

Creating a Marketing Manual and Marketing Plan for Habitat for Humanity Metro West

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report

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ABSTRACT

ReStore is a relatively new facility that resells donated furniture, appliances, fixtures, and building materials to support the building efforts of Habitat for Humanity's MetroWest/ Greater Worcester chapter. The goal of this project was to evaluate and improve their marketing efforts. To achieve this goal we: (1) evaluated the existing marketing and outreach efforts of the ReStore; (2) identified opportunities for new relationships between Habitat for Humanity's Restore and Worcester area businesses and institutions (3) customized, populated, and evaluated the "Giftworks" databases.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We just want to take this time to thank ReStore for this amazing and life changing opportunity.

We have learned so much about the value of non-profit organizations, especially the work of Habitat for Humanity.

We would in particular like to thank Deborah Maurice Hoak, the ReStore Director, as without her we would not have been able to accomplish so much. She helped us manage our time in our weekly meetings and gave us timely and supportive feedback on every aspect of our project.

We would also like to thank Tim Firment, ReStore Executive Director, for his patience and guidance throughout this project. Although he was always pressed for time, he always made sure we weren't feeling overwhelmed and supplied us with vital information about the ReStore.

We would lastly like to thank all the ReStore volunteers and staff that have been with us along the way contributing to our project and ReStore's mission. They made us feel at home while at the ReStore and always stopped what they were doing to participate in our interviews and questionnaires.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, Christian ministry founded on the mission that every man, woman and child should have a decent, safe and affordable place to live. Nearly 2 billion people around the world live in substandard housing and over 100 million are homeless. Habitat is trying to redress this problem, one home at a time (Habitat World 1, 2012). Habitat for Humanity comprises many branches across the United States. Each branch serves a particular region of the state in which it is located. The ReStore is a furniture and building supply store that sells new as well as used building materials to the general public (TheGuardian,2005). The ReStore acquires all the materials and furniture it sells through donation and then makes them available to customers at a discounted price. The revenues from ReStore are used to build homes for needy families (Reeger 1,2013). According to Tim Firment, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity Metro West and our project sponsor, ReStore is the building block in portraying the message of Habitat of Humanity Metro West consistently to the general public. He hopes that with ReStore's continued growth more homes will be built for those in need and everyone who deserves a home will have one. Therefore, marketing for a non-profit such as Habitat for Humanity is essential (Habitat Report 11, 2012).

Project Methodology

The Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester ReStore facility opened in 2011 and is still developing its marketing and outreach program for the Worcester area. The goal of our Interactive Qualifying Project was to assist the staff in creating a more effective marketing strategy. In order to provide a suitable marketing and advertising scheme, our team first needed to know what the current methods of the ReStore were and search for areas in need of improvement. We identified current marketing methods by interviewing Tim Firment and other

Habitat employees involved in the development of marketing material. Through these interviews we gained a more in-depth understanding of what methods were being used and which could be strengthened. We also interviewed and surveyed donors and customers to find out how they learned about ReStore and how often they contribute.

We began our communications with Worcester area colleges and universities by finding which institutions were already affiliated with Habitat for Humanity Metro West's ReStore program either by Habitat groups or by volunteering programs. ReStore had kept a contact binder, which contained all this information and last date of contact for each college and university. After using both the contact binder and online research, we emailed multiple local college and university's facilities managers, who are in charge of removing excess furniture and supplies from the university. We met with facility managers from Holy Cross College, Clark University, and WPI, described the ReStore program, and explained our ideas for a "Welcome Back" and "Spring Cleaning" campaign to promote sustainability and create an additional resource for ReStore. The "Spring Cleaning" campaign allowed the college or university to set up a schedule at the end of the year for students and faculty to donate any unused furniture or appliances to the ReStore before they moved out for the summer. The "Welcome Back" campaign would allow students and faculty at the beginning of the fall semester to buy items from the ReStore at a discounted price in order promote ReStore as a valuable resource to students and faculty. These events would also raise the profile of ReStore in the local community as the students and faculty would relay this information about the discounts and ReStore's mission to their family and friends.

An important and vital part of every successful business, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, is a tracking system that allows management of monetary and in-kind donations, donors,

sales and outreach efforts. Shortly after our project began we learned that the organization had recently begun to utilize an inventory tracking system called “Giftworks.” The ReStore has numerous hard-copy donation receipts that were not well-organized. After customizing “Giftworks” to better meet the needs of the Restore staff, we populated the data base with existing donor and customer information and explored how the software could be used to in the future to track donors, send reminders, and conduct temporal and spatial analysis of sales and donations.

Findings

Many of HFH’s ReStore marketing materials could easily be improved. Many of their pamphlets and brochures have the wrong information on them and do not correspond to the actual days or hours that ReStore is open or even the correct telephone number.

In our process of setting up relationships with businesses, colleges, and universities we found that the Worcester ReStore would benefit from improved communication with other ReStore’s. Although the Worcester ReStore attends monthly meetings with other ReStore managers, most of the meeting time is spent discussing the profitability of each ReStore with little emphasis on how each individual ReStore could improve its operations and how they could collectively learn from what each facility is doing presently. We also discovered that there is a lack of awareness in the community about the existence and purpose of ReStore. For example, although regularly participates in “Woo Card” events, which are events sponsored “Woo Card” that are held on local college campuses that promote organizations that allow the use of a “Woo Card” for discounts off purchases, the businesses that set up tables next to ReStore had little idea what the ReStore program was until we told them. Surprisingly, several of the facility managers we interviewed at local colleges were also unaware of the ReStore program.

We met with facility managers or sustainability coordinators at area colleges, including, John Cannon of Holy Cross College, Jennifer Isler of Clark University, Steven Bandarra of Worcester State University, and Elizabeth Tomaszewski of WPI, in order to explore how ReStore might a closer relationship with them, and garner their support for and involvement in the ReStore's first annual "Spring Cleaning" events. For a variety of reasons neither Clark University nor the Holy Cross College were interested in participating in our "Spring Cleaning" event. However, Elizabeth Tomaszewski, Facility Systems Manager for Worcester Polytechnic Institute was delighted to formalize the connection between WPI and the ReStore and participate in the first "Spring Cleaning" event.

While organizing this event, we realized it was important for ReStore to improve their methods of keeping, attracting, and organizing donors as well. Through our work we learned that ReStore does not send "thank you" cards, letters or emails to donors on a consistent basis. ReStore recently invested in a program called "Giftworks", which takes donor information and documents it for tracking and organizational purposes. "Giftworks" allows ReStore to email blast any selection of people regarding news about upcoming events, and sales information.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In a nutshell, Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester and its ReStore have been successful since opening in 2011, but still have a lot of potential for growth. Some recommendations are: (1) Re-work the marketing materials to ensure that each pamphlet, brochure, and event flyers accurately reflect the ReStore's general information; (2) Keep the sign on Gold Star Boulevard up to date with news on upcoming events and sales; (3) Improve contact with other ReStore's and consistently reach out to businesses, universities, and colleges;

(4) Send out “thank you” letters or emails to the more generous; (5) Continue holding “Spring Fling” events in partnership with local area institutions;(6) Continue to update “Giftworks” based on the donor data sheets and the Customer and Donor Questionnaires to monitor how donors and customers learn about ReStore and to track donor and customer opinions of ReStore operations. Implementing these marketing strategies and recommendations will help Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester raise awareness in the community about the Restore program and should assure its continued success.

AUTHORSHIP

Michael Potter- Mike’s contribution towards this project has mainly been focused on contacting colleges and businesses as well as hosting the interviews. Mike was also active emailing or calling his contacts and following up to set up interviews and meeting times.

Enrique DeLaCruz- Enrique served as our primary link to the “Giftworks” database and was responsible for most technical aspects of the project. He was also our team’s primary photographer around the build sites and participated in interviews asking questions and taking notes.

Joseph Rubino- Joe was an active member of the team during meetings and interviews, taking notes and asking questions. He kept the team organized by recording the times and dates of our meetings, interviews, and deadlines, and by making to-do lists specific to parts of our project.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

What would you do if the place you called “home” was gone? In the fall of 2012, Super-Storm Sandy made this nightmare a reality for millions of people along the northeast, including two of the students involved in this Interactive Qualifying Project. Sandy’s devastation not only caused sorrows and hardships, but a sense of loneliness as many people lost everything they had. The tears and grief on people’s faces showed a sense of defeat and suffering from which some may never recover. With two of the group members being personally affected by this storm, the reality hit even closer to “home.” Within these periods of turmoil, however, there is always a bright side. When communities come together, strangers help strangers and people go out of their way to support and comfort those in need. Often, not-for-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity are at the forefront of these relief efforts feeding, clothing, and providing shelter for those left homeless.

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, Christian ministry founded on the mission that every man, woman and child should have a decent, safe and affordable place to live. Nearly 2 billion people around the world live in substandard housing and over 100 million are homeless, and Habitat is trying to redress this problem, one home at a time (Habitat World 1, 2012). Habitat builds for people in need regardless of race or religion all around the world and welcomes volunteers and supporters from all backgrounds (Habitat World 1, 2012). Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has helped more than 600,000 families break the cycle of poverty and improve their lives. In the fiscal year 2012 alone, Habitat for Humanity served a record 94,618 families worldwide through construction, rehabilitation and repairs (Habitat World 1, 2012).

Habitat for Humanity comprises many branches across the United States. Each branch serves a particular region of the state in which it is located. The goal of this Interactive Qualifying Project was the creation of an effective marketing strategy for Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester ReStore program. This ReStore is a furniture and building supply store that sells new as well as used building materials to the general public (TheGuardian,2005). The ReStore acquires all the materials and furniture it sells through donation and then makes them available to customers at discounted price. The revenues from ReStore are used to build homes for needy families (Reeger 1,2013).According to Tim Firment, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity Metro West/ Greater Worcester and our project sponsor, ReStore is the building block in portraying the message of Habitat of Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester consistently to the general public. Mr. Firment wants to expand ReStore awareness of the program so that more people contribute to Habitat’s overall mission and that Habitat for Humanity of MetroWest/ Greater Worcester can reach out to more people. He hopes that with continued growth more homes will be built for those in need and everyone who deserves a home will have one.

