

## It's their responsibility too

*Companies are becoming more involved with community outreach*

By Alexia Johnson

The demand for companies to implement beneficial social behaviors into their core has increased in recent times. This partially can be accredited to the rise in generation-z employees and the research that suggests gen-z will become the [largest generation of consumers](#) in the near future. This generation will make up [40 percent of all customers by 2020](#), which means that their ideals shape company focus; with such an influential generation focused on giving back there is no surprise that companies are focusing on corporate social responsibility.

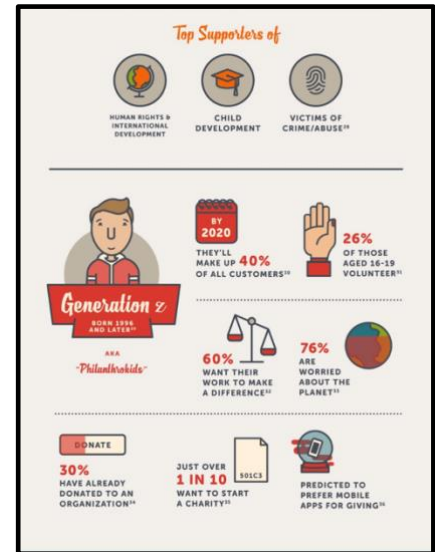
Corporate social responsibility is the belief that organizations should focus not only on making money, but also on practices that benefit the community.

### Mutual benefits

Corporate social responsibility proves beneficial for companies, employees looking for meaningful contribution and organization that work alongside these companies. Companies that give back to their communities can create more engaged employees which would facilitate higher productivity rates and loyalty that would improve the company's brand. With the workforce quickly integrating gen-z employees, companies can rest assured knowing that 60 percent of gen-z "[want their work to make a difference](#)" and 26 percent volunteer.

This also expands and maintains the brand loyalty of customers. According to research performed by Nielsen, nearly 60 percent of global respondents are [willing to pay more](#) for companies that are known for their "social value".

Corporate responsibility can also be seen through nonprofit collaborations with corporations. These collaborations can provide financial support for the nonprofit organizations directly and indirectly, through exposure. This is a great way for organizations to receive funding from companies because it benefits both entities. Working with larger, more established companies exposes nonprofits to business-oriented mindsets.



*This infographic prepared by Classy.org outlines gen-z's giving habits.*

## Target is on target with CSR



*Target's Hawaii store teams helping community residents affected by earthquakes and lava flow.*

An organization that does an exceptional job at corporate social responsibility is Target. By starting numerous outreach programs that provide support to the environment and communities, Target could be regarded as a “good corporate citizen.”

Target incorporates its social responsibility both within the company and in the community. One of the company's main focuses is diversity and inclusion.

Target is listed as one of the [top 55 companies for diversity](#), while sponsoring and partnering with organizations like the National Urban League to improve diversity relations in the community.

## Problems with CSR

Corporate social responsibility is important to companies, but it is necessary that it is performed appropriately and with the right intentions. Many organizations use CSR to shift the focus from the company's irresponsible social behaviors. This causes a distrust between the community and the company because it makes the efforts seem ingenuine. Companies should first focus on addressing and rectifying any irresponsible behaviors before taking on new ones.

An example of a company that attempted to hide their irresponsible social behavior through CSR is Volkswagen. Volkswagen supported environmentally friendly causes and used that as a focus for many of their campaigns. While supporting these causes, they were producing cars that were emitting high levels of nitrogen, which is harmful to the environment. Knowingly doing this was misleading and unethical.

Taking on social responsibilities as a company makes it more human and relatable for consumers. Maybe it's the gen-z in me, but I appreciate organizations that take part in making the world a better place a little more. Overall, I believe that companies should donate and implement community outreach projects that are related to their causes.

### *About Alexia Johnson*



*Alexia Johnson is a senior majoring in public relations at the University of North Texas. She is skilled with PR writing and is heavily interested in performing research for companies. She aspires to work in a public relations agency as a PR or social media specialist.*

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