all fronts, the Causecast team was off to the races. If employees truly are a company's best brand ambassadors, a competitive social fundraiser offers employees a natural opportunity to wave their company's flag. And when social media tools are built into that fundraiser, the marketing reach is as wide as your employees' personal networks.

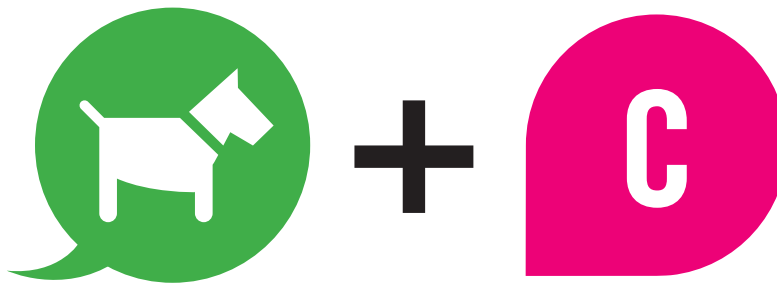
In this case, every participating employee was able to customize their own fundraiser page on the platform with no more difficulty than it would take to create a Facebook entry. Employees selected which of the two rescues they wished to support through their fundraising activity, committed to an individual fundraising goal they hoped to reach, then personalized pages with whatever they thought would help donors cough up support. Causecasters posted photos of their own dogs, stock images of dogs behind bars, even funny video clips of dog trick mashups. Some people added poignant comments based on their own dog rescue stories and explained why this cause was so important to them. Others simply emphasized how much they really wanted to win a day off of work.

The range of Causecast personalities shone through the unique fundraising pages, and of course every time that employees appealed to their communities for donations the Causecast name gained a little more luster. The fact that the company matched all donations up to \$50 per employee would give Causecasters an added draw in their request for donations and cast the company in an even more flattering light.

“ I COULDN'T BELIEVE HOW OBSESSED I BECAME WITH WINNING THIS COMPETITION. EVERY DAY I CHECKED THE HOME PAGE TO SEE WHERE I RANKED. IF I SAW MY COLLEAGUES CREEPING AHEAD OF ME, I REDOUBLED MY EFFORTS TO GET FRIENDS TO DONATE OR JUST DEDUCTED MORE MONEY FROM MY NEXT PAYCHECK. EVERYONE GOT SO INTO IT! ”


— SHANNA BELOTT






“ ANGEL CITY PIT BULLS HAD A VERY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH CAUSECAST AND THEIR GIVING CAMPAIGN. WE RECEIVED FREQUENT EMAILS UPDATING US ON DONATIONS RECEIVED, AND WERE ABLE TO RAISE A LOT OF MONEY TOWARDS OUR CAUSE THROUGH THEIR EASY WEB INTERFACE. ”

—— KATIE LARKIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ANGEL CITY PIT



Save A Dog's Life

My fundraiser is supporting the following nonprofit:



Forte Animal Rescue
Forte Animal Rescue is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, seeking solutions for pet-overpopulation, as well as working together with the ...

Help me reach my fundraising goal of \$500 by Saturday, June 30, 2012.

My Fundraiser Progress

\$374

0%

25%

50%

75%

Goal: \$500

Like

2

Tweet

0

Share


7

shanna's Message

In honor of "Take Your Dog to Work Day" on June 22nd, Causecast is hosting a competitive fundraiser to support 2 animal rescues, one of which is Forte Animal Rescue, staffed by the dogged-working folks who rescued Oggi from the streets of Compton. Rescues like Forte survive on donations and volunteering alone, and their fuel is the passion of people who care about dogs. The only thing limiting their capacity to save dogs from the shelter and the streets is resources. So throw me a bone and chip in a few bucks to support a terrific organization; let's make it a little easier for Forte to save the lives of our four-pawed buddies and provide boarding, food, training and veterinary care while adoptive families are found. Any amount will do - no sum is too small! And did I mention that Causecast is offering matching funds? (PS - If I raise the most money in my company I win a day off work.) :-:) Woof woof!

Donate Now >>

This Fundraiser Sponsored By:



CAUSECAST
Causecast offers an engaging, web-based solution designed to increase employee participation in your workplace volunteering and giving programs.

