

Effective Strategies for Managing Your Employee Volunteer and Engagement Programs with MicroEdge AngelPoints

Executive Summary

Are you reaping the full benefits of your CSR programs? Can you get employees excited about community involvement and CSR at your company? Employee involvement is a cornerstone of many successful corporate social responsibility initiatives, but most companies still lack the resources to: (1) effectively plan events; (2) engage their employees; and (3) fully articulate the impact of their programs to their customers, corporate stakeholders, and communities.

MicroEdge AngelPoints is an effective and integrated CSR solution that will help your organization mobilize the collective power of your employees to make a positive impact on your people, your company, and the world. The AngelPoints integrated platform provides the tools you need to effectively drive programs that will change the way your people and your customers perceive your company. We give you the technology you need to rally employees, encouraging them to be more involved with your volunteering and giving programs. And we allow you to gain efficiencies and utilize fewer resources in the process, ultimately saving you time and money and allowing you to make a greater difference.

This white paper discusses some of the elements of a successful employee involvement program.



The Benefits of Engaging Employees in CSR Efforts

At MicroEdge, we believe that the world's leading corporations hold the keys and the resources to solving many of our most pressing problems. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs, including community involvement, charitable giving, and sustainability initiatives, have seen tremendous growth in recent years. Employees, consumers, investors – all stakeholders – demand more from the companies with which they do business. Effective CSR reduces risk while creating distinct advantages for your company culture: employees report higher job satisfaction and loyalty to companies that actively demonstrate values similar to their own. *CSR is no longer a nice to have; it's a must have.*

So how does employee engagement fit into a corporate social responsibility strategy, and what benefits can programs that involve your employees bring to your company? CSR initiatives are only as strong as the people behind them. Keeping your workforce engaged and motivated – whether to recycle cans, bottles, and paper in the office; donate blood; package supplies at a food bank; participate in a walk-a-thon; or find creative ways to make your business more sustainable – requires a shared cultural mindset and firm belief that together you can make a difference and that *people lead the way. Employee volunteerism and other involvement programs are the best way to engender that mindset and build CSR into your company's DNA.*

Successful CSR programs comprise many elements – a strong tie-in to established corporate values, management commitment, and adequate resources, to name a few. Even the best programs, however, can be undermined by common problems: too much administrative overhead, lack of employee engagement, and difficulty demonstrating return on investment.

MicroEdge AngelPoints provides the solutions to these problems, boosting engagement in employee volunteer programs and strengthening the value of CSR programs. This paper discusses the ways you can manage your initiatives in the most efficient and cost effective manner, engage your workforce in new and innovative ways, and demonstrate value to your corporate stakeholders and community

Employee Engagement Ideas

Wondering how to effectively engage your employees?

Here are a few of the activities that clients manage with their AngelPoints system:

- Walk-a-thons and other “thons”
- Food drives or other types of drives (clothing, toys, old electronics, etc.)
- Soup kitchen shifts and food packaging
- Habitat for Humanity homebuilding
- Tutoring and Junior Achievement
- Drives to quit smoking, lose weight, or get in shape
- Personal sustainability goals
- Adopt-a-family charity drives
- Financial literacy
- Non-profit board service
- Environmental clean-up days
- Skills-based volunteering and pro-bono office work and consulting
- Personal volunteering, such as volunteering in schools or places of worship



Saving Time and Money with Efficient Program Management

As any event or volunteer program manager can tell you, administrative tasks consume the bulk of employee engagement planning activities. The list is endless: creating promotional materials, designing and building web pages and adding articles to newsletters, drafting messages and emailing employees, managing rosters with spreadsheets, sending follow-up emails, revising attendee lists when employees cancel, tracking t-shirt sizes, adding friends and family members to the list, and then trying to figure out everyone's hours. And if you compound these activities across all your locations or business units, you quickly see how crucial technology is to efficiently manage these tasks and scale your efforts.

While many planners do an excellent job at juggling all of these activities, there comes a point when you either have too many employees to effectively manage events using email and spreadsheets, or you want to expand the size and scope of your program (for example, to launch a global day of service across all of your locations), or both.

If you are evaluating how to launch an employee involvement initiative or increase the effectiveness of your current program, it's important to understand the key role that technology plays in your success. It can significantly streamline the administrative overhead of creating events, managing employees, tracking outputs and outcomes; and enable you to efficiently report on your program results – whether to management, your employees or the communities you serve – so you can spend your time creating strategic value for your programs.

Steps to Success

Promote and publicize your events

Provide ample opportunities for staff feedback

Survey your employees for greater insight into staff motivations. This will enable you to tailor your program to further increase involvement and allow you to benchmark and measure event success. Surveys are also a great way to collect stories from your events, and bring a personal touch to your internal communications and post-event press releases.



