



# THE POWER OF CAUSE MARKETING

Driving Social  
Impact  
and Business  
Success

# “Businesses cannot be successful when the society around them fails.”

— Paul Polman, former CEO of Unilever

In today’s market, consumers prioritize corporate social responsibility and meaningful brand connections nearly as much as the product or service the company offers — if not more. Businesses today have an exciting opportunity to engage customers on a deeper level, differentiating themselves from competitors and fostering long-term loyalty by aligning their brand with impactful causes. As such, **cause marketing has become a powerful tool for creating a positive social impact.**


This white paper serves as a guide to understanding the basics of cause marketing and how brands like yours can unlock new levels of growth and become a force for change in your community by leveraging this tool.

## What is Cause Marketing and What Are the Benefits?

Cause marketing is when a company associates itself with a social cause that reflects its values, appeals to its intended audience, and has an authentic connection to the brand’s offerings. This creates a mutually beneficial relationship between the brand and the cause. The company uses its marketing to promote this cause, address a societal issue, and drive business goals.

The idea behind cause marketing is to create a win-win situation where the business benefits from improved brand reputation, increased customer loyalty, and improved market positioning while the cause receives support, visibility, and resources to further its mission. This approach allows businesses to go beyond profit-making and demonstrate a genuine commitment to social impact, positively impacting society and strengthening their relationships with customers, employees, and other stakeholders.

**By harnessing the power of cause marketing, businesses have the opportunity to create meaningful and lasting impacts on both society and their bottom line.**



“Successful people have a social responsibility to make the world a better place and not just take from it.”

— Carrie Underwood



## Why Should Businesses Make Cause Marketing a Focus?

Cause marketing has permanently changed the business landscape and has demanded more accountability from businesses for their actions, power, and influence than ever before. So, when businesses don't focus on cause marketing, they may face several challenges, including:



### Brand perception:

Consumers expect businesses to be socially responsible and contribute to the greater good. When businesses don't focus on cause marketing, they risk being perceived as indifferent to important societal issues, leading to negative brand perception, public backlash, and reputational damage.



### Customer engagement:

Cause marketing showcases a business's commitment to making a positive impact to emotionally connect with customers. Without cause marketing, companies may struggle to engage customers on a deeper level, resulting in reduced customer interest and lower levels of engagement.



### Access to conscious consumer segments:

Partnering with nonprofits or like-minded businesses through cause marketing can bring shared resources, expanded reach, and increased credibility to both parties. Without it, businesses may miss out on valuable collaboration and strategic partnerships, leading to negative brand perception, public backlash, and reputational damage.

# 78%

of consumers think it's crucial that brands do more than just make money. They should also have a positive impact on society.

Source: [Porter Novelli/Cone Purpose Biometrics Study](#)



### Brand differentiation:

By not engaging in cause marketing, businesses miss out on the opportunity to differentiate themselves from competitors who do, potentially leading to reduced brand awareness and customer loyalty.



### Employee engagement:

Showing commitment to social or environmental causes boosts employee morale and motivation. Without it, businesses risk low engagement and loyalty, reducing productivity and higher turnover rates.



### Access to conscious consumer segments:

Neglecting cause marketing can lead to missed opportunities to attract conscious consumers who prioritize social and environmental responsibility in their purchasing decisions.

Integrating cause marketing can help businesses overcome these challenges and build stronger connections with their target audiences.



## How to implement a Cause Marketing Strategy

If your organization hasn't yet implemented a cause marketing strategy, it's not too late. Here are some simple steps you can take starting today that can help you see better results with your brand perception, customer engagement, growth, and community impact:

### 1. Identify a social issue that aligns with your company mission.

Start by identifying a cause or social issue that aligns with your brand values, mission, and target audience. Choose a cause that resonates with your customers and has a natural connection to your products, services, or industry. This will ensure that your cause marketing comes across authentically.

### 2. Research and partner with relevant organizations.

Conduct thorough research to find nonprofit organizations or charitable initiatives that are actively working in the chosen cause area. Look for reputable organizations with a track record of impact and aligning values. Reach out to them to explore potential partnerships or collaborations.

### 3. Develop a cause marketing strategy.

Create a well-defined cause marketing strategy that outlines your goals, target audience, messaging, and desired outcomes. These should be specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and timely. Determine how you will integrate the cause into your marketing efforts, such as through campaigns, product promotions, events, or corporate initiatives.

### 4. Allocate resources and budget.

Dedicate appropriate resources, including financial resources and personnel, to support your cause's marketing initiatives. Determine a budget that allows for effective execution and measurement of your cause marketing campaigns.

### 5. Collaborate on campaigns and initiatives.

Work closely with the selected nonprofit organization or cause partner to develop joint campaigns, initiatives, or events. Leverage their expertise and insights to ensure the effectiveness and authenticity of your cause marketing efforts.