In Chapter 2 we explain the notion of affordable housing and how it has been used to help those affected by the recent U.S. Recession (2007-2009). In this chapter, we discuss Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester’s development and what the ReStore Program is while analyzing popular marketing strategies and their effectiveness. In Chapter 3 we detail our approach to the project. In order to achieve our overall project goal we identified three main objectives: (1)evaluate the existing marketing and outreach efforts of the ReStore; (2)identify opportunities for new relationships between Habitat for Humanity’s ReStore and Worcester area businesses and institutions; (3) customize, populate, and evaluate the “Giftworks” databases and

train the ReStore staff. In Chapter 4 we discuss our findings while working at the ReStore. In Chapter 5 we present our recommendations and final conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

I. Introduction

Habitat for Humanity is a not for profit organization, founded in 1976, that serves families in need of decent housing in over 80 countries (HabitatWorld1, 2012). Throughout this changing world, Habitat has been consistent in its services as it continues to provide low-income families with a place to call home (Habitat World1, 2012). Tim Firment, new Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity Metro West/ Greater Worcester has a vision to increase the number of Habitat built homes to 40 before the end of spring 2013. This vision takes into account the major issue of affordable housing in the United States and numerous organizations such as Habitat for Humanity that have sprung up to address the problem, Habitat for Humanity's mission and core values, the importance of marketing strategies for non-profit organizations, and the meaning behind Habitat for Humanity's ReStore program.

In section II we discuss the United States housing market and the impact of the 2007-2009 recession. In this section we describe the influences and reactions of the United States government as well as non-profit organizations to the changing of mortgage rates and rise of housing prices(Woo, R. and Mangin, J. 15, 2009). In section III, we describe the mission and core values of Habitat for Humanity as well as the impact of the organization's efforts on communities. In section IV, we provide an assessment of various marketing strategies and their variable effectiveness for non-profit organizations. In section V, we illustrate the purpose of Habitat for Humanity's ReStore program and how its function and use can be further utilized to benefit low- income communities. Finally, in section VI, we offer chapter conclusions,

summarizing the main points of our literature and give an introduction to the main objectives of our project.

II. United States Housing Market

The United States housing market was heavily affected by the 2007- 2009 recession. Prior to the recession, national housing prices were at an all-time high. Post-recession, the market value of homes plummeted and mortgage rates continue to reflect the uncertain economy and incentivize consumers to reenter the real estate market. Recently though, housing prices have begun to stabilize and even increase, perhaps in reaction to the low mortgage rates, but still the prices of newly constructed homes have remained relatively high(Sanders, M. I. & Breed, J. A. 2, 2006). The availability of sufficient and adequate affordable housing has been a long-term problem, even before the recent recession, but the recession and housing crisis have exacerbated it dramatically. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) keeps quarterly statistics on housing prices, as well as rates of homelessness in the country. Housing prices in the 3rd quarter of 2012 averaged roughly \$242,900 nationally, which was up 9% from the previous year (HUD 17, 2012). Recently in the state of Massachusetts ,however, housing prices have begun to stabilize as some urban areas are beginning to increase. According to the HUD's 3rd quarter report in 2012, Massachusetts housing prices averaged around \$294,900, which is down only 1% from September 2011, and the number of homes sold totaled 44,300, which was up 15% from the previous year (HUD 30, 2012).The Federal Housing Finance Agency also keeps yearly reports of the top two sources of residential mortgage credit in the United States, Freddy Mac and Fannie Mae. These two “Enterprises” are federally funded to serve low, very low, and moderate income families in three markets: manufactured housing, affordable housing preservation, and rural areas. Together, their job is to increase mortgage

investments and improve the distribution of investment capital available for mortgage financing (FHFA 2). In the last two years after the recession, Freddy Mac and Fannie Mae have reached or come within 1% of reaching their benchmark goals (FHFA 4). In 2010 and 2011, for “low income home purchase” the benchmark was 27% of low income families to have purchased a home. Freddy Mac reached 27.84% and 27.8% respectively while Fannie Mae came up just a little short at 25.13% and 26.1% (FHFA 5). For the “very low” income home purchase, the benchmark was only 8% of very low income families to have purchased a home (FHFA 5). Freddy Mac again topped it with 8.5% and 8.4% while Fannie Mae had only 7.2% and 7.6% (FHFA 5). These two different categorizes show that although the housing market still needs improvement, it is starting to level off.

Housing is deemed “affordable” by the federal government if a family spends no more than 30% of their income to live in it (Woo and Mangin 15, 2009). For example, if a family makes an annual income of around \$50,000, then a house with a payment plan of around \$15,000 a year would be considered “affordable” for that family. This is used to easily set a standard threshold for home payments in order to help families find housing that they can afford. Woo and Mangin, published writers on the housing market, explain that these thresholds differ from location to location. Each location’s threshold is determined by a certain area’s mean family income (MFI), which is the average income of families living in a certain area. For example, in 2009 the New York Metro Area had an MFI of \$76,800 for a family of four, and families that were either above or below the average, qualified for homes for their price range (Woo and Mangin 27, 2009). The housing projects described by Woo and Mangin in *What is Affordable Housing* are funded through the federal government, which in that same year spent about \$4.2 billion dollars on the construction of public housing projects in New York City. There are

drawbacks to these government constructions however. The wait time is roughly eight years before a family can apply for affordable housing due to the sheer number of applicants (Woo and Mangin 49, 2009).

A. Government Efforts to Increase Availability of Affordable Housing

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) both manage programs targeted at addressing the dearth of available housing in the country. The IRS, with the oversight of HUD, have been participating in low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) projects for over a decade in an attempt to find housing situations for families in need. The LIHTC program runs construction projects all over the country for families that meet the financial requirements (Sanders & Breed 2, 2006). The construction process is regulated by HUD with the IRS playing a peripheral role, and any attempt by non-profit housing organizations (NPO's) to conduct any activity through these LIHTC ventures will trigger close inspection; for example Habitat for Humanity building and operating low income housing (McClure, 2000). Although this program has been a mainstay for non-profit organizations, most projects are in high cost, low income areas, so the risk is extremely high. This often leads to undercapitalization and financial instability for these non-profits (McClure, 2000).

The United States and more specifically the Obama Administration successfully pushed for the passing of the Serve America Act and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The Serve America Act instituted new service corporations and expanded the existing ones to address the needs of low income families (Corporation for National and Community Service 2012). This law attempts to increase placements in national service, providing greater financial incentives for students and the younger generations, especially for Habitat for Humanity (Nesbit & Brudney 1,

2010). The Affordable Housing Trust Fund, however, was never actually funded, which again demonstrates the housing need in the United States (HUD 15).

B. Non-Profit Organization Influence on Affordable Housing

Since 2009, most NPOs have been growing at a faster rate than for-profit firms. During the 2007 to 2009 recession NPO's have paid increasing attention to the issue of affordable housing and their numbers have grown as the problem has worsened. NPO jobs increased 1.9% per year, while private sector jobs decreased at a rate of 3.7% per year. (Salamon, Sokolowski, & Geller 19, 2012). This NPO growth has increased rapidly since 2009 within household name organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and the Salvation Army. (Speer 3, 2010). As these national NPOs continued to expand, their presence is not only felt in the United States, but all over the world. For example, political changes in central Europe during the early 90s have caused many people to be displaced from their homes. The Salvation Army began negotiations with Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to help the people of Czechoslovakia begin to reorganize those who were displaced (Hradecky 184, 2008). They worked with the local Church organizations and created a project strategy to create more housing for these people, which illustrates how a national US NPO can have substantial influence all over the world.

III. Habitat for Humanity “A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out”

The main mission of Habitat for Humanity is to “put God’s love into action by bringing people together to build homes and communities” (Habitat Report 2, 2012). Habitat for Humanity strives to “demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ, advocate affordable housing, and promote dignity and home” (Habitat Report 3, 2012). Around the world, more than 1.6 billion people live in substandard housing (Habitat Report 11, 2012). See below for more statistics on substandard housing.

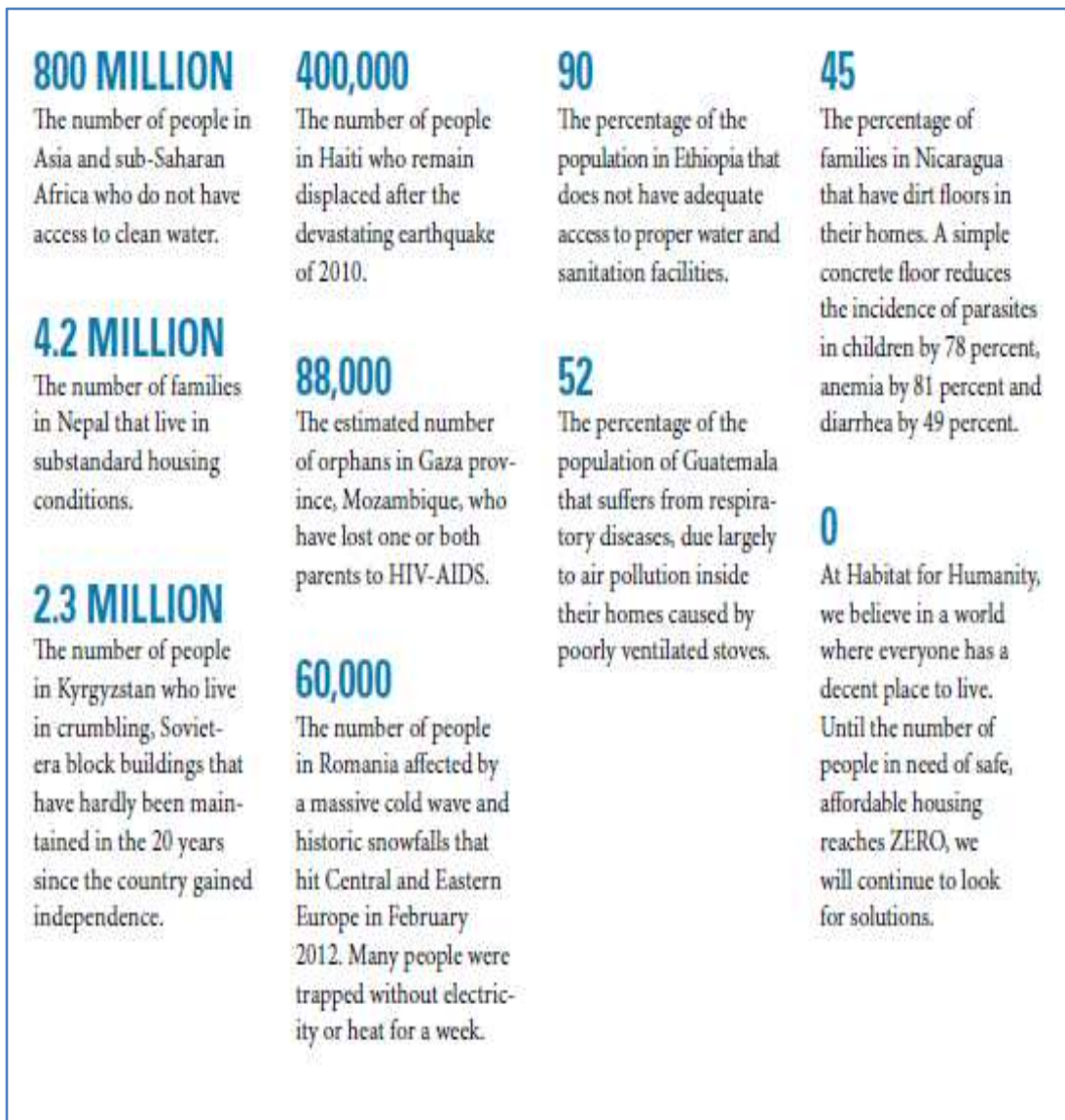


Figure 1: Statistics on Substandard Housing (Habitat World, 2012)

That number of substandard houses compels Habitat to continue to help people by physically building homes for families in need. For example, in 2012 a HFH volunteer taught a 19 year-old man to lay brick work in Africa. Through this experience, the young man and other volunteers were able to build a home where he could be re-united with his siblings (HabitatReport7, 2012). Celebrating with families is Habitat for Humanity’s reward for its

sizeable efforts. Seeing dramatic and long-term changes in people's lives is why Habitat for Humanity began its efforts and continues to build homes (Habitat Report7, 2012).