Program managers are under ever-increasing pressure to demonstrate the return on investment in volunteer and other CSR programs. Post-event surveys are one way to collect and analyze this important data, providing a way to benchmark and measure event success. (For more information about ROI and reporting, see *Enhancing Brand Reputation* in this paper.)

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Survey Preview" for a "Basic Post Event Survey". The main content area displays the following text and questions:

Thank you for volunteering! We really appreciate your time and effort. To make our community events even better, please fill out the survey below.

1. My involvement had a positive impact on my community. (Required)
 Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree N/A
2. The event manager(s) was well-organized and helpful. (Required)
 Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree N/A
3. The nonprofit was well-organized and provided adequate supervision. (Required)
 Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree N/A
4. This website made my volunteer experience more efficient. It was easy to sign-up and submit my hours. (Required)
 Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree N/A
5. This experience helped me... (check all that apply)
 Feel good about myself
 Feel good about my company
 Improve my ability to work with my colleagues
 Make a difference in the community
 Make new connections with colleagues at work
 Make a new business connection

A "Close" button is located at the bottom right of the survey preview area.

The sidebar on the left contains configuration options for the survey, including "How do you want it managed" (Maximum Volunteers, Pre-Screening, Validate Hours, CRA Eligible, Allow Friends & Family) and "What kind of feedback we want" (No Survey, Basic Post Event Survey).

Target and promote events to increase turnout

Your marketing team knows the value of targeting your company's message to the right audience. In the same way, promoting your events to targeted groups within your company is the most effective way to increase turnout. Target and promote events based on:

- Causes your employees care the most about
- Skill sets your team possesses
- Geographic areas
- Departments
- Business Units
- Task forces
- And any other group you define



By doing so, you can ensure that your events are easy to find in relevant user searches, and you can also send targeted promotional emails to the employees who should be most closely associated with the event.

With a well-planned CSR strategy and robust system to help them manage their program, AAA's employee volunteer participation exploded over 900% and its program experienced a triple digit increase in volunteers, volunteer leaders, and the number of events AAA participates in each year.

ANGELPOINTS better companies.better world.

Dashboard | Sustainability | Giving | My Page | Rewards | Manage | Reports | About | Help | Log Out

Search for Events | External Events | Group Leader Search | Event Calendar | News & Information

Go To Classic Home Page

Welcome Back, Stephane. Did you attend this event on May 4? Brown Bag Lunch Series: How to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint. [Log Your Hours](#)

You might be interested in this event on September 4: Ocean Beach Clean Up. [Sign Up!](#)

Volunteer Hours
 13 Hours Since 9/19/2010 | 0 Friends & Family Hours | 19 Lifetime Hours
[View Hours History](#) | [View CarePoints Mail History](#)

My Local Events | [View List](#)

External Events | [View List](#)

October 19 - 31 2011

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

- 1 - Habitat for Humanity San Francisco
- 9 - Habitat for Humanity San Francisco
- 10 - Marin County Humane Society
- 13 - Financial Literacy Classes for Students
- 21 - Ocean Beach Clean Up

Search Events [Search](#)

Quick Links

- Submit My Hours
- Log My Independent Volunteer Activity (IVA)
- Flexible Opportunities
- External Events
- Group Leader Search
- Customize My Profile
- PSP Overview
- Create PSP
- Track PSP

News & Information

ABC Employees Help Raise \$350,000 for Riley Hospital for Children
 On August 28, 2007, Loss Prevention Associates from Indiana teamed up with Associates from the...

Earth Day 2008 Results
 Earth Day 2008—more than 1,300 ABC Company employees, retirees and their friends and families...

3rd Annual Step Up & Serve: Service a Huge Success!
 The third annual "Step Up and Serve" walk to raise funds for the Scales Elementary School (Murfreesb...

Me | **Our Company** | Key Stats

How Our Company Makes a Difference! This Year

Volunteering Impact
 Change Photo
\$45,480
 Total Value of Community Impact
 Based on Independent Factor, 2008

Volunteering Stats

- 245 Total employee participants
- 90 Company events attended
- 1,146 Employee volunteer hours
- 22 Non-profit partners served
- 30 Non-profit partners served (including write-ins)

Volunteering Goals Set Goals

Company Goal	Current 02/2011	Total Value	Participation Rate	Average Hours/Emp	Employee Hours
		\$3,094	42%	33%	96,000

Volunteering Accomplishments

- Angelpoints Volunteers have planted 1,000 trees!! [View | Edit](#)
- Angelpoints volunteers have mentored over 500 children [View | Edit](#)
- 2010 Leader Board [View | Edit](#)
- Create New Accomplishments



Engage Employees with Your Community Initiatives

Leading management teams the world over agree that their number one asset is their people. But what is the key to recruiting and retaining this most valuable resource? Employee engagement.

