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FUNDAMENTALS

In this issue, we are featuring two articles by Ryan Scott, CEO at www.CauseCast.com, a great Corporate Philanthropy and Employee Volunteering Platform.

What are companies doing to keep community involvement front and center in their business environments? Check out the [5 Habits of Companies that rock at giving back](#).

Did you know that volunteering is closely linked to improved health and in some cases even helps people manage chronic conditions? Learn how [Community Impact keeps the doctor away](#).

PORTRAIT

THE “ANNUAL REPORT” VOLUNTEER



Meet **Le Thuy Linh**, a Market Research expert whose professional experience and personal interests suggested a perfect fit for the task of writing up LIN's 2013 annual report.

In [this interview](#), Linh shares her tips to create an annual report that is both professional and eye-catching.

“We are so proud of the report that Linh created for LIN and truly fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from her.”

- Ms. **Dana Doan**, LIN's Consultant

EXPERIENCES

THE VOLUNTEERS BEHIND THE WORDS

Thanks to the generous efforts of the translator and copy - editor volunteers, LIN could save thousands of dollars each year which would otherwise be spent on translation services.

Learn who LIN's volunteer translators are and what they like about the work in [this article](#).

NEWS

VOLUNTEER PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



Photo by: Quang Tram

This summer, LIN is engaging over 60 skilled volunteers in projects to build stronger communities in Ho Chi Minh City. These volunteers are contributing their expertise in various fields, including communications, marketing, design, coaching and mentoring, fundraising, event management and more.

Wonder what exciting projects we are offering and how you can get involved? Check out our [summer highlights](#).

5 HABITS OF COMPANIES THAT ROCK AT GIVING BACK

By Ryan Scott

(Published with permission from author. Read [5 habits of companies that rock at giving back](#))

A recent report by Civic 50 unveiled a list of the 50 most community-minded corporations in the US, as well as the common characteristics of their engagement activities.

The report affirms the important role that companies play when it comes to generating community impact. And it concludes that impact doesn't come from checkbooks alone (although certainly, corporate giving helps). Rather, companies harness their power most effectively when they contribute the expertise and resources of their businesses and employees. And the best way to fuel this kind of company-wide involvement is by cultivating a culture of civic engagement, which comes most easily when companies carefully match their approach to giving back with their core business competencies.

According to the report, here are the winners:

Communications: AT&T

Consumer Discretionary: Gap Inc.

Consumer Staples: Campbell Soup Co.

Energy & Utilities: Pacific Gas & Electric Co.

Financials: Morgan Stanley

Health Care: UnitedHealth Group

Industrials: GE

Materials: Sigma-Aldrich

Technology: Hewlett-Packard

Want to know what these companies are doing to keep community involvement front and center in their business environments? Take note: [here's five healthy habits](#) of companies that rock at civic engagement:

1. 88% evaluated their employees' performance in part based on their participation in community engagement.
2. 92% reported specific policies to institutionalize community engagement.
3. 96% say 100% of their workforce is invited to participate in community engagement efforts.
4. 96% evaluated their business performance in part based on the impact of their community engagement programs.
5. Nearly 1 in 3 employees at these companies volunteered or donated expertise. In 2012 this number was 1 in 6.

If you're looking to kick philanthropy up a notch at your company, follow the leaders and find ways to institute these five healthy habits of community engagement.

COMMUNITY IMPACT KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY

By Ryan Scott

(Published with permission from author. Read [Community impact keeps the doctor away](#))

An apple a day keeps the doctor away...and, it turns out, so does volunteering. According to a study from United Health Group, volunteering is closely linked to improved health and in some cases even helps people manage chronic conditions.

What's more, the study also found compelling evidence that employee volunteer programs can help businesses in key areas, such as productivity, engagement and synergy.

Feel Better

Aside from doing good, volunteering helps employees feel good. According to the study, over three quarters of employees who had volunteered during the last 12 months found that they felt healthier. A whopping 94 percent reported that they had improved moods as a result of the work they were doing to create community impact. Volunteers were also significantly more likely to consider themselves in very good or excellent health.

Manage Stress Better

Here's another aspect of employee volunteerism that should

appeal to employers and employees alike: Over three quarters of employees who volunteered in the last 12 months found that they had less stress. Not only were employees who volunteer more apt to feel calm and peaceful, they also reported that they felt more invigorated during the four weeks after they volunteer. Employees bring this increased energy to the workplace, making them more productive and impacting their company's bottom line.