A. Habitat Lending a Hand

Since 1976, Habitat for Humanity has helped 3 million people across the world gain access to affordable housing (Habitat World, 2012). Habitat is dedicated to helping people of the community and with its slogan "a hand up not a hand out", the families also give back by building their future home with the volunteers as well. The organization continues to help build and repair the worst areas in the world. In fiscal year 2012, Habitat for Humanity, with the help of countless volunteers, served a record 94,618 families nation-wide through new home construction, rehabilitation and repairs (Habitat World, 2012). This breaks the previous fiscal year's record by more than 13,000 families (Habitat World, 2012).

With thousands of members throughout the world, Habitat for Humanity has over 800 branches with volunteers who continue to build homes in their communities (Roberage 1, 2012). The financial support from individuals, corporations, and faith groups provide Habitat for Humanity with the necessary resources to continue their efforts. Habitat for Humanity's total revenue in fiscal year 2012 was \$299.5 million, including cash and in-kind donations, government grants and other income sources. With this volunteer and financial support, Habitat has reached its 600,000 home built milestone world-wide (Habitat Report 31, 2012). However, the milestone is even more remarkable as the homes were not built by Habitat employees or carpenters, but through Habitat's self-help housing model.

In the self-help housing model pioneered by Habitat, prospective homeowners invest hundreds of hours of "sweat equity" into building their houses as well as their neighbors' homes

(Habitat Report 16, 2012). The mortgage payments they make on no-profit loans goes toward giving other families a “hand up rather than a hand out” (Habitat Report 16, 2012). Building safe, decent shelter remains the heart of Habitat’s work and will always be its most tangible symbol of hope. Habitat for Humanity works in all 50 U.S. states and in nearly 80 countries, not only building and improving houses after natural disasters, but also giving furniture, revitalizing entire communities, and rebuilding stronger and safer neighborhoods (Habitat Report 17, 2012).

Participation is an important part of why Habitat for Humanity is successful. Without the good love and appreciation from the organization’s volunteers and donors, Habitat for Humanity could not be in existence. In order to maintain a publicized system to gain more activity, effective marketing and outreach is always needed.

IV. Marketing Strategies & Effectiveness

Marketing for non-profit organizations is not much different than marketing for businesses. According to Philip Kotler, author of “Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations” and a renowned expert on marketing, defines marketing strategies as, “the function of a nonprofit whose goal is to plan, price, promote, and distribute the organization’s programs and product by.... building a program of communication....” (McLeish 11, 2010).

Organizations such as The Salvation Army, Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation, the American Red Cross, and Savers Thrift Stores all embrace these elements by maintaining close stakeholder relationships and proper advertising efforts to suitably reach out and create bonds with their supporters (Knox &Guar117, 2007).

In order to find the best marketing strategy, many nonprofit organizations use a series of marketing campaigns to increase visibility and support for the organization’s efforts. Marketing

strategies may include: website management, email marketing, public relations, social media, direct mail and brand building.

A. Brand Building For Non-Profit Organizations

Perhaps a worthy indicator of a recognized organization is the implementation of an identifiable brand (Williamson, David 7, 2009). According to David Williamson, Director of Managing from the consulting firm of Bernuth & Williamson, brand building is “...being disciplined in articulating the distinctive set of attributes that collectively define an organization’s position in the marketplace for funding, ideas, and influence” (Williamson, David 7, 2009). Such brands demonstrate an organization’s success in the market through the organizations marketing department. In other words, if a company has an outstanding marketing branch, they will most likely know how to represent their brand, hence giving them a leg up on the competition with more potential customers or consumers. This level of commitment or professionalism shows the meaning of following an organizations’ core values as well as accomplishing the organization’s mission statement.

A readily recognizable Habitat for Humanity brand has and will continue to publicize Habitat’s mission. Since 2011, Habitat has designed and registered the “ReStore” name and identifier to over half of all its offices so that the foundation can build a more recognized brand in order to increase customer traffic and loyalty (Habitat for Humanity, 2012).

B. Branding Alliance Partnerships

When a non-profit organization needs help with promotional and publicity efforts, ‘branding alliance’ can be a valuable marketing tool (Simon and Ruth, 1998). Branding alliance is defined as a mutually beneficial strategy by forming partnerships with other organizations to promote interests in each other’s products or services (Heller & Reitsema 2010). In marketing, brand alliancing can take many forms; in this case we mention categorical products which can be defined as two or more brands serving a same action or purpose towards a similar market. For example, categorical products such as using Tide detergents in Maytag washing machines or government agencies such as the National Cancer Institute partnering with the American Cancer Society coming together to increase the assets of each organization (Heller & Reitsema 2010). Another benefit of branding alliance is the development of international partnerships, such as Goodwill Industries of America changing their name to Goodwill Industries International, Inc. (Heller & Reitsema 2010). This can be seen as a positive impact on Goodwill as their mission is to improve the dignity and quality of life of families and individuals by strengthening communities, eliminating barriers to opportunity, and helping people in need reach their full potential through learning and the power of work. Since they are international, they can have a closer relation with third world countries and help the more needy families and individuals. Expanding an organizations market like this enables the association to reach a broader audience, thereby increasing publicity and outreach.

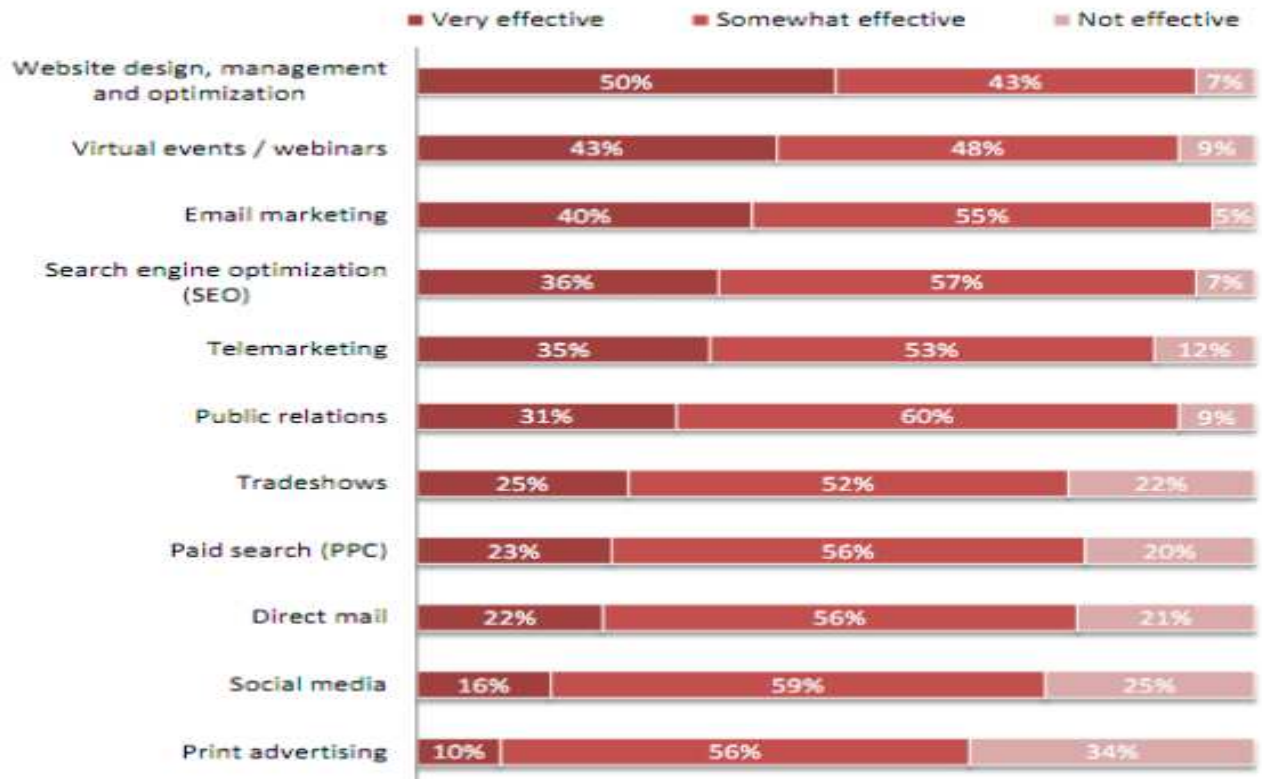
Another corporation that uses the brand alliance tool is Savers Thrift Stores. The store’s mission is “To provide our customers with the best selection and shopping experience of any thrift store in the world” (Savers, 2009). Savers manages 270 stores across 25 US States, 10 Canadian provinces and Australia, making it the largest for-profit thrift store chain in America (Hoover, 2013). Since Savers is an organization that has meaningful core values, they partially

rely on 140 nonprofit alliances to promote their work and values, such as the Epilepsy Foundation (Savers, 2009). Also, by shopping at Savers, not only will you be contributing to this organization, but to allied community programs; “Partnering with local charities is not a byproduct of our business-it’s how we do business”(Savers, 2009).

C. Salvation Army’s Marketing Methods

Many marketing campaigns, as shown in Figure 2, incorporate a variety of measures in order to be successful (MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey, 2011). These strategies are ranked for effectiveness on a scale of Very Effective, Somewhat Effective and Not Effective. Ranked strategies include: web design, management & optimization, virtual events, email marketing, and direct mail, just to name a few. Another popular, yet simple, campaign that many non-profit organizations use is online communications.