### 6. Measure and share the impact.

Regularly measure and evaluate the impact of your cause marketing initiatives. Track key performance indicators (KPIs) such as brand sentiment, customer engagement, and campaign reach. Share the progress and outcomes of your cause marketing efforts transparently with stakeholders to demonstrate the impact being made.

Remember that cause marketing is not a one-time endeavor but an ongoing commitment. By following these steps and continuously integrating cause marketing into your business strategy, you can create meaningful change, enhance your brand's reputation, and foster deeper connections with your customers and community.

# 64%

of consumers find brands that actively communicate their purpose more attractive.

Source: [AP News](#)



## An Avalaunch Employee's Cause Marketing "Secret Sauce"



At Avalaunch Media, we are fortunate to have several employees engaged in their own personal cause marketing endeavors. Randy Roberts, one of our own SEO Strategists, runs a nonprofit with his family called Hands on Hope.

This organization started out sending Christmas gifts to impoverished families, but as Randy's family immersed themselves in the community, they realized its needs were bigger. Since then, the nonprofit has started engaging in public infrastructure projects and financial literacy programs as Randy and his siblings have learned how to engage with local community members, businesses, and other nonprofits.

He has several special tips for marketers wanting to engage in similar endeavors, which we share below.

### 1. Focus on Finding the Problem, Not the Organization

Of all the advice Randy could give a business looking to get involved with nonprofits, Randy had this to say first and foremost:

*"Focus less on finding the right organization to partner with and focus instead on identifying the problem you see is painful enough you want to solve. Pick the cause that matters most to you — as if the organizations involved with it don't exist."*

*Once you identify the problem, research how to solve it and start taking steps. As you get into that, you'll find the right people along the way. The easiest way to find them is to go where they're going. Find the problem they're in pursuit of, and the right people to partner with will be there."*

### 2. Get Specific About the Issue

Randy's second-most important piece of advice was to be as specific as possible when identifying the problem you're trying to solve.

For example, if your business wants to find an education nonprofit to partner with, Randy advised against focusing simply on "education" or "scholarships." Instead, you'd focus on "Spanish-speaking international students who can't afford textbooks," for example. He recommended getting more specific than you think you'd need to, as the more nuanced the problem, the easier it is to make an impact.





### 3. Ensure Emotional Payoff for Donors

As his last piece of advice, Randy underscored the importance of donor engagement and ensuring a return on their investment — but it’s not necessarily the tax write-off that matters most, as most may think.

Donors who feel appreciated and valued by a business are more likely to continue supporting associated causes in the future, so businesses should try to provide an emotional payoff for donations and give them a sense of fulfillment for making a difference.

Write letters, send photos, hand-deliver gifts, create impact videos or testimonial reels — whatever you think will have the biggest impact. The more personalized, the better.



## Where to Find Nonprofit Partners

As Randy said, you’re likely to find nonprofit partners once you’ve identified a specific cause and started taking steps to address it. However, if things don’t work out this way, we’ve provided some helpful links to assist you in researching

and identifying the ideal nonprofit partners aligned with your values and passions.

Here are some additional ways to identify nonprofit partners for your business:

#### 1. Search nonprofit directories

Online directories designed to connect businesses with nonprofits can be a valuable resource. These directories categorize nonprofits based on their mission, cause, location, or size, making it easier for businesses to search and identify potential nonprofit partners.

- [Charity Navigator](#): A nonprofit that independently evaluates U.S. charities based on their financial health, accountability, and transparency.
- [GuideStar](#): A database that provides comprehensive, reliable information about nonprofit organizations for donors, researchers, and the general public interested in the nonprofit sector.

#### 2. Utilize cause marketing platforms

Cause marketing platforms facilitate partnerships between businesses and nonprofits for cause-related marketing campaigns. These platforms provide a range of tools and resources to help businesses find suitable nonprofit partners, manage campaigns, and measure impact.

- [Pledgeling Foundation](#): A nonprofit that empowers businesses and nonprofits to create meaningful change through its technology and services.



### 3. Leverage business networking websites or social media

Online platforms that focus on connecting businesses and professionals can also serve as a means to find nonprofit partners. Websites like LinkedIn, for example, allow businesses to search for nonprofits based on location, cause, or keywords.

On causal social networking sites, like Facebook and Twitter, you can connect with nonprofits, join relevant groups or communities, and engage in conversations related to causes they are interested in. Social media provides an informal yet effective way to explore potential nonprofit partnerships and initiate conversations.

### 4. Check with local business associations or chambers of commerce

Local business associations, chambers of commerce, or industry-specific organizations often maintain directories and resources to connect businesses with local nonprofits. These organizations can offer valuable networking opportunities, events, or programs that facilitate partnerships between businesses and nonprofits operating in the same community or industry.

