

Pursuing New Revenue Growth Strategies for 2012

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While social enterprises have allocated significant resources in fundraising activities towards individual donors, one potential untapped segment are corporations. As corporate donations rose an estimated 10.6 percent to \$15.29 billion in 2010 (Giving USA Foundation 2011), forward-thinking social enterprises have an opportunity to tap into the smallest contributing sector (approximately 5 percent of total philanthropic dollars), which may be an untapped market that just needs a new engagement model. In particular, the continued focus of many companies, especially Fortune 500 firms, on corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives has potential benefits for those nonprofits that invest the time to connect their capabilities against such efforts. As such, social enterprises might consider the following:

- **Change up the typical Social Enterprise to Fortune 500 engagement model:** While communicating the need for companies to reallocate some of their resources towards social causes is important, a few prudent nonprofits will propose new ideas that can also benefit a private company's business goals. Similar to nonprofits that need to demonstrate return on investment, does your social

enterprise possess data and/or insights that can help these companies display their progress against such efforts? Examples of such competencies might include:

- **Environmental Footprint:** Does your organization prepare reports on environmental impact (e.g., pollution containment, recycling, carbon emissions) for specific parts of the country/state? Perhaps such reports can be used as third-party qualitative and/or quantitative proof points to help measure the impact of a company's activities?
- **Understand how your social enterprise offers differentiated value compared to existing nonprofits that currently serve a Fortune 500 firm:** While Fortune 500 firms understand the value of positive consumer awareness for their companies, many already have established relationships with worthy nonprofits that are already doing a commendable job executing against specific causes. Still, consider how many companies are striving to, for instance, crack the code of engaging with America's booming Hispanic population. Does your entity possess insights and/or relationships with this population segment and hence the potential to provide valuable benefits for both Hispanic-Americans as well as the corporate entity?
- **Consider creative partnerships that can provide**

global solutions for your Fortune 500 target

clients: Recognizing that a number of this Journal's readers have operations that are based in the Greater Philadelphia area, a question arises around realistic scope and scale of one's potential efforts. Still, if you consider most Fortune 500 companies' annual reports, they have a common objective to grow their international operations. So, consider if your entity is able to partner with other international nonprofits that have similar missions but perhaps different geographical support points. You just might find that you have a fairly comprehensive solution to offer. Given this context, are you able to partner with an organization in Brazil, Russia, India or China? Or perhaps you're able to connect with an entity in Africa, a region that an Economist article (2011) predicted will have a faster GDP growth rate than China.

Just like Fortune 500 firms that are constantly reevaluating future growth opportunities for their businesses, social enterprises should consider this small, but potentially untapped, market segment for their upcoming revenue remits.

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References

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