Shanna Belott donated \$52.64 on June 22, 2012 at 3:10 PM

Shanna Belott donated \$10.53 on June 21, 2012 at 2:17 PM

Anthony Belott donated \$135.80 and said Forte is a great organization. I'm happy to provide support. Oggi is going to be very excited to spend the day at the CauseCast office. I can't wait to hear how it goes! on June 19, 2012 at 9:47 PM

Julie James donated \$8.90 on June 18, 2012 at 7:52 PM

Harvey Rosen donated \$11.07 on June 18, 2012 at 2:32 PM

Shanna Belott donated \$105.27 on June 13, 2012 at 5:41 PM

GOAL


Measure your fundraiser progress in the amount of dollars as well as a percentage.

SHARE

Get the word out about your campaign through all social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter and Google +


DONATION FEED

Throughout your campaign, find out who donated and left messages of support and other types of activity on your page.



Throw us a Bone! Give a dog a life..and show your support!

My fundraiser is supporting the following nonprofit:



Forte Animal Rescue
Forte Animal Rescue is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, seeking solutions for pet-overpopulation, as well as working together with the ...

Help me reach my fundraising goal of \$300 by Saturday, June 30, 2012.

My Fundraiser Progress

\$284

0%

25%

50%

75%

Goal: \$300

Like

0

Tweet


1

0

Share

17

michele's Message



Hello Friends and Family: In honor of "Take your Dog to Work Day" on Friday June 22nd my company (Causecast.com) will be fundraising for a two great dog rescues in the month of June. I know that many of you are dog lovers, and if so, please find it in your heart to donate a little money to help save a dogs life. You can donate \$1 dollar or \$50 but anything would be great. Our CEO will be matching up to \$50 dollars for every dollar that we raise. so your \$5 dollars could really be like \$10 dollars!

Holly Cornish donated \$11.07 on June 26, 2012 at 12:41 PM

Jennifer Gerber donated \$11.07 on June 21, 2012 at 3:25 PM

Ryan Conley donated \$11.07 on June 21, 2012 at 2:41 PM

Kyle Jeter donated \$10.53 on June 20, 2012 at 2:25 PM

Laura Bruccolieri donated \$11.07 and said Happy to help! love mom on June 18, 2012 at 8:00 PM

Denise Orazi donated \$54.45 on June 17, 2012 at 8:05 AM

Jennifer Gerber donated \$21.91 on June 14, 2012 at 5:33 PM

Michele Bruccolieri donated \$52.64 on June 14, 2012 at 12:52 PM

MESSAGE

Write a personalized message on how you are involved with this campaign. Also include why people should support this and the benefits of supporting your cause.

5th Bark: The Employees

A game provides thrills when it operates as a spectator sport. Competing in a silo isn't the same as facing off at an arena, with the roar of the crowd thundering through the bleachers. The greater the transparency and immediacy, the more exciting the game.

A typical fundraising competition is characterized by individual efforts, with everyone operating in isolation and their results tabulated and compared at the end. But because the Community Impact Platform offers automatic tracking and reporting, Causecast's fundraising participants are able to assess their status in real time. The competition's home page features a running progress report of the company's collective fundraising efforts as well as call-outs to the top four fundraising employees, with their up-to-the-minute totals listed for all to see. Participants can also look at any individual pages to see their colleagues' progress and specific donation history, all clearly conveyed through colorful images, graphs and bars.

This group visibility and interactivity sets the stage for fierce, albeit good-spirited, competitions, and Causecast's Throw Us a Bone fundraiser was no different. Michele sent regular emails to the group to remind everyone which employees were in the lead and where the group as a whole stood in relation to its happy hour goal. The emails kept everyone motivated, but they also had an unintended effect; providing a forum for competitive taunting. As participants rose and fell in the rankings, politeness disappeared and friendly smack talk via group email ruled the day.

“THE PERFECT OFFICE EVENT DURING THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER ... WE HAD A BUNCH OF FURRY PUPS IN THE OFFICE, JAMMED OUT TO TUNES WITH DOG THEMES, EVERYONE THEIR OWN VERSION OF DOG EARS ATTACHED TO THEIR CAUSECAST HATS AND WE RAISED SOME DOUGH FOR DOG SHELTERS IN THE LOCAL AREA...GREAT CAUSE...GOOD TIMES.”

— DAN LOUGHEED

The fundraising smack talk became such a giddy characteristic of the competition that the development team subsequently added a chat forum feature directly on the campaign home pages so that email is no longer needed to goad opponents. Now you can taunt and boast directly on the platform.

