

Everything Everywhere: volunteering

Just five minutes to make a difference

Our busy lifestyles make it increasingly difficult for many ordinary people to give time to charity. But, thanks to a mobile phone app from Everything Everywhere, we can now help out during those everyday 'thumb-twiddling' moments

In keeping with almost everyone during a recession, UK charities are cautious about the future. According to a National Council for Voluntary Organisations survey published in September, a third of charity leaders believe they will have to scale back their services over the next year because of the continuing downturn.

But while there might not be much money around, the raw materials – people – are not in such short supply. According to Third Sector Foresight, while long-term commitment to charities is falling, interest in short bursts of support is on the rise. Its research suggests that our busy, modern lifestyles are pushing us more towards 'episodic volunteering'

(involvement in one-off activities) and 'micro-volunteering', very short periods of time, usually given on a non-committal basis. Participants also increasingly want their

volunteering 'leisure time' to be fun.

Enter Everything Everywhere and the Do Some Good smartphone application. People might have little time to make big volunteering contributions in this fast-paced world, but most have the odd five minutes to contribute, and this app is designed to enable people with busy lives to engage with issues and causes they care about in a fun, interesting and easy way, while helping charities to meet their objectives.

Everything Everywhere brand Orange launched the app on the iPhone at the end of March, though it has since moved on to other smartphone platforms. The idea is simple: charities from the Samaritans to the World Clean Air Force Initiative can run pieces of research and surveys, as well as a range of other tasks, such as assistance with translations and photography, from people as they wait for a train, walk in the park or wander between meetings.

For Groundwork UK, for instance, people can take a quick snap with their camera phone of green spaces that they like. This is sent through the app to the charity, which then creates an online map of great green spaces from these recommendations. The

charity is using submissions as part of its campaign to improve urban living and help ensure local councils don't earmark green spaces for development.

A more fun example is Poo Patrol. Volunteers take pictures of dog waste in their local community in an effort to clean up the streets and can also do the same if they spot graffiti. Others include people with language skills being able to translate briefs for people who don't speak English, giving advice to people abroad on practical skills.

Everything Everywhere head of respect and responsibility, Helen Davies, claimed that one million of these five-minute activities is the equivalent of 10 years worth of volunteering. This is a big target, so to encourage more users onto the app, Orange offers music rewards, such as gig tickets, every time someone completes 60 actions.

"We all have these thumb-twiddling moments, sitting at the bus stop," says Georgie Sutcliffe, the app's product manager. "This app lets you become a bite size volunteer and you can help a lot of different charities, from the local to the global."

Davies adds: "This is a recognition of how people live their lives in the 21st century, including choice and flexibility. We're not saying that it's the only way to volunteer."

The target for the first year was to hit 50,000 actions within the first 12 months. The app is well in

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the company

Everything Everywhere was created on 1 April 2010 as a result of a decision by France Telecom and Deutsche Telekom in 2009 to merge T-Mobile UK and Orange UK into a 50:50 joint venture. The merger created the UK's leading mobile phone network operator, with nearly 28 million customers and more than 720 retail stores across the country. The merged group generates revenues of around £5.2bn, which amounts to just under 35% of total UK mobile retail revenue.

■ Launched in 1994, the Orange network grew to reach 90% of the UK population in two years and the Orange Group now has more than 130 million customers across five continents.

■ T-Mobile UK started life as One2One. The network was acquired by Deutsche Telekom in 1999 and rebranded in 2002. It sells more than 4.5 million handsets and 10 million SIM cards a year, and has more than 12 million customers.

■ The name Everything Everywhere originates from the company's plans to give customers instant access to 'everything everywhere'.



advance of this timetable, with 20,000 mobile volunteers already performing 30,000 actions. That first year's target should, then, be reached in 10 months.

To maximise the app's effectiveness and, therefore, the impact on charities, Orange developed it through an open innovation process. This involved inviting app developers and charities to join an online forum that enabled them to share ideas on how the app could look. The ambitions and ideas behind the venture were open to all, including competitors. "We wanted to be collaborative," says Sutcliffe. "We did this through a crowd sourcing platform which generated the best ideas through an online voting process. For a competitive industry like ours, this is unusual. We talked about this for months before we launched it."

The app neatly fits into UK prime minister David Cameron's concept of the Big Society, which he often describes as the centrepiece of his administration's political agenda. This vision lies behind the creation in July of Big Society Capital, a bank designed to fund voluntary projects and social sector organisations.

Indeed, Cameron backed the app from its launch, when he stated: "Millions of people who don't currently volunteer would like to do so if they had the time and information to make it as easy as possible. Do Some Good is a great way of tapping into this huge pool of untapped volunteering energy."

Davies points out that with this kind of endorsement, the app has "already been recognised as something new", while there is still so much more potential as Do Some Good is "definitely still in a growth phase".

For Orange, there is little doubt that this innovative

app improves the company's image. The company has a history of creating hugely successful marketing exercises, most notably the two-for-one cinema tickets offer it coined Orange Wednesdays.

There are also the technology benefits, as it allows Orange to experiment with new ideas of encouraging people to use apps more broadly.

As Sutcliffe concludes: "For sure this generates love for the brand. But it's about more than that. It's about creating pride within the company."

■ Further information:
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The app can be downloaded from the Orange website at www.orange.co.uk/dosomegood

comment EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE



Everything Everywhere has provided a unique opportunity for its customers to volunteer in many small ways, which will collectively make a big impact.

The Do Some Good mobile phone app is an example of a company 'thinking outside the box' about ways that they can use their expertise (in this case technological) and their outreach (their millions of customers) to make a positive impact on charities.

Points to note:

- The way the company has used its knowledge of its customers' mobile usage to encourage them to 'micro-volunteer' through the app, encouraging volunteering in a new generation.
- The use of a crowd sourcing platform as an open innovation process to ensure that the app worked for the charities involved, and the fact that the process was open to all, including competitors.
- The awareness that, not only is this good for the company's reputation externally, but that it also boosts internal pride.

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