The Salvation Army, which has implemented the use of online communications, has brought in \$147.6 million dollars and 3.4 million volunteers annually through their online and in-person “Red Kettle Campaigns” (Salvation Home 1). By implementing the online and in-person tactics, several campaigns are launched nationally in which volunteers hit the streets outside popular retail locations throughout the holiday season. In addition, The Salvation Army also has an online “Red Kettle” which allows users to set donation goals and encourage friends and family to make donations. These “Red Kettle” campaigns promoted through online banner ads and news stations such as CNN, Fox News and MSNBC make their mission of “Doing the Most Good” a reality rather than just a dream (Hurn, 2009). Even though these Red Kettle campaigns are beneficial for The Salvation Army’s’ efforts, other organizations could use a variety of strategies to advertise and gain an audience’s attention.



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Figure 2: Marketing Strategies Outlined by MarketingSherpa

D. The American Red Cross's Marketing Efforts

The American Red Cross also uses a series of mediums to promote their services. An efficient marketing tactic used by the American Red Cross is the use of collaborative ideas, such as targeting the community's emotional side or “heart” by adding pictures or stories to their promotional material. Approximately two years ago, the American Red Cross developed a multichannel campaign which focused their efforts towards consumers by creating a catalog that included phone cards for soldiers, swimming lessons for underprivileged children, measles

vaccinations for desperate families, emergency water containers, temporary shelters and bicycles for Red Cross volunteers (Hoffmann 2012). This approach gave the consumer the chance of “gift-giving” items or services to the less fortunate, which generated a 44% increase in catalogue donations as well as a 27% increase in online donations (Hoffmann 2012). Since this catalogue was also advertised through the Internet, the American Red Cross’s social media presence increased. Director of social strategy from the American Red Cross, Wendy Harman, comments, “Instead of buying another tie or a sweater for somebody, [a Red Cross catalogue purchase] it lets people buy meaningful gifts that will last throughout the year” (Hoffmann 2012). Even though the use of online multi-channel catalogues has been a great investment in time and effort for the American Red Cross, there are also other departments that need improvement, in particular in Habitat’s marketing department. Habitat for Humanity’s ReStore program is currently underserved and could benefit from a marketing revamping utilizing the tools used by the American Red Cross, The Salvation Army and Savers.

V. The ReStore Program

The ReStore, owned and operated by Habitat for Humanity, is a retail venue that offers building materials, appliances, and furniture to the general public. Any proceeds from sales of Restore products are reinvested into Habitat for Humanity’s mission of building homes for low-income families (The Guardian, 2005). The ReStore concept started when building contractors, who often had small lots of lumber, paint and other building supplies, gave them to Habitat when they finished a job. Habitat then sold this unused merchandise to individuals for a low price and the proceeds were used to build homes for people in need (Wood 1, 2013).

A. ReStore Operations

The ReStore generates funds to support Habitat's building programs while reducing the amount of used materials that go to landfills (Wood 1, 2013). For example, in less than one year, a Colorado ReStore was able to keep over “80 tons of useable building materials out of the landfill since its opening in May of 2004.”(The Guardian,2005).The ReStore program accepts cans of latex paint, lumber, doors, windows, furniture, and appliances that are in good condition. Sometimes home improvement stores, such as Home Depot and Lowes will give floor models of cabinets when they change their displays as well (The Guardian,2005). All the material that the Restore takes and sells has a dual purpose: (1) helping the environment by keeping furniture from going in the trash, and (2) making usable products available at an affordable price.(The Guardian, 2005).If consistency continues, ReStore nation will be positioned for tremendous growth in revenue and funding over the next five years(The Guardian,2005).

The work that volunteers engage in at ReStore is essential to achieve ReStore’s main goal of building homes from donated materials. The hard work, creativity, and dedication of ReStore staff and volunteers never goes unnoticed. The staff always makes sure everyone is having fun as well. “We are absolutely convinced happy stores make more money and serve more families. Happy stores provide better customer service, acquire more and better donations and have stronger volunteer programs.” (FY 2012).

With the help of volunteers, ReStore’s national goal is to achieve \$40.00 of donated product sales per square foot for every ReStore in the United States. This is calculated by taking the total revenue generated by a store and subtracting the sale of purchased product. Take that number and divide by the number of square feet in the store to get the sales per square foot (FY

2012). Through this realistic goal, Habitat for Humanity will be able to serve 50% more families through ReStore's net revenues and continue to give back to those in need.

B. ReStore Plan of Action

In order for ReStore to succeed in providing furniture and building supplies to the greater Worcester community, while keeping a managed inventory, correct placement and marketing of these outlets are essential. As shown in Figure 3 and 4, the ReStore outlets are located in those areas of the country with higher levels of poverty; within a given community the outlets are typically located in or near low-income neighborhoods that they wish to serve. Such deliberate placement helps HFH offer resources to the population the organization wishes to serve. This placement also helps locate materials in areas likely to need rebuilding, which allows an easier access to critical supplies (Roberage 1, 2012).

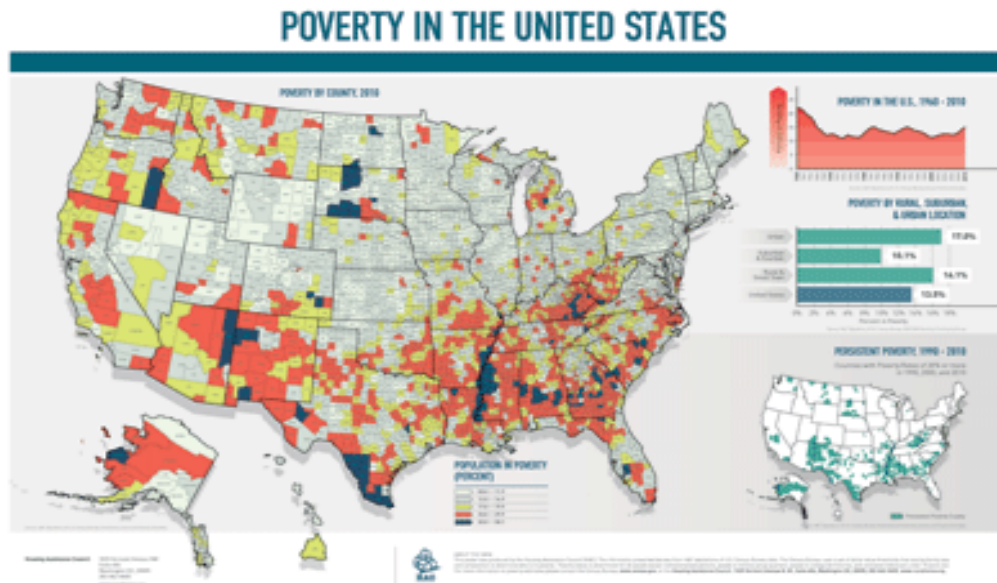
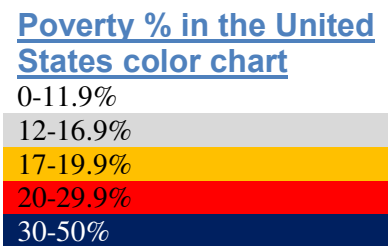


Figure 3: Poverty in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012)



Figure 4: ReStore Outlets in the United States (Habitat for Humanity, 2012)

Operating on donations from businesses, furniture stores, and private residents is a strong feature that maintains a good value and wide variety for all types of customers. From appliances to furniture, cast-iron bathtubs, jetted whirlpools and a wide selection of cabinets, the inventory is endless and constantly turning over (Roberage 1, 2012). Although the ReStore program in Worcester does have an array of different types of products, it is always looking for new ways to accumulate inventory to gain more business and interest. ReStore manager Gerry Sutton stated, “Usually once people come here once, we find that they come back” (Roverage 1, 2012). Between all these donations and customer outreach, the ReStore program continues to grow but there is still a plethora of resources the ReStore can further utilize if their marketing plan wishes to expand.

C. [ReStore Guidebook](#)

The layout of the ReStore is to encourage customers to browse through the entire store and view all the merchandise. In order to maximize ReStore profit, 85% of the store must be devoted to sales with no more than 15% of the store used for storage, offices, and bathrooms (Guidebook 71). Research has shown that the average customer takes five steps into the store before he/she decides whether they are going to continue to shop there, so a brightly lit atmosphere is crucial to the success of a ReStore (Guidebook 71). There are two main tactics that ReStore utilizes in order to optimize the donor as well as the customer's impression of ReStore. These strategies are called the "Donor Experience" and the "Shopping Experience" as they both set guidelines on how to make the donors and customers time at ReStore convenient and hassle free. These strategies allow for the donors and customers to feel welcome at ReStore and continue coming back. Also, this makes for a good "word of mouth impression" as this is how ReStore gains its reputation in the community which leads to higher sales (Guidebook 1).

In the "Donor Experience" an accessible and convenient donation drop-off station is critical. Although sending the ReStore truck to pick up pricier items is essential, the donations that come to ReStore are just as valuable as there is no overhead invested in receiving the donation (Guidebook 6). The probability that a donor will return with more donations is directly tied to the outlet's competence in solving that donor's problem: getting rid of their stuff (Guidebook 7). Often these donors will talk to the public more than any ReStore affiliate will and having positive feedback is vital to acquiring new donors (Guidebook 8). In the "Shopping Experience", targeting women is essential. Although ReStore falls into the category of a hardware/ home improvement store, women customers make the majority of purchases as they buy or influence the purchase of close to 80% of consumer products (Guidebook 30). A quote commonly

overheard at ReStore is: “If a woman is in the ReStore and is on the phone with her spouse, she is asking for dimensions, but if a man is on the phone, he is asking for permission” (Guidebook 31).

VI. Conclusion

Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester does important work for the greater Worcester community, but its ReStore program is underutilized and under marketed. Habitat for Humanity Metro West/ Greater Worcester and its ReStore need a new marketing plan, an expansion of its social networking base, and stronger foundation for gathering building supplies to compete with other non-profit organizations and continue to help those in need. With housing prices on the rise, more people find themselves in need of more affordable housing as they are trying to climb out the remnants of the recession. While the federal government has some programs in place to assist those in need, NPOs have also been helping with finding and building new homes for people in the United States as well as around the world. These NPO’s have utilized the strategy of brand building to represent their core values and mission statement. Similar organizations, such as the Salvation Army and the Red Cross have used this method in addition to advertising and have increased their number of volunteers and donations. Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester has much potential for growth, yet is in need of a new marketing strategy. Their ReStore program, although it is an important asset to their organization, is not exposed enough to its surrounding community and needs a revamping of its image to increase the already impactful organization.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

I. Introduction

The main goal of our project was to assess and improve the marketing and outreach strategies of Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester. In achieving our goal we want the Restore program to optimize their operations and marketing to enhance sales, donations, and volunteers. An increase in cash and in-kind donation will improve Habitat's capability to serve Central Massachusetts' low- income residents. In order to accomplish our primary goal, we worked to achieve a number of objectives: (1) evaluate the existing marketing and outreach efforts of the ReStore; (2) Identify opportunities for new relationships between Habitat for Humanity's ReStore and Worcester area businesses and institutions; and(3) customize, populate, and evaluate the "Giftworks" databases and train ReStore staff in its use.

