

Case Study

Liquidnet for Good

Overview

Liquidnet is a global institutional marketplace that facilitates equities trading for institutional investors worldwide. Each year, Liquidnet commits one percent of revenues to engage with social challenges through their initiative Liquidnet for Good. The pursuit of a better world is embedded in the DNA of Liquidnet and is a core component of their statement of purpose.

In 2008, as part of the Liquidnet for Good program, Liquidnet created a local giving program called "The \$150,000 Local Impact Challenge". The program invests grant money in local New York City based non-profit organizations that are nominated, selected, and vetted by employees. The program proved successful in its launch year: employees were engaged, winning non-profits received much needed grant money and the company received some accolades for its investment. In the spring of 2009, Liquidnet approached Justmeans with a request to drive more interaction around the Local Impact Challenge.

Working in partnership, Liquidnet and Justmeans designed an online, multi-stage competition for selecting grant recipients. By placing social media as a core part of the challenge's process, Liquidnet dramatically increased positive exposure to their giving program, the recipient organizations, and all applicants who applied. For Liquidnet, the program not only made sense from the perspective of greater exposure for the company, but it also heightened the profile of non-profit grantees.

How Social Media Provided a Return on Investment

Corporate Philanthropy is a core component of Liquidnet's community engagement strategy. Without social media, the program was a success, albeit a quiet success. By integrating social media into the core process of the grant program, Liquidnet was able to realize several additional benefits to the program.

The program's reach is now exponentially broader: In 2008, a press release using traditional wire services was distributed to announce Liquidnet's program. The 10 recipient organizations likewise listed Liquidnet as a donor after they were selected. While Liquidnet was able to achieve some reach through traditional wire services, using social media incentivized 27 non-profit organizations to engage their entire communities in the online challenge. In partnership with Justmeans, social media ignited Liquidnet's program and secured a significantly larger audience with whom Liquidnet can communicate and interact. Social media also gave the non-profit organizations reason to bring people to Liquidnet's page on Justmeans and Facebook which are filled with information about the company's good work.

Non-profits benefit from engaging their stakeholders in the program: Small non-profit organizations often lack the resources to utilize social media. While only half of the participating organizations received cash from Liquidnet, all 27 received extensive exposure by developing their own social media page as part of the challenge.

The campaign expanded the audience of followers: All campaign participants who voted or commented became followers of Liquidnet on Justmeans. As a result, Liquidnet's community of invested participants can continue to engage online and stay updated on Liquidnet initiatives.

General marketing exposure: The program generated over 23,000 backlinks and in excess of 3 million impressions across the web.

The Process

Step 1.) Liquidnet employees were invited to nominate non-profit organizations based in their communities to participate in the \$150,000 Local Impact Challenge.

Step 2.) 27 nominated organizations uploaded programmatic information to Liquidnet's campaign module on Justmeans.

Step 3.) Each organization was then asked to solicit votes and comments on Justmeans and Facebook to support their application. Participants were able to easily share the applications through their Facebook and Twitter Newsfeeds, allowing for viral exposure.

Step 4.) The top 10 vote receiving organizations received at least \$10,000.

Step 5.) Following the culmination of online voting, employees then determined which of the top 10 organizations would receive additional grant dollars ranging up to \$35,000.

"Our Local Impact Challenge is specifically aimed at strengthening local communities. Many nonprofits that provide vital services are experiencing severe funding challenges, and we decided to help them address their needs. In doing so, we are encouraging each organization to use social media to engage their existing supporters and develop new ones, which is so critical for nonprofits these days."

Seth Merin

CEO

Liquidnet

Liquidnet had the full ability to create the application form, review and rate entries, and add judges.

Liquidnet was able to reach hundreds of millions of potential participants through the Justmeans Facebook application.

Voters and commenters could share the contest easily through their newsfeed to gain more support for their applications.