

COMMUNIQUE

Trends, Best Practices, and Opinions on Community Involvement

The Benefits of Strategic Partnerships

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As we embark on a new year, we want to take this opportunity once again to wish everyone a happy, healthy and fulfilling new year. This last wish is the focus of our first *Communiqué* for 2011. One of your corporate citizenship, and perhaps even personal, goals is no doubt to make a difference in your company and in your communities. This is no easy task. But there is one way to try and accomplish this: strategic partnerships.

LBG Associates defines a strategic partnership as: *A mutually beneficial relationship and investment of resources between a nonprofit and a company that results in a community involvement program that's aligned with the company's CI strategy, brand, and business goals.*

The business case for these programs is compelling. Done right, strategic partnerships are powerful differentiators for companies in the community and the marketplace. In fact, LBG's past research has shown that strategic partnerships, when developed and executed in alignment with a company's goals and business strategy, create a powerful value—helping to build brand, enhancing reputation and contributing to overall commercial success.

We have just completed our latest study which lists our 13-step proprietary model for developing a strategic partnership, best practices, challenges and 24 case studies of successful programs from companies such as AMD, American Express, Ernst & Young, FedEx, Ford, Moody's, Seventh Generation, Verizon and more.

A few key best practices gleaned from the research follow.

- Ensure that the goals of the company and those of the nonprofit partner are compatible.

- Get senior management's support as early on in the process as possible. You don't want to be fairly far along in the design process, only to learn that executives are not in favor of the program.
- Don't lose sight of the company's business goals. A strategic partnership is far more than a community relations program and should take into consideration the company's business direction, brand and marketing goals.
- Consult internal and external experts before selecting a cause, and later, before choosing a niche within the cause.
- Pilot the program before launching a national or international program to give you the opportunity to work out the kinks.
- Be flexible. The program may not progress in the manner that you expected and may require changes as well as patience along the way.



Interested in learning more? [Click here to order the study.](#) Or attend the conference on February 16, being hosted by Moody's in New York in which the results of the study and case studies are explored. [Click here to see the agenda and register.](#)

We know you want to make a difference. We want to help. The study, with its 13 steps and case studies, plus the conference, are excellent tools to help you achieve your goals.

About LBG Associates

LBG Associates is a woman-owned consulting firm focused on designing, implementing, and managing corporate citizenship and community outreach programs and initiatives. Founded in 1993 by Dr. Linda Gornitsky, LBG Associates drives social change through expert advice; implementation of strategies, programs, policies, and procedures; research on cutting-edge CSR issues and trends; and training that equips practitioners with the knowledge and skills to grow and advance in the field of corporate social responsibility and community involvement. Find more information at: www.lbg-associates.com.

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