In section II, we outline our approach to achieving our first objective. In this section we talk about the development of optimal systems for communicating affiliate information for donors, volunteers, and employees to assist the HFHMW Development Team in increasing the outreach audience by 50% by the end of the fiscal year. In Section III, we explain our methodological approach to creating a consistent, maintainable method for communicating with local businesses, universities communities. In section IV we talk about the usability of a tracking system called "Giftworks".

II. Creation and Implementation of Marketing and Advertising Strategy

In order to adequately address the marketing needs of Habitat's ReStore, our first step was to assess ReStore's current marketing strategy. Once we understood ReStore's current strategy, we identified the benefits and shortcomings of that strategy. Finally, we collaborated

with the ReStore Marketing and design team on appropriate methods for expanding the reach of ReStore's marketing efforts.

A. Clarify ReStore's Current Marketing Strategy

We identified ReStore's current marketing methods through a series of one on one interviews. We interviewed Tim Firment, HFH's Executive Director, Debbie Hoak, ReStore Director, Louis Garcia, ReStore Floor Manager, Hannah Kurman, Volunteer Coordinator, and Justin McNally, Donations Coordinator to gather their understanding of and hope for the ReStore and its marketing strategy (the interview questions can be found in Appendix B). We choose to use the interviewing method because we knew that through this process we could gather qualitative answers and find out what most important information was. We also decided to interview the people mentioned because we knew that they had been working with Habitat for at least a year, with the exception of Mr. Firment and had known what has been working and what might need some improving. By acknowledging these aspects first, we were able to direct our motives towards the success of a suitable marketing plan as well as take a closer look at the current marketing tools HFH and ReStore had been using. We also had the chance to take part in walking around the ReStore in both Worcester and Lowell. These enabled us to compare each ReStore and see the organization and promotions of sales, and how items move and are sold to the public.

B. Identify the Benefits and Shortcomings of ReStore's Marketing Strategy

When taking a closer look at ReStore's marketing strategy we were able to identify the benefits and shortcomings of their approach. Coming in with new mindsets, we were able to see

what perhaps the Habitat employees could not. For example, Habitat's ReStore electronic sign out in front of the building was a great addition to their marketing efforts.

Although the sign seems to attract customers, it's not reaching its full potential. Many customers and donors have said to us, "Sometimes when I am driving by, I would like to see sales or updates with what ReStore currently has". This person had told us too that it would help with ReStore's general advertising to "hook" the person reading it with a attractive phrase or sales updates.

Another method of ReStore's outreach is the use of brochures and flyers that are given out to potential donors, customers, and business partners. When the ReStore truck goes on its rounds to pick up donations, flyers are sometimes given to the new donors. Having these marketing materials and brochures shows that an organization is set on promoting their services and products to the public and moving forward.

C. Design New Marketing Strategy

After gathering information about similar strategies used throughout other ReStore centers and similar organizations, we brainstormed ideas for an improved marketing strategy. In order to create marketing strategies, we collected data that would allow us to shape our campaign. We generated both customer and donor questionnaires that focused our attention on collecting information about how people heard about ReStore. These surveys allowed us to properly produce ideas for what ReStore was in need of, such as maintaining the ReStore floor in an organized way. We choose to use this approach as it did focus on a customer's feedback, which is a good place to start if an organization is having issues with their sales or in-house operations. We also worked with and interviewed Habitat volunteers as this allowed us to gain

knowledge from their first hand experiences at the ReStore. This aided in our design of a more tailored marketing program and to reach out to a more desired audience.

In continuing to design our marketing strategy, we suggested using email marketing as one of our methods to reach out to the community. Since the majority of our target audience was students, using emails to relay information about any promotional, volunteering, sales, campaigns and even events Habitat for Humanity seemed to be the most effective way to reach out to such a large number of people.

As for the social media aspect of the marketing strategy, we knew that students use social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter. Given the number of colleges and universities in Habitat's service area, which includes 43 communities in central and eastern Massachusetts, we decided to utilize social media to contact younger generations. We ourselves are students and use these tools to communicate with friends by sharing our interests with each other. With that, we knew that students would appreciate Facebook updates rather than repeated emails of certain events. Unlike emailing, Facebook allows the user to like, comment or share a post by anyone to anyone, which in our mind was a great opportunity for people to share our postings and spread the word about the ReStore.

Another marketing strategy that we thought would benefit the ReStore was to target more marketing materials onto Craigslist and Diggerslist. Since these websites are made to link customers to almost any products, jobs, housing, and even local activities, it serves a large part of the United States, including Worcester, MA. From the responses we have received from customers, many have said that they found ReStore on behalf of Craigslist or Diggerslist, a site similar to craigslist, by searching for jobs or furniture. It is said that over 50 billion people view

the craigslist webpage per month, so if Habitat focuses a bit more on these websites, perhaps more people will become aware of ReStore's fine services and hence create more traffic (Craigslist, 2013).

D. Proposed Marketing Strategy to Habitat Management

After we had collected our data, we proposed our strategy to Habitat's Executive director, Tim Firment. The development of this marketing schedule for Habitat's ReStore program encompassed methods to increase the number of volunteers, customers and number of ReStore website visits as well.

E. Assessment of New Marketing Strategy

In order to make sure that our proposed marketing strategy worked, we needed to incorporate an evaluation process of success. First, there were weekly recording of people coming into ReStore. Simply by giving out the questionnaires that our team developed to people coming into either shop, donate or volunteer, the ReStore could manage how people had heard about the ReStore. By doing this, we were able to tally up the results and analyze the responses to strives toward improving their marketing endeavors.

Second, checking up on the Facebook "likes" was another great way to verify the new marketing strategies. If the ratings of "like" spiked up, then we knew that the new strategies have been effective, and vice versa. A reason why this is to be taken into account is that it gives the ReStore employees easy access for retrieving tallied information. It also provides useful data that they can use to gauge how well the new marketing strategies have been helping ReStore.

Finally, another way that ReStore was able to track the effects of the new marketing strategies was through generating reports from "Giftworks". These reports focused on the zip

codes from where donors and customers lived. This enabled us to track these donors and customers and focus our marketing efforts towards locations that were lacking participation.

III. Creating Relationships with Area Businesses, Colleges and Universities

Before creating new relationships for ReStore, we first needed to understand what connections Habitat for Humanity Metro West already had with local area businesses and institutions. Ms. Deborah Maurice Hoak, the ReStore Director, supplied us with a binder full of contact information for all the local businesses, colleges, and universities around the Worcester area that they had been in contact with since they opened almost two years ago. From this information, we had a good understanding of what materials ReStore has been receiving and what type of businesses and institutions should be targeted.

A. Potential Businesses

By looking at the companies ReStore already had successes and failures with from the binder, we were able to refine our outreach to potential businesses. This enabled us to brainstorm possible places to contact. In order to save time and effort in contacting prospective businesses we tried to contact small business vendors and franchised stores as we learned that they can make decisions about connections with ReStore without seeking approval from a central branch. We tried to target stores that held the high sale ReStore products such as new appliances and building supplies as well.

In order to outreach to new businesses and organizations for possible donations, we interviewed the store managers for the possibility of creating a relationship with the ReStore. In these interviews we indicated our efforts with ReStore and how an affiliation with ReStore could be beneficial. These interviews included asking managers if they had any unused materials,

which could be donated to ReStore, or community service hours that needed to be completed by their employees.

B. Colleges and Universities in the Worcester Area

Knowing that Habitat for Humanity Metro West/ Greater Worcester serves 43 communities in Central Massachusetts, a major target audience our team was trying to gain attention from was the 13 colleges and universities within the Worcester area. Each of these colleges and universities held a large potential for donors, customers, and even volunteers.

Similarly to the businesses, communication with schools was done first by finding which schools were already affiliated with Habitat for Humanity Metro West's ReStore program from the contact binder. When we saw that the WPI "Habitat for Humanity" on-campus group was involved with the ReStore, we emailed the President to set a meeting to explain our affiliation with ReStore and gain the contact information for the neighboring colleges and universities on campus "Habitat for Humanity" groups. This would allow for more student involvement for our project and more potential volunteers for the ReStore. While we waiting for a response, we emailed WPI's Facilities Manager, Elizabeth Tomaszewski, who is in charge of removing excess furniture and supplies from the university, to access the contact information of the additional facilities managers at neighboring universities. After we had met with Ms. Tomaszewski, this created a snowball effect as we were able to contact and set up interviews with other college and university's facility managers. These interviews allowed us to ask about a possible relationship with the ReStore as any unused furniture and/or material could be easily donated to ReStore. Also, we informed the facility managers about our ideas for a "Welcome Back" and "Spring Cleaning" campaign to improve the efforts of the school community towards sustainability. The

“Spring Cleaning” campaign allowed the college or university to set up a schedule at the end of the year for students and faculty to donate any unused furniture or appliances to the ReStore before they moved out for the summer. The “Welcome Back” campaign would then allow new students and faculty at the beginning of the fall semester to buy any items for the upcoming school year at a discounted price.

IV. Creation of a Tracking System

A successful business, whether it before-profit or not-for-profit, needs a user friendly tracking system that allows management and tracking of influx monetary and in-kind donations, donors, sales and outreach efforts. Without a tracking system, it is difficult for any organization to maintain its progress and grow as much as possible. Habitat’s ReStore is just beginning to start its own tracking system and with the assistance we’ve given they will be able to excel at a much faster pace.

A. The Process and Evaluation of “GiftWorks”

Shortly after our project began we learned from Habitat’s Executive Director, Tim Ferment that the organization had recently begun to utilize an inventory tracking system called “Giftworks”. While “Giftworks” had great potential, according to both our primary contacts at Habitat, it was underutilized and most employees did not know how to correctly input relevant information.

Consequently, we worked with Michelle Dann, a technician for ReStore, to learn the basics of the “Giftworks” program and spent the next four weeks identifying the scope of uses of “Giftworks” for Habitat. Michelle had already developed categories defining the information

ReStore was trying to identify so we could move in the right direction. We also trained employees and volunteers on the program and its capabilities at the end of our seven weeks.

Having the “Giftworks” software available to use, we were able to manage our time and information a lot more efficiently. This program had capabilities that allowed us to organize customer and donor information into specific categories, while sending email blasts to any specific audience simultaneously. We continued to learn this software and populate it as well, so when our task ended, the ReStore employees could continue this process and utilize “Giftworks” in future endeavors.

B. [The Development Of Surveys](#)

The “Giftworks” software is a good tool for tracking donors, but we thought it was important to attain more information about both the customer and donor’s perspective about the ReStore.