Human resources research consistently shows that employees are the happiest and most likely to stay at companies that:

- Are innovative
- Align with their personal values
- Offer opportunities for growth and development
- Foster an environment where employees feel they are making an impact
- Cultivate and encourage great teams

While many components of your corporate culture must work together to foster these different criteria, employee volunteer programs are one of the most cost-effective ways to engage your workforce in all of these aspects.

Building a strong program helps you recruit and retain top talent and provide opportunities for skills-based learning, team-building, networking, and fun. In fact, the industry average for corporate volunteer participation hovers at around 10%. Better yet, organizations that use AngelPoints have experienced approximately 30% participation, with some clients seeing upwards of 75% participation.

Some features that can increase your engagement include:

Know What Employees Are Interested In and Able to Do

Instead of gathering only basic information about your employees (such as location), make sure you dive a little deeper so that it's easier to help match them with the events that fit them best. Understanding the types of causes they are interested in, their skills, and availability will help you to find the most likely volunteer candidates.

Make it Easy to Find Events

Why do people get involved? Oftentimes it is simply because they are asked! Be sure to reach out to your employees directly. Furthermore, make your events easy to find.



Also, put some thought into the different types of activities you want to support. There are several ways that you can encourage your employees to get involved:

Company-Sponsored Activities: Promote those activities that are organized and/or sanctioned by your company.

External Events: Allow employees to search for volunteer opportunities of interest through an organization such as Idealist.org.

Independent Volunteer Activities: Enable employees to log independent volunteer hours spent donating blood, participating in local school events, etc.



Figure 4: Example of how AngelPoints can help employees find Company-Sponsored Events

Make it Easy to Sign Up for Events

Signing up for events should be as easy as clicking a button. Beyond that, there are several features that will lead to increased engagement:

- Automatic calendar updates
- Links to maps and weather reports
- Ability to include friends and family



Customize Your Program for Your Employees

The more information you provide to employees, the more likely they will be to sign up for events. Some important pieces of information and tools to provide include:

- Information about company initiatives
- Information about non-profit partners
- Tools that support your company's CSR initiatives (e.g. a tool to help you calculate and offset your carbon footprint)
- Posts and links to event pictures
- Volunteer time off policy information
- Links to online giving platforms

The screenshot shows a web page with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Home', 'My Page', 'Manage', 'Reports', 'About', and 'Support'. The main heading is 'Nourishing Our Communities'. Below the heading is a photograph of several people in white shirts handing boxes of food to a group of people. To the right of the photo is a box titled 'About Pages' containing a list of links: 'Nourishing Our Communities', 'Non-Profit Partners', 'Calculate & Offset Your Carbon Footprint', 'How to Reduce Environmental Impact', 'Suggest a Volunteer Event', 'Photo Gallery', 'ABC Company's VTO Policy', 'ABC Company's Matching Gift Program', 'BoardNet USA - NonProfit Board Matching Resource', 'Community Grants Program', 'Community Grant Recipients', 'Team Green', 'Corporate Philanthropy Report', 'Additional Volunteer Resources', 'From Hunger to Hope', 'Shine the Light on Hunger', 'San Diego Home Page', and 'New York City Home Page'. Below the photo, there is a paragraph of text: 'At ABC Company, we are proud of our long-standing commitment to the communities where we live and work, beginning in our hometown of Nashville, Tennessee. We describe our community efforts as "nourishing our neighbors" and we are focused in four primary areas:'. This is followed by a numbered list: '1. Community Revitalization—enhancing the quality of life in our communities.' and '2. Wellness—addressing the health of our consumers in the communities where they live.'

Figure 6: Sample About Page

Reward Participation!

Volunteering is a commitment of time and skills, and it is a testament to your employees' passion for making the world a better place. Reward them for that participation – it will inspire your employees to participate even more! Recognize top volunteers, encourage engagement, and provide incentives for volunteers to submit their hours.

The screenshot shows a web page with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Home', 'My Page', 'Rewards', 'Manage', 'Reports', 'About', 'Support', and 'CRA'. The main heading is 'Grants'. Below the heading is a 'Sort By' dropdown menu set to 'Hours'. A navigation bar shows '<< Showing 1-5 of 5 >>'. There are four grant listings, each with a 'Midwestern Regional Reward' icon, a '1,000 Grant' icon, and a '50 Grant' icon. The first listing is for a '\$1,000 Grant' for '1 Hours between 01/01/2008 and 12/31/2008'. The second listing is for a '\$100 Grant' for '15 Hours between 01/01/2008 and 12/31/2008'. The third listing is for a '\$50 Grant' for '20 Hours between 01/01/2008 and 12/31/2008'. The fourth listing is for a '\$100 Grant' for '25 Hours between 01/01/2008 and 12/31/2008'. To the right of the grant listings is a box titled 'Volunteer Hours' showing '0 Hours' and '251.5 Lifetime Hours' since 01/01/2009. Below this box is a 'Rewards Item Types' box with a 'Merchandise' link and a 'Grants' link.