### 5. Use community websites

Websites focused on community engagement, philanthropy, or social impact can provide information and resources for businesses seeking nonprofit partners. These websites often feature directories, events, volunteer

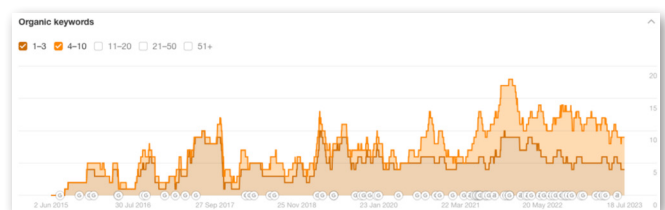
opportunities, and other information that can help you identify nonprofits aligned with your values and goals.

## Avalaunch Media's Proven Track Record of CSR Success

### Interventional Vascular & Vein Center Scholarship

Avalaunch Media has proudly helped dozens of businesses develop and market new or existing CSR programs over the past decade. One of our longest-standing CSR partnerships has been with Interventional Vascular & Vein Center (IVC), where we helped develop a scholarship program that has made a significant local impact and achieved remarkable organic growth.

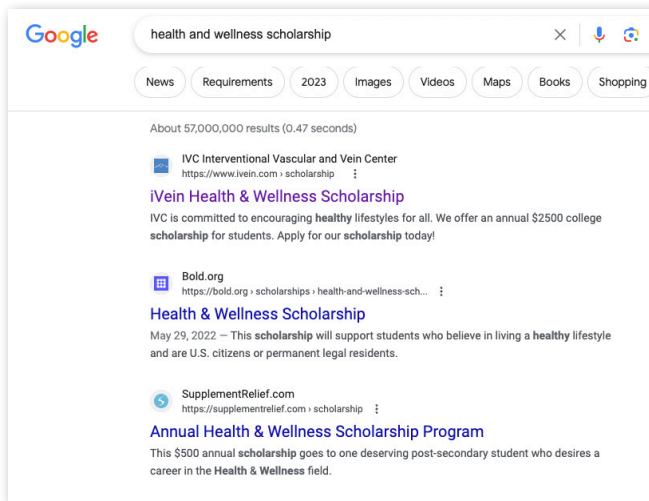
IVC has run this scholarship for the past eight years out of a genuine commitment to supporting students in their educational pursuits. With our guidance and expertise, IVC designed a scholarship program that has garnered immense recognition and success.



**Figure 1:** IVC shows a notable increase in search volume for organic keywords since the launch of the scholarship in 2015.



Today, IVC's scholarship program has grown to such an extent that it is entirely self-sustaining and has achieved prominent visibility in search engine rankings. In fact, if you search for a "health and wellness scholarship" on Google, IVC's program proudly holds the top position, attracting considerable search volume.



IVC has given away an impressive \$40,000 in scholarships over eight years through its dedication and commitment. The program has attracted a substantial number of applicants, with IVC now receiving 500-600 applications at a time. This tremendous response reflects the positive impact and reputation the scholarship program has built over the years.

Furthermore, IVC's commitment to user-generated content (UGC) has contributed to the brand's overall growth. By creating an environment that supports students in their educational journey through scholarships, IVC has

organically fostered a community of engagement and recognition.

As a result, IVC has attracted referring domains naturally without requiring extensive link-building efforts from Avalaunch Media. In fact, since 2020, link-building has not been a central focus for IVC due to the organic influx of referring domains from individuals and organizations linking to their scholarship program.



Figure 2: IVC's traffic in referring domains since the 2015 scholarship launch.

The organic traffic to IVC's website has seen a consistent and significant increase over time, driven by their impactful efforts in their CSR initiatives. By genuinely supporting students and investing in education, IVC has captured the attention and appreciation of individuals, leading to substantial organic growth for its brand.

IVC's partnership with Avalaunch Media is a testament to the power of effective cause marketing and CSR. Together, we have helped IVC develop a scholarship program that provides valuable support to students and generates remarkable organic visibility, demonstrating the long-term benefits of prioritizing social responsibility.







The success story of Interventional Vascular & Vein Center highlights how strategic cause marketing and CSR efforts can lead to substantial organic growth, community engagement, and brand recognition. At Avalaunch Media, we are proud to have been a part of IVC's journey and look forward to continuing our support in furthering their future impact.

## Become a More Socially Responsible Marketer

As a socially responsible marketer, you can make a difference in society while achieving your business objectives. Let this white paper be the catalyst for your journey toward a more purpose-driven and impactful marketing approach. If you're looking for expert guidance

and support in implementing a cause marketing program within your business, Avalaunch Media is here to help. We have extensive experience in corporate social responsibility and specialize in helping businesses of all sizes create and carry out successful cause marketing initiatives.

**[Contact us](#) today to learn how we can collaborate to make a positive impact and drive your business forward.**