And what about the administrator in charge of the fundraising campaign? Did the Community Impact Platform make her job

COMPETITIVE CROWDFUNDING

of managing the event easier? In a word, yes. No need to track donations in spreadsheets or keep a calculator nearby; with this platform, everything was automated and instant. Michele was able to see at a glance which employees were participating, how much they had raised, the source of their donations - the data was crunch-able in any way she wished. If Causecast was a bigger company, she could have segmented information according to departments, office locations, teams, and any other metric she required. With this level of user-friendly sophistication, it was accurate to say that the campaign practically ran itself.

“HAVING THE DOGS IN OUR OFFICE DOES A GREAT JOB OF LIGHTENING THE MOOD AND MAKING OUR OFFICE A LOT MORE FUN!”

— NAREG BURR

“I LOVED SEEING THE DOG EARS ON MY COLLEAGUES’ HEADS AT THE TAKE YOUR DOG TO WORK DAY PARTY.”

— WILL LOPEZ

6th Bark: The Dogs

After weeks of drawing friends and family to our fundraising pages via email, Twitter and Facebook; donating from our own future paychecks; checking and re-checking the progress of our “opponents”; e-slapping each other with macho grandstanding; and generally becoming more engaged with our company through a spirited game for good cause, the final hour had arrived. As the seconds ran out, last-minute donations were made until finally the winners revealed themselves.

The best part of the campaign was the last. Culminating on that well-known national holiday, Take Your Dog to Work Day, the game’s biggest pay-off was the opportunity for Causecasters to enjoy the company of canines in the office. Big dogs, small dogs and everything in between - the pooch parade reminded all of us why we’d been hitting up everyone we knew for donations. And we could all feel good returning the doleful stares of our new doggie coworkers because the group had collected more than \$2600 in donations to help their canine brethren.

Now it was time for that happy hour!

At the end of the day, the team enjoyed a festive little beer gathering while grooving to a “doggie” soundtrack - with tunes ranging from



“Hound Dog” to “Who Let the Dogs Out.” No **COMPETITIVE CROWDFUNDING** hats were distributed and everyone was invited to attach customized dog ears in honor of our furry friends. One hundred percent of the team had participated in the fundraising competition and its safe to say that every one of those contestants - and their doggie pals - gave the game a big paws up.

Causecast's fundraising competition was an easy lift for everyone involved. Creating and customizing the campaign page took - quite literally - a few minutes and alerting employees took seconds. Employees were quickly able to personalize their own pages and instantly blast them out to their entire social media networks. And the nonprofits didn't have to lift a finger in order to benefit from a lucrative game that drew widespread attention to their organizations as well as the Causecast brand.

Fundraising competitions aren't always this effortless, but with the right tools they can be. And when running a campaign that engages your entire company is this easy, there's only one question on everyone's minds after it's done:

When are we doing this again?

7th Bark: Your Company

If you're looking for new ways to engage your employees, competitive crowdfunding campaigns offer a superb way to generate attention and excitement around your corporate volunteer and giving program. Causecast's Community Impact Platform makes the process of customizing and launching these campaigns painlessly simple; the only real effort you'll need to exert is deciding what prizes to offer. With Causecast's robust technology, competitive crowdfunders can be a gift you give to your employee givers, and this is a gift that will truly keep giving back in the form of increased employee engagement.

To find out more about the Community Impact Platform, visit us at www.causecast.com



COMPETITIVE CROWDFUNDING



“THE FUNDS THAT CAUSECAST RAISED WILL HELP US IN CARRYING ON WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING FOR THE PAST 10+ YEARS; I.E., SEEKING SOLUTIONS FOR PET-OVERPOPULATION, AS WELL AS WORKING TOGETHER WITH THE COMMUNITY TO CULTIVATE THE HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND THROUGH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. AND MORE IMMEDIATELY, CAUSECAST’S DONATION GIVES US THE ABILITY TO SAVE THE LIVES OF SEVERAL DOGS. CAUSECAST HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE TO OUR CAUSE. THANK YOU, TEAM CAUSECAST!”

— MARIE ATAKE, FOUNDER & PRESIDENT, FORTE ANIMAL RESCUE





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& REPORTING***



MOBILE VERIFICATION



***RECOGNITION
AND REWARDS***



***IMMEDIATE
DISASTER RESPONSE***



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