Tips for Creating a Strong Community Impact Report

Community impact reports are no longer optional, but essential for businesses and nonprofits. They communicate the importance of your CSR program to stakeholders, shareholders, board members, current and prospective employees, and your community. They also provide content you can leverage for marketing efforts throughout the year. Finally, they help build a business case for your programs and resource.

Creating a Community Impact Report

Developing a community impact report can be a challenging, time-consuming labor of love. Fortunately, we have a few tips to help you streamline the report-writing process.

SELECT HIGH-QUALITY PHOTOS

Photos should be print quality (at least 300 dpi) and captivating. If you don't have quality authentic photos, budget for stock imagery — but know it can impact your report's look and feel.

QUANTIFY YOUR DATA

Organizations will often share data that is clear to them but doesn't make sense to their audience. Your data should digestible, even to someone who has no idea what you do.

BE THOUGHTFUL ABOUT REPORT FORMAT

Your report format will dictate your content needs. For example, if you need something you can share at community events, you may want to set up your report as a small brochure or flyer instead of a 16-page online report.

KEEP QUOTES SHORT AND SWEET

Testimonials are always fun to share, but try to limit them to two sentences with a photo or visual.

Setting Yourself Up for Success

DETERMINE YOUR GOALS

What are your CSR goals and how will you measure and report them each year?

STAY ON TOP OF THE DATA

Create smaller-scale reports each quarter. These can be compiled for an annual report.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Are you targeting board members and shareholders, customers, the general public, donors or others? You can have multiple audiences but use language that is specific to each one.

PROVE YOUR VALUE

What value do you want to highlight for this audience?

FINALIZE AND PROOF YOUR CONTENT

Pin down content, visuals and data before sending your project to design. Make sure it has been proofed thoroughly.