Figure 7: Rewards Page



Enhancing Your Brand Reputation and Demonstrating ROI

If you are like many of the companies we talk to, you have spent years building an iconic brand and you are looking for authentic and innovative ways to promote your brand throughout your community and around the world.

Particularly in these times, where the news is dominated by troubling stories, there is perhaps no better way to enhance your image and stand out from the pack than by sharing uplifting stories that demonstrate your company's social responsibility.

Volunteer engagements enable your employees to go out in the community, represent your brand, build relationships, and strengthen communities by sharing their skills and passions. This alone is a positive step, but effective software solutions can help you to scale programs and coordinate efforts on a national and even global level by providing the tools and infrastructure to track and manage your events, and to target and promote events and engage employees throughout your entire company.

Moreover, all of those efforts add up to a great story, and it is important that you're able to easily pull together real-time, accurate and credible data to build it. When you have a system that manages your data for you, you no longer need to spend valuable time building complicated spreadsheets and collating information from your event coordinators around the country. The right tools can help you demonstrate the impact you've made, so you can tell it through your annual CSR reports, press releases, and more. Powerful reporting gives you all the qualitative and quantitative data you need to analyze and evaluate your program, and demonstrate its value and ROI to your customers, community, and management team. These reports show your program's impacts, strengths, and weaknesses, and give you a means to benchmark your efforts against the programs of other companies of the same size or industry.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for reporting. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'My Page', 'Rewards', 'Manage', 'Reports', 'About', 'Support', and 'CRA'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with 'Participants', 'Organizations', 'Events', 'Recent Activity', 'New Users', 'Surveys', 'Board Membership', 'Board Participation', 'Event Managers', 'Master Roster', and 'Scheduled Reports'. The main content area is titled 'Reports' and features a section 'View reports for all...' with a grid of report links: 'Participants Report', 'Organizations Report', 'Events Report', 'Board Membership Report', 'Board Participation Report', 'Survey Report', 'New User Report', 'Recent Activity Report', 'Event Managers Report', and 'Master Roster Report'. A 'Quick Links' box on the right contains links for 'Participants Report', 'Organizations Report', and 'Events Report', each with a list of time-based filters like 'Today', 'Yesterday', 'This Week', etc.

Figure 8: Reporting can help you measure your impact and tell your story



Ways that Reporting Can Support Your Volunteer Initiatives

- Shows you who is participating in your events so you can identify your top volunteers and top activities
- Lists your non-profit partners and shows the level of activity and engagement for each
- Shows board participation and membership
- Compiles survey feedback and allows you to view in aggregate format, by event, or individual responses
- Expands and narrows down data sets, so you can slice and dice information by group, region, business unit, or other criteria to more critically analyze your program
- Displays log-in data so you can track system usage
- Summarizes the number of events and participation level per event manager

Taking the Next Step

Empowered by MicroEdge AngelPoints solutions, leading companies in every industry around the globe manage and measure their community involvement initiatives and recognize and reward more than two million active employees. MicroEdge AngelPoints clients have logged more than 20,000,000 volunteer hours – approximately \$425,000,000 in volunteer services at today's estimated dollar value for volunteer time – since 2001.

With the MicroEdge AngelPoints complete CSR solution, you will be able to:

- Manage your CSR programs more efficiently: Our technology helps you to do more with fewer resources, so you can spend less time on logistics and more time on what's important – increasing the impact and value of your volunteering and giving initiatives.
- Engage employees and make a greater impact: Attract employees to more events with targeted communications tools, proven to draw participants to 95% of promoted events.
- Keep them coming back: Recognize employees for their participation with customizable rewards programs and increase the likelihood that they will take part in future events.
- Show collective impact: Real-time results increase employee motivation and a wealth of giving data and standard and custom reporting tools give greater insight into your corporate social responsibility initiatives, helping you demonstrate your success both internally and to your community.
- Track all aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility: Volunteering, Giving, and Sustainability.
- Do it all across various languages and with peace of mind, knowing that your solution is backed by enterprise-grade security.

Need more information? Contact us today:

800-899-0890 (option 1) | info@microedge.com | www.microedge.com



What people are saying about our comprehensive CSR solution:

“We decided to use AngelPoints solutions rather than hiring another full-time person—it's that effective.”

“Impact Dashboard has been outstanding! We only launched a month ago and sent one communication, and we're already at 1,600 hours logged. That's truly extraordinary!”

“People are inspired by the program and want to use AngelPoints solutions to log service work for department team building activities.”

“Our biggest pride point demonstrating success was Global Volunteer Day. We had about 13,000 hours registered in over 80 sites globally. There's no way we could have done that without our AngelPoints solutions.”