After meeting with Deborah Hoak, the ReStore Director, we decided to try to gather additional data from the donors and customers of ReStore through surveys. We developed two survey instruments to gather feedback. This feedback enlightened us as to what areas were participating in either donating or shopping and how ReStore could improve its operations to attract more potential customers and donors.

These two questionnaires were short surveys of eleven questions that would only take a couple of minutes to fill out, yet would provide us with crucial information. The questions would relay information such as how many times a donor or customer has shopped/ donated at ReStore and what recommendations they might have for improvement. The information was gathered and then entered into a Google survey Excel file which allowed ReStore to create graphs and charts.

With the use of this tracking system, ReStore had more ways to track its audience and make upgrades.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Throughout our seven weeks at Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/ Greater Worcester ReStore we experienced many trials and tribulations in creating an improved marketing plan for a non-profit organization such as Habitat for Humanity. There were many aspects to marketing that researching and studying beforehand could not prepare us for. Fortunately for us, the staff at the ReStore made us sure we experienced the cycle of Habitat for Humanity (donating, selling, and building) before we started any of our other research tasks. This enabled us to get a proper understanding of the organization and what its mission statement represents.

In section I we look at the ReStore marketing strategy especially marketing materials and methods of advertising. In section II we discuss ReStore communication in regards to businesses, and colleges, and universities, and other non-profit organizations to encourage donations and sales. In section III we determine the usability of “Giftworks” and the tracking systems for inventory and donors.

I. ReStore Marketing Strategy

The ReStore approaches their audience with the use of marketing materials such as brochures, door knocks, and signage. Based on our review of the materials and feedback from staff, customers, and donors, we found that the existing marketing materials are lacking in several ways.

A. ReStore Brochures

Many of ReStore’s brochures, while visually attractive, contain inaccurate information and an insufficient description of the ReStore. Specifically, of the 6 brochures we reviewed 4 displayed either the incorrect phone number and hours of operation for the ReStore as well as the

wrong address (See Appendix C for an example of an inadequate ReStore Brochure). We also found, from ReStore staff, that when donors looked at multiple brochures, they either did not understand what ReStore was or became confused about their mission. When a potential customer or donor picks up a ReStore-Worcester brochure, it should be easy for them to understand ReStore's mission, and how they could become involved. A great example of how a brochure should look like is displayed through the ReStore at Lowell. In contrast with the ReStore at Worcester, the ReStore at Lowell used far fewer marketing materials, and focused primarily on its brochure. This meant there less need for updating multiple marketing materials and fewer errors and omissions. Furthermore, the brochure they developed clearly, concisely and accurately presented all the key information donors and customers required, such as store hours and acceptable items for donation. It also clearly explained how ReStore Lowell operated and how it is related to the overall HFH mission.

If a business has inaccurate or outdated brochures this may reflect poorly on the business as a whole, as we noticed from our first hand experiences at ReStore. For example, our interviews revealed that donors and customers were not only frustrated and confused by the incorrect and conflicting information, but they thought that the quality of the marketing materials reflected poorly on the organization. Some donors have even said, "...it makes the ReStore seem unprofessional", "Not having the correct times that ReStore is open throughout the week on flyers shows the organization of their employees and if it is disorganized, I know that I wouldn't want to come here again".

Based on our review of the ReStore brochures, we found they fail to explain clearly the relationship between HFH and ReStore. Our customer survey questionnaires showed that many people did not know that ReStore is connected to Habitat for Humanity and that the proceeds

from the store are used to build homes for low-income families. During the course of interviewing, we found that many customers were actually pleased and surprised to know that ReStore is part of HFH. Failing to make this connection clear to potential donors and customers may certainly inhibit their willingness to donate and/or purchase items.

B. ReStore Signage

ReStore-Worcester has a valuable and informational sign in front of their store, yet we found that its impact could easily be enhanced. The electronic sign in front of the ReStore building that is adjacent to Gold Star Boulevard, as shown below in Figure 5,



Figure 5: ReStore Worcester Sign facing Gold Star Boulevard

caught our attention when we first drove by the ReStore, but we also noticed that the messages were not as clear or compelling as they might be. Staff were aware that ReStore needed a greater visual presence on Gold Star Boulevard. Several customer surveys indicated concern about the

content of the message on the sign. Although customers noticed that the sign lit up and flashed to catch their attention as they drove by, they also noted that information could be more informative and might include rotating details of sales and events. Unlike the Worcester ReStore, the ReStore at Lowell had more prominent signage that also clearly indicated the types of items sold, as shown below in Figure 6.



Figure 6: (Top to bottom) ReStore Worcester and ReStore Lowell

II. Communication

After evaluating the marketing of the ReStore, we looked into their outreach efforts to local businesses, colleges, universities, and other non-profit organizations to promote sales and donations. By interviewing ReStore staff and volunteers as well as reading through their contact binder, we determined that they had very little or no contact with any local institutions with no planned mailings or big events. After discovering this, we made it our priority to establish relationships between Worcester area businesses and institutions. In our process of setting up these relationships we thought it would be a good idea to look into other ReStore's first and how they organize these relationships.

With guidance of the ReStore manager, Deborah Maurice Hoak, we decided to take a field trip to the ReStore in Lowell, MA as Ms. Hoak said this would be the "most valuable" ReStore to visit as they were only a year old and were already fairly successful. When we arrived, we introduced ourselves to the ReStore manager at Lowell, Brenda Gould. She first showed us around the store and explained their truck partnership program, which allows businesses to advertise on the back of the ReStore truck for a monthly fee. Although we noticed that the ReStore at Lowell was very well organized with newer items in stock, we noted that they did not have any couches on display or an active volunteer system, which are the two central aspects of the Worcester ReStore. When asked about business partnerships, Ms. Gould responded that their location is the key to their rapid success: "ReStore Lowell is located on a central road, with over eighth teen thousand cars passing the ReStore per day and over a hundred local businesses being a stone's throw away". She said this is one of the main reasons why they have been so successful in such short period of time, and that many neighboring businesses are currently trying to participate in partnership events with them, especially Harley Davidson.

Lastly, while at the Lowell ReStore we learned that every ReStore in Massachusetts plans monthly meetings with one another to discuss progress and relationship building exercises. However, we also discovered that is difficult to find a regular meeting time and location for all the managers to meet. This often leads to most meeting being cancelled. The meetings that still take place, however, only incorporate a handful of ReStore's and are more focused on discussing how each ReStore is progressing in donations and sales, with less emphasis on how to improve relationships with businesses or operations.

When we returned, we relayed all our information back to Ms. Hoak. We were surprised that the staff at ReStore Worcester was not more familiar with the operations at ReStore Lowell. Clearly there is a lot to be learned by all the ReStore facilities talking more candidly and regularly about the ways they conduct business.

One of the major concerns among staff at ReStore Worcester was the need to develop much closer and more systematic relationships with area businesses, colleges, and other non-profit organizations in order to boost sales and donations. One of our major business connections were the numerous businesses attending the "Woo Card" venues held on local college campuses. These venues were organized by "Woo Card" in an event fashion, in order to increase the publicity and marketing of local businesses that permit the use of a "Woo" card. This "Woo Card", similar to a "Dunkin Donuts" card, allows a discount each time a customer uses the card for a purchase. Also, this "Woo Card" allocates a reward system such that if a customer reaches a certain point total on his or her card, they receive a free movie pass.

These "Woo Card" events are effective and easy way to promote Habitat for Humanity's ReStore program. Although ReStore focuses a lot of their attention on large firms that donate

regularly, these “Woo Card” events allowed them to tap into many other resources such as colleges, universities and small businesses. Outreach to these colleges and universities allowed for a better collection of goods in the spring while encouraging sales in the fall. Similarly, many partnership events can be organized with these small businesses as they do not have to answer to any corporate head.

We found that although ReStore has been regularly participating in these events for a little less than a year, the small businesses that attend these “Woo Card” events do not understand the concept of ReStore. Most of these other businesses are at these events trying to increase their own publicity by attracting college students to their tables with free food and games. Although the business people are very friendly, they are also professional and are not going to lose an opportunity to gain as much free publicity as possible. According to Caitlyn LaJoie, Volunteer Outreach Coordinator, Habitat’s table game called “Guess the ReStore Price”, had not been very successful compared to the other “Woo Card” games. Until we participated in these events, both at WPI and Clark University, the Habitat table would only attract 1 or 2 people per day. We attempted to increase the awareness of Habitat prior to these events by creating flyers that publicized the event and emailing students we knew, especially for WPI event. We found these methods to be successful and were told by Louis Garcia, ReStore Floor Manager that when we started going to these biweekly events, Habitat had the best turnouts since it became a “Woo Card” venue, with over 30 participants each time. We even started to create friendly relationships with the local businesses at these events, especially the local bakeries. After explaining the concept of ReStore, they seemed very interested in starting partnership events to promote their business with Habitat for Humanity in the near future.

Similarly, this lack of communication to local businesses, colleges, and universities could be seen in the office of Habit for Humanity Metro West/ Greater Worcester as well. WPI as well as a handful of other schools in the Worcester Consortium have an on campus charter for Habit for Humanity groups. The WPI group especially was having trouble communicating with the ReStore because of lack of proper contact information on both the side of ReStore and the Habitat group. The WPI Habitat group wanted to volunteer as well as set up a build day with the ReStore, but their contact at the ReStore was not responding to their emails. Luckily for the ReStore, the president of Habitat for Humanity at WPI heard about our project and contacted us for help. We eventually set up a meeting and gave the ReStore the Habitat group's contact information. Now the WPI Habitat for Humanity group is more active in ReStore activities and has already drafted work schedule for the fall. We also created an Excel spreadsheet of all the local schools and businesses that have volunteered at the Restore in the last two years and their contact information so something similar to the difficulties with WPI would never happen again.

ReStore needs to improve their methods of communicating and attracting donors as well. Through our work we learned that ReStore does not send "thank you" cards, letters or emails to donors, not even ones who donate multiple times or ones that donate a big selling item such as a two thousand dollar kitchen set. According to the ReStore Guidebook, this can hurt ReStore as less people would continue to donate as they would feel underappreciated. As mentioned in our Background Chapter, most other non-profit businesses such as Savers and Salvation Army use "thank you" cards and emails to continue to attract donors and keep the ones that have already donated. These "thank you" cards or letters show how their donation is contributing to the organization's mission and be disseminated via social media or email as well. Many businesses especially, "Stop and Shop" who frequently donate big selling items to ReStore use social media.

While working at the ReStore we learned that there is very little communication and outreach to these local businesses even through other means as well. They give these businesses as well as their donors' very little information regarding events and store sales. The failure to update these businesses as well as donors could make these potential clients shy away from ReStore as they would be clueless as to what the store is currently doing or what special events are going on.