Have a Sense of Purpose

The UnitedHealth study found that an incredible 96 percent of employee volunteers believe that volunteering enriches their sense of purpose in life. Having a sense of purpose doesn't just give your life more meaning or make you feel better -- it's also tied to one's overall health. [Read more >>](#)

THE VOLUNTEERS BEHIND THE WORDS

The ability to solve some of the world’s biggest issues – hunger, relief after natural disasters, nutrition, education, etc. often hinges on the ability to access information. When people who need information cannot get it in their native language, they are often unable to respond adequately.” - Translators without borders

Every week, there are numerous documents that need to be translated at LIN, either from English to Vietnamese or vice versa. If it were not for the generous efforts of the translator volunteers, many helpful resources would not reach the NPOs who need them to improve their work. In the past four years, LIN has been proud to work with the many translator volunteers who helped translate countless research reports, resource articles, training materials and other informational materials that served to inform and build the capacity of local NPOs, donors and volunteers.

Since most of the translation can be done online, volunteers are able to contribute their skills to a good cause, right from home. Although not all volunteers are professional translators, they have delivered high quality translation services, which help LIN save thousands of dollars each year which would otherwise be spent on translation services.

So, who are LIN’s volunteer translators and what do they like about the work? We asked two of our committed volunteers, and here’s what they have to say:



Vu Thi Thanh Thao

Internal Auditor at Tan Thuan Corp

Why LIN?

When I volunteer for an organization, it is important that my skills and my contribution is meaningful for the community. What I like about LIN is that it is a well organized and professional organization that provides practical services to the local nonprofits.



Ta Nhut Minh

Webmaster at 99% Ltd.

I realize that through my translation for LIN, I am contributing to help build the community. Furthermore, LIN recognizes my volunteer work and that inspires me to continue supporting LIN.

The challenge

The biggest challenge is terminology. Sometimes I could not find the exact words to translate the terms in the shortest and easiest way. To solve this problem, I search for relevant articles on the internet, using keywords from the original text. Once I understand how the terms are used in , I try to translate the words into Vietnamese in the simplest way.

There is a difference in the style between English and Vietnamese. Vietnamese text tends to be more complex, while English is very straightforward. Every time I translate a document from Vietnamese to English, I have to analyze the text to understand the gist of it and then choose the appropriate way to translate to English.

The reward

I have helped LIN to translate several articles about disadvantaged women and persons with disabilities. Their stories inspired me to become a better person. They got me asking myself, if they can overcome such difficulties in life, why can’t I? In a way, the translation work has helped me to stay positive.

My languages, both English and Vietnamese, are enriched. Furthermore, the knowledge gained from the materials I translate improves my understanding about issues that I was not previously aware of.

The copyeditor

The translation would not be perfect without the important work of volunteer copyeditors. One of LIN’s silent supporters is Mr. Jim Schwartz, a microvolunteer* who has been lending his copyediting skills since August, 2013. A resident of Osseo, Wisconsin, Jim has edited most of LIN’s monthly newsletters in the past eight months and submissions in the LIN 2013 Volunteer stories contest. **“My work with LIN is very satisfying to me personally,” said Jim. “I spent most of my adult life working in the non-profit sector and I am happy to now apply my skills to benefit the many NGO’s who are working hard to improve the lives of people in the HCMC area.”**

LE THUY LINH - THE “ANNUAL REPORT” VOLUNTEER

For the past three years, LIN engaged skilled volunteers to help draft our annual report. In addition to supporting our team with an essential task, having an outsider’s perspective on our work has proven to be invaluable to LIN for two reasons. Firstly, we are learning how to better explain our work to key stakeholders. The second benefit is to have an unbiased person supporting the process of reflection and evaluation of our work and our outcomes. This past year, we were fortunate to meet Ms. Le Thuy Linh whose professional experience and personal interests suggested a perfect fit for the task of writing up LIN’s 2013 annual report.

In this interview, Linh shares her tips to create an annual report that is both professional and eye-catching.



Le Thuy Linh

- * Graduated from RMIT Vietnam in 2008.
- * Worked at Cimigo Vietnam as a Marketing Researcher from 2008-2013.
- * Currently a freelance qualitative researcher.

How did you get to help LIN write its Annual Report?

Linh: I had known about LIN for a while before I registered to volunteer for this organization. During a discussion with Ms. Dana Doan, my supervisor at LIN, I was asked if I could help to write the LIN 2013 Annual Report. I thought this would offer the best opportunity to gain an overall understanding about an organization, since I would have the opportunity to talk to not only LIN staff but also its beneficiaries and partners. Because my background was in market research, I was particularly interested in this project which would enable me to apply my analysis and presentation skills.

How long did it take for you to complete the report? What did you have to do?

Linh: The first step was to compile all data into an internal report, followed by drafting the content for the official report. The entire LIN team especially Ms. Dana Doan, contributed to the content through discussions and interviews. Since the target was a short report that delivers the most essential information about LIN, I spent quite a lot of time to select data and plan the draft.

However, it was the presentation of the report that was most time-consuming. I am very critical when it comes to presentation. I am not skilled in graphic designing, therefore, I tried to read many annual reports by other organizations to learn from their layout and design. I spent quite a lot of time going back and forth with different layouts

and designs, as well as selecting photos from LIN’s database and editing them in Instagram. My boyfriend is a designer so he also volunteered to help me with the design. I spent a total of one month on the report.

In your opinion, how important is the annual report for an NPO?

Linh: The Annual Report is a tool to share information about the organization and its activities and achievements. It is an effective way to archive data and helps the staff to gain an overall picture of the work of the organization and set their targets for the coming year. For not-for-profit organizations, the Annual Report has another important function: the opportunity to inform the donors and the community about their work, raise the awareness and indirectly call for action or rally support for a causes that the NPOs are advocating.

What skills are required of a volunteer to write an Annual Report for an NPO?

Linh: First, the volunteer must be interested in reading and learning about the NPO he/she is supporting. Second is the ability to analyze and select data, however, the most important skill is storytelling. The volunteer should be able to pick the right information to create the plot and use visuals to present the story in the most compelling way.

Thank you!

“We are proud of this report!”

"The LIN team learned a great deal from Linh during the three months that she worked with us. She always prepared for meetings and asked great questions. One of the first things she did was to explain her proposed approach and suggested timeline, which helped to set our expectations and ensured that we would be prepared with the information she needed to complete the report. She engaged easily with the LIN team and spoke with several of our stakeholders, making a deliberate and sincere effort to understand our work.

Opening up Linh’s first draft of the annual report was an awesome experience. She accomplished something we had always wanted to do but did not know how to do ourselves. The format and design of the annual report managed to tell the story of LIN’s work in 2013, using data and visuals in a meaningful and effective way. We are so proud of the report that Linh created for LIN and truly fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from her."

- Ms. Dana Doan, LIN’s Consultant

[Click here for LIN’s 2013 Annual Report](#)

VOLUNTEER PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

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Community Partnership Initiative (CPI)

CPI is a ready made Corporate Social Responsibility program that connects teams of skilled volunteers to local NPOs during a four month mentorship (June-September 2014). This year, CPI focuses on **strengthening NPOs' strategy for long-term financial sustainability**. Each team of volunteers will be matched with one NPO and spend two hours per week to coach the NPO to produce donor acquisition tools and execute fundraising campaigns.

The skilled volunteers' greatest contributions will be transferring their skills and knowledge to build NPOs' capacity and igniting long term impact. **Finance, Marketing, Sales, and/or Business Development professionals** should especially capitalize on this golden opportunity to connect with a social purpose while connecting nonprofits to their full potential.

LIN will hold an info session for interested volunteers on 11 April, 2014. Contact us for more information!

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE
IMPROVING NONPROFITS' FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

A unique community project for experts in Marketing, Sales and Finance. CPI matches you with nonprofits that address pressing issues in our society. Use your skills to help them grow sustainably!

You **don't give** them the fish.
You **teach them** how to fish!

Are you ready to volunteer your skills to make a difference?

Contact us at:
Website: www.linvn.org
Email: volunteer@linvn.org
Tel: 08-3512-0092

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Bliain na hÉireann

Mentors for Female Nonprofit Staff in HCMC

This project is part of a larger LIN initiative designed to empower female nonprofit professionals. We were overwhelmed with the interest of experienced executives from the private sector and international NGOs who volunteered to mentor female nonprofit professionals in Ho Chi Minh City.

The Mentorship project aims to provide female not-for-profit professionals with the knowledge and tools they can use to move themselves forward, achieve work-life balance, and thereby remain motivated and focused on their nonprofits' missions. At the same time, we hope to build a stronger community by connecting women in different sectors who all care about community development.

Nearly 20 skilled volunteers expressed their interest to become a Mentor in this project. Selected Mentors will be informed and invited to the Meet & Greet event in mid April.

Narrow the Gap Community Fund and Event

LIN's Narrow the Gap Community Fund plays a vital role in organizing community members to address critical needs in their community. This year, the LIN team and Narrow the Gap volunteer team are working to engage as many community members as possible in activities that are designed to raise awareness, seek input and engage in solutions to challenges relating to **Education**. This grant round culminates in an annual Narrow the Gap Community Event, which is scheduled to take place in Ho Chi Minh City this August 2014.

This will be the fourth year in a row that the Narrow the Gap Community Fund organizes people in HCMC to work together to solve a community challenge.

Want to volunteer at LIN?

Contact us:

Email: Volunteer@LINvn.org | Phone: 08-3512-0092