We met with facility managers (or sustainability coordinators) at several area colleges and universities to gauge their interest in collaborating with ReStore and to determine if they might be willing to participate in an annual "Spring Cleaning" event. As mentioned earlier, this "Spring Cleaning" event would enable students and faculty to dispose of any unwanted items by donating them to Restore and impede them from going to landfills. The Restore truck would either be designated a spot on campus, where people can bring their items, or it would schedule pickups from a donor's house. Although from our meetings with John Cannon, Facility Manager of Holy Cross, and Steven Bandarra, Sustainability Coordinator of Worcester State University as well as communication with Jennifer Isler, Sustainability Coordinator of Clark University, we learned that neither of these schools would be interested in a "Spring Cleaning" event. We learned that Holy Cross has a "Trash for Treasure" campaign at the end of the school year in which they donate everything to the Salvation Army and Worcester State has a similar "Ditch the Dumpster" campaign. Clark University, on the other hand, has a student run Thrift Store that takes in old furniture and appliances from the campus and reupholsters and repairs them and returns them to campus. Although these meetings might have seemed unproductive and fruitless, they were actually beneficial as they allowed us to attain valuable information on what aspects go into campus wide events and how to make them successful.

In our meeting with Elizabeth Tomaszewski, Facility Systems Manager for WPI, however, we finally found our first candidate for the “Spring Cleaning” campaign. She seemed very interested in participating in an event like this for WPI as more than half of WPI students live in off-campus housing. Even before our interview formally began, she said that we had perfect timing to propose this event as minutes before we had met with her she had sent an email to her superior asking what to do for an end of the year “sustainability” event. We had multiple meetings with Ms. Tomaszewski, but eventually we set up two dates, May 1st and May 8th where the ReStore truck would sit on campus, in the Boynton St. parking lot (across from the Goat’s Head restaurant), from 10:00AM to 3:00PM to collect any donations. (See Figure 7 for the actual flyer that our team created with some help from ReStore staff). We decided that the ReStore would also be available for pickups after 12:00 PM on a limited basis if a donor couldn’t bring their item to the parking lot. We would also set up a table, with the assistance of the thirty member Habitat group, where donors could write down their contact information in order to receive reminders and updates about the ReStore as well as 10% percent off coupon to the ReStore in the fall to promote the “Welcome Back” campaign. We lastly wanted to advertise this event to all WPI students by sending a mass email, putting flyers in local businesses such as “Woo- Berry”, and putting mini-flyers in all 3500 student mailboxes in the campus center. Although these arrangements might seem simple and straightforward there were many alternatives that we could have considered. For instance, we thought to perhaps have a “rat-pack” (a small stationary storage container) placed for a week or so on campus in order to maximize donations. Unfortunately, the cost of moving this container to and from WPI was too much for ReStore to consider. Also, we had hoped to manage this event with the help of WPI work-study volunteers. Regrettably, since the event is happening after the semester ends, there is no chance

of having volunteers as their hours will not count. Lastly, we wanted to have the ReStore truck available on graduation day, May 11th as this is the day when most seniors officially leave their apartments and campus for good. Disappointingly, because of the traffic on graduation day and the availability of the Restore truck, this date was not feasible. Even with these drawbacks, we still have high hopes for this campaign and hope that it will be successful this year and for years to come.



Figure 7: Copy of the “Spring Cleaning” Flyer

III. Inventory / Donor Tracking and Usability of “Giftworks”

ReStore currently tracks data, such as donations, with hard copy receipts. Unfortunately, this uses up unnecessary space and is hard to organize as most of the time the contact

information is not fully completed. The main system that ReStore now uses to track their donors and customers is a program called “Giftworks”. Although “Giftworks” was already installed on ReStore’s computers, the staff was not fully aware of its capabilities and was not using it to its full capacity. This program took donor and customers information and documented it into specific categories for tracking and organizational usage. Throughout these seven weeks, we learned to utilize the “Giftworks” software and have assisted the staff in inputting information. “Giftworks” was used for tracking donation counts per area codes to the types of material donated per donor. “Giftworks” also allowed ReStore to email blast any category, whether it is a donor who contributed an expensive item or a donor who contributed building supplies This allowed us to send a “thank you” notes as well as updates for ReStore news, and deals.

Since we came in around the same time “Giftworks” was being implemented at ReStore, Tim Firment, Executive Director, decided to defer the teaching of the program to the ReStore staff so we could first customize the program to better meet ReStore’s needs. We created a step-by-step manual for ReStore employees so they could understand and use the software after we left.

With initial assistance from the IT representative at ReStore, we entered several months of information from donation receipts into “Giftworks”(see Appendix Dfor a sample donation receipt). The procedure we have set up can now help any ReStore staff member use the software and input new information on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to any type of categorized group. This software allows ReStore to track donations and the amount of business they generated each month. At the end of each month, “Giftworks” can be used to generate maps and charts illustrating the nature of the community’s participation, as shown in Figure 8. This information can be used to help target marketing and outreach efforts. Without “Giftworks”, ReStore had a

difficult time keeping track of all the information recorded. Now that we have developed “Giftworks”, ReStore is more familiar with the process and can continue to use it for years to come.



Figure 8: Map of donations generated by “Giftworks”

In order for ReStore to develop a better understanding of the community’s participation, we created questionnaire surveys that asked donors and customers what their interest and relationship was with the ReStore. We developed two questionnaires, a customer questionnaire and a donor questionnaire (attached in Appendix E and F, respectively). The donor questionnaire was given to individuals donating either through the ReStore drop-off or pick-up. In this questionnaire we sought information about how donors heard about ReStore and why they chose to donate to ReStore over another non-profit organizations. We decided the best way to have these donor questionnaires completed was to give them to the donors while the ReStore

employees were moving their item into the truck or the store. The donor had time to fill out the questionnaire out as he or she still had to wait for the donation receipt and the optional tax reward. Filling out this donor questionnaire gave us answers to whether or not the donor has ever volunteered or shopped at ReStore and whether they were interested in receiving email updates regarding ReStore deals and updates. The “customer questionnaire” was similar to the “donor questionnaire”, in that it was used to attain different, yet still important, feedback. We left these surveys on the checkout counter so that the customers, who were waiting to checkout, could fill them out as they passed the time. From this customer information, we tracked whether customers have ever donated or volunteered for ReStore, if they’d like to receive emails updates, and some suggestions and recommendations for the Worcester ReStore. Collecting this data will lastly help ReStore maintain and improve relationships throughout the “43 municipalities” in the future as well.

The information we gathered was inputted into a “Google Survey” document to create charts and graphs. These graphs and charts showed comparisons from one demographic to another and can be furthered used in the future to illustrate how customers and donors feel the ReStore can improve and continue to move forward.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the beginning of our seven week term at the ReStore we were anxious about the tasks ahead, but as the weeks progressed we slowly started to feel like we actually worked there. We felt connected with the employees and volunteers and tried to contribute as much as we could to Habitat for Humanity's mission.

Conclusion 1: Public Relations

In a nutshell, Habitat for Humanity Metro West/ Greater Worcester has much potential for growth. In just seven short weeks, we believe we were able to improve sales, donations, and their tracking system. We hope our project will not only enhance the growth of the ReStore program in the Worcester area, but will also provide tools and ideas about how to market and conduct their business in a more fluid and effective manner in the future.

Recommendation 1: Public Relations

ReStore needs to keep good public relations in order to increase sales. ReStore should continue having partnership events such as the upcoming "Spring Fling" on May 18th, where they invite other small businesses to contribute to a collaborative event. For example, the ReStore at Lowell rents out a space out in front of their store to a sausage stand throughout the week, which provides another source of income and attracts custom. The Metro West/ Greater Worcester ReStore can invite similar food stands to engage in these events or just try setting aside a small space for a vendor to rent out for the week or weekend. ReStore can also create relationships with businesses by hosting its' own event at the ReStore. Businesses such as local bakeries, especially from the "Woo Card" events, can come to ReStore and sell their goods with ReStore taking a percentage of the proceeds. Doing such events can develop better relations with

the businesses as well as attract more people to ReStore. Perhaps having a built model of a home during this event, or even having a set model against the wall with some drawings of a home built by Habitat for Humanity can help display the main message of ReStore and why it exists. Physical evidence that demonstrates the mission, hard work and dedication of Habitat for Humanity and the ReStore will likely intrigue, engage, and encourage people to shop at ReStore. Some other suggestions to gain attention are perhaps raffles and/or giveaways.

Conclusion 2: Communication

Metro West/ Greater Worcester ReStore should focus more attention communicating with other ReStore's. There seems to be a lack of communication between the ReStore's, which is evident in the lack of knowledge one has of the other. Every ReStore has its own way of being successful. Proper communication and meetings can lead to the development of new marketing strategies as well as relationship building advice with local institutions. This partnership is vital in the business world as it allows for greater success and a vast resource of information.

Recommendation 2: Communication

The Metro West/ Greater Worcester ReStore needs to improve communications with other ReStore's. As mentioned previously, the Worcester ReStore could benefit from having a more consistent relationship with other ReStore's. Increased communication could allow ReStore's to learn new, innovative or effective marketing strategies from each other. Although each ReStore does send a representative to the monthly meetings, most often not everyone shows up. One suggestion would be bi-weekly phone calls. Each week, ReStore Manager A would call ReStore manager B, during a set hour of the day, and discuss development and how each ReStore is planning on moving forward. Every second week ReStore Manager A would call

ReStore Manager C so that each ReStore gets an opportunity to communicate with one another. This would help create a joint progression toward the completion of Habitat's mission. It would also allow projects ideas and scopes to be discussed on a timely schedule and the transfer of ideas to be more efficient. In the end each ReStore has the same mission and is working towards the completion of the same goal. There does not seem to be any competition between the each ReStore as most of them are a sizable distance away from one another as well. More consistent contact would be nothing but a benefit, not just to the Worcester ReStore program, but every ReStore program in Massachusetts.

Conclusion 3: Tracking System

The tracking system called "Giftworks" is an extremely powerful resource that compiles and sends out information. ReStore has only recently installed "Giftworks" and the existing systems for tracking donations and customers was paper-based and somewhat inefficient, leading to lost opportunities to track donations and sales and follow up with appropriate marketing. The impact we had in learning this program and transferring all the data from hard copy to software will help set a standard for the rest of the ReStore. Many employees had said that it is now easier for them to retrieve and analyze data and move forward since all of the information is in one easy, accessible, location. Using this database, ReStore should be able to focus more attention to customers and donors. By paying careful attention to donors, more people will likely remember and continue to contribute to HFH and the ReStore. Since most people appreciate kind gestures, a "thank you" letter or basket to donors will make them feel more welcomed and respected. Also, by paying careful attention to customers, it can allow ReStore to focus on what marketing

strategies are working best for them, where most of their customers and donors are coming from, and what they can do to improve sales.

Recommendation 3: Tracking System

A well organized tracking system is essential for a business to continue to grow and expand. ReStore should continue to use the donor and survey questionnaires we developed to gather and enter information into the customized “Giftworks” database. The database should be used as a tool to direct future marketing and outreach efforts through data analysis and the coordination of events, and mailings. This will increase ReStore’s data sample and will continue to increase their knowledge of how people hear about ReStore and what they can do to improve ReStore operations. With ability of this software to create graphs and charts, ReStore can see the demographic regions within the “43 communities” that are contributing the most as well as the communities that ReStore should be targeting more of its outreach efforts towards. Over time, ReStore can track its business more easily if all this information is updated and kept organized on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Having the hard copies moved to soft copies is useful as it improves storage space and gives the ReStore Manager easier access to all donation data.

Conclusion 4: Businesses, Colleges, & Universities

There are many opportunities for ReStore to increase relationships with local businesses, colleges, and universities. Although large scale businesses do donate great quantities of items, there are no “thank you” letters or emails. Some sort of recognition to that business is necessary, especially if ReStore wants to be kept in good terms with them and receive any future donations. Furthermore, the impact of the “Spring Cleaning” and “Welcome Back” campaign can improve the image of ReStore to all colleges and universities around the Worcester area. This will allow a

hassle free venue for students and faculty to get rid of any unwanted furniture as well as a place to buy “gently used” discounted furniture for their new apartments or dorms.

Recommendation 4: Businesses, Colleges, & Universities

The Restore has been lacking in recognizing local business venues. Many businesses donate large scale items to the ReStore on occasion. One idea would be to send “thank you” letters or baskets to these businesses to let them know that every donation is appreciated. This would not only make ReStore look professional in the eyes of the businesses, but it is a key to marketing as it would target the hearts of those donating. Another idea would be to put a sign next to the donated items on the sales floor that shows what businesses donated the items. This could create good relations as it allows the business to gain some publicity. Also, since we have most of these businesses contact information on file, we could send them monthly email blasts to remind them that we are still around and interested in continuing to receive their help.

Colleges and universities is another resource that could drastically improve the image and publicity of ReStore. During our 7 week period at ReStore we worked hard to get a “Spring Cleaning” campaign started at as many colleges and universities in the Worcester area as possible. We created a step-by-step manual and gave it to MetroWest/ Greater Worcester ReStore in order to give them the tools, such as all the facility managers contact information, to continue this campaign in the following years and continue its growth. We suggest that next year the ReStore tries to market this event in a more timely fashion and not in last couple of weeks of the semester, like us. There are many Habitat groups on these college and university’s campuses and this is an easy access point to spread the word throughout each college and university’s respective campus early in the year. In the manual that we created for ReStore we also left a

contact sheet for all the habitat groups and volunteer coordinators. This would make emailing the group and finding volunteers for this event fairly easy as well. We recommend that at these future spring cleaning events ReStore employee's take down the donors email address so that when the fall semester starts back up they can email every student that donated and remind them about the "Welcome Back" campaign. This "Welcome Back" campaign will give discounts to students and faculty who come to the ReStore to buy furniture or appliances for their new apartments or dorms. We feel that these two campaigns will help garnish the image of the ReStore program in Worcester and make it a common place where students and faculty continue to donate and shop for years to come.

Conclusion 5: Marketing

In accordance with our findings, we recommend re-doing or re-making Habitat for Humanity's Marketing materials such as the pamphlets, brochures and event flyers to all coincide with ReStore's general information, such as the days and hours of operation, what items can be donated, and the formatting and location of the ReStore. This will prevent confusion with potential new customers, donors and volunteers which will continue to fulfill Habitat's mission and community needs.

Recommendation 5: Marketing

Another recommendation that would benefit ReStore's Marketing efforts is to maintain the big electronic sign with any promotional events, store hours, sales/discounts, and even catchy phrases to engage any person reading the sign. Since Gold Star Boulevard is a high traffic area for residents, it would greatly help ReStore if they took initiative.

Additionally, we recommend the idea of setting up displays outside of ReStore next to the sign in the summer months or when weather permits. For example, we know that they setup kitchen sets together with dining tables and chairs near the entrance of the store to attract customers as they walk in. Imagine that being outside where people can see them from their cars as they drive by. People would actually see these items and wonder what else ReStore has to offer and become intrigued to come take a look inside. Lastly, the Worcester ReStore should make an effort to apply more welcoming signage like the ReStore at Lowell. They would benefit from these signs around the building as it would seem more inviting to potential customers or donors.

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLE SURVEY AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How long have you been the sustainability coordinator or facility manager at your school?

2. What are your primary responsibilities for your position?

3. Do you ever have any excess items such as furniture, appliances, building supplies, or unopened paint at your campus?

Yes / No _____

4. Are you in charge of disposing these items if not claimed?

Yes / No _____

5. What methods do you currently use to dispose of these excess goods?

Dumps _____

Employee Giveaway _____

Donating to Who _____

Other

-
6. How often do you go through this removal process? Is it part of a regular schedule or as needed?

Regular / As needed _____

7. Do you know that there is a Habitat for Humanity in Worcester that serves 43 communities in central Massachusetts?

Yes / No _____

7A. If so, have you ever shopped or donated at ReStore in your position as facilities manger?

- If yes, under what circumstances?

Yes / No _____

7B. If not, explain the mission of ReStore:

- HFH truck can pick up items
- Advance notice to schedule
- Breadth of items/ condition
- Where the proceeds go

8. Would you be interested in setting up fairly consistent pickup schedule with ReStore?

Yes / No _____

9. Would you be interested to participate in a “Spring Cleaning” program at WPI to assist WPI and students remove any unwanted items?

Yes / No _____

Thank you very much for your time.

Use name is final report with any findings?

Any Floor Epoxy? (Special Request from Deb)

APPENDIX B: EMPLOYEE INTERVIEW SHEET

Employee Questionnaire

Date _____

1. How did you start with Habitat for Humanity's ReStore?

2. Are you a volunteer? If so, what drives you to come help?

3. How long have you been working here at ReStore?

4. What do you think is the best aspect of the ReStore program?

5. Do you shop or donate here?

6. Do you think ReStore needs improvements, if so what?

APPENDIX C: INACCURATE BROCHURES



Building HOMES | Building HOPE | Building COMMUNITIES

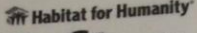
 **Habitat for Humanity**
Cars for Homes™

 **Habitat for Humanity**
ReStore
Shop / Donate / Volunteer
11 Distributor Road (at Gold Star Blvd.)
Worcester, MA 01609
(508) 439-7655

 **Habitat for Humanity**
MetroWest/Greater Worcester
111 Park Avenue
Worcester, MA 01609
(508) 799-9259
www.habitatmwgw.org

www.wbjournal.com Worcester Business Journal - Giving Guide 2012 47

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE DONATION RECEIPT

 **ReStore**

Donation Receipt D/O _____ P/U _____

Date: _____

Received from: _____

Address: _____

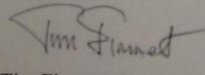
E-Mail/Phone _____

Mailing List? Yes _____ No _____

On behalf of the Habitat for Humanity—MetroWest/Greater Worcester Board of Directors, thank you for your support of the ReStore and our housing mission. We appreciate your in-kind donation.

Item(s) Donated:

By virtue of our designation as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, your donation is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. No goods or services were given in exchange for this charitable contribution. Please note that per Internal Revenue Service regulations we are not appraisers, and therefore, we cannot place a fair market value on any in-kind donations. For assistance with charitable tax deductions, please contact your tax preparer and see IRS publication #561 (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p561.pdf>).

Sincerely,

Tim Firment, Executive Director

Receiving Contact: _____

APPENDIX E: CUSTOMER QUESTIONNAIRE

Customer Questionnaire

Name: _____ Zip: _____ Date: _____

Specialty:

Did you know we have a, _____?

- Landlord, Vendor, Website, Builder, Home Owner, Facebook, Tradesman, Other, Twitter

1. How did you hear about ReStore?

- Word of Mouth, Attended Event, Craig's List, Board/committee member/staff referral, Digger's List, Donor, E-Newsletter, Member of Current Household, Homeowner, Newsletter, Other Non-Profit, Researched, ReStore Customer, ReStore Volunteer, Staff, Unknown, Vendor, Volunteer, Website, Grant Prospect, HFFI, Other

2. Are you a first time customer?

Yes No, # of visits _____

3. Do you know how ReStore operates?

Yes No

4. Do you know that all of our proceeds support our local HFH builds?

Yes No

5. What type of items do you usually shop for?

6. Have you donated to ReStore?

Yes No

7. Have you volunteered for ReStore?

Yes No

8. If you could improve ReStore what aspect would you improve and how?

Inventory Quality Personnel Hours/Days Prices

Inventory Selection Discounts/specials Location Other_____

9. What do you think is the best thing about ReStore?

Prices Mission Personnel Hours/days

Inventory Discounts/specials Events Organization Other_____

10. Would you be interested in receiving emails regarding donation events, store specials, and/or Habitat for Humanity updates?

Donation Events Store Specials HFH updates None

11. If so, what is your email? _____

APPENDIX F: DONOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Pick-up

Drop-Off

Donor Questionnaire

Name: _____ Zip: _____ Date: _____

1. Categories being donated:

- Furniture Kitchen Doors/Windows Appliances Electrical
 Décor Tools Plumbing Tools Building Materials
 Flooring Hardware Paint Bathroom Lumber
 Gardening Books Other _____

2. Type of item (specific) _____

3. Quality of Material: New Gently Used

- Word of Mouth Attended Event Craig's List Board/committee member/staff referral
 Digger's List Donor E-Newsletter Member of Current Household
 Homeowner Newsletter Other Non-Profit Researched
 ReStore Customer ReStore Volunteer Staff Unknown
 Vendor Volunteer Website Grant Prospect
 HFFI Other _____

4. How did you hear about ReStore?

5. Why are you donating these items?

- Upgrade Relocation Downsizing Other _____

6. Why did you choose to donate to ReStore over other non-profits?

- Mission type of items we accept Timing of pick-up Free pick-up Other _____

7. Is this your first time donating?

Yes / No

a. If so, would you donate again?

Yes / No

i. If not, why won't you donate again?

b. If this is not your first time donating, how many times have you donated?

8. Do you know the range of items we accept? Yes / No

9. Have you volunteered for ReStore? Yes / No

10. Have you shopped at ReStore? Yes / No

11. Would you be interested in receiving emails regarding donation events, store specials, and/or Habitat for Humanity updates?

Donation Events Store Specials HFH updates None

12. If so, what is your email? _____