

## **CASE STUDY:**

How Optimizely  
Increased Its  
Employee Giving  
Results Sevenfold



## Thinking Strategically About Employee Giving

John Leonard knew his co-workers at [Optimizely](#), Inc. are very generous. But he didn't realize just how generous they were until he saw the results of the company's most recent annual giving campaign.

The San Francisco-based tech startup, which makes software for website experimentation and personalization, had launched its first employee giving campaign as a way to help its employees give back to charity.

The initial effort did well — more than one-fifth of the company's employees chose to give.

But when the company reworked the campaign and branded it OPTIGIVE, employees responded in a huge way, said Leonard, who manages social impact at Optimizely.

**The total amount of money raised increased sevenfold — and more than half of its 340 employees made contributions.**

"It blew all of our expectations out of the water," Leonard said.

The difference? Optimizely got strategic.

Prior to launching its newly branded campaign, Optimizely worked with experts at America's Charities to come up with a customized strategic plan to guide the program, which included recommendations for goals, structure, timing, and communications, Leonard said.

"The plan streamlined my process by sharing best practices and ensuring that I didn't have to 'reinvent the wheel,'" he said.



**Shown in Photo:** John Leonard,  
Program Manager at Optimizely

## An Expert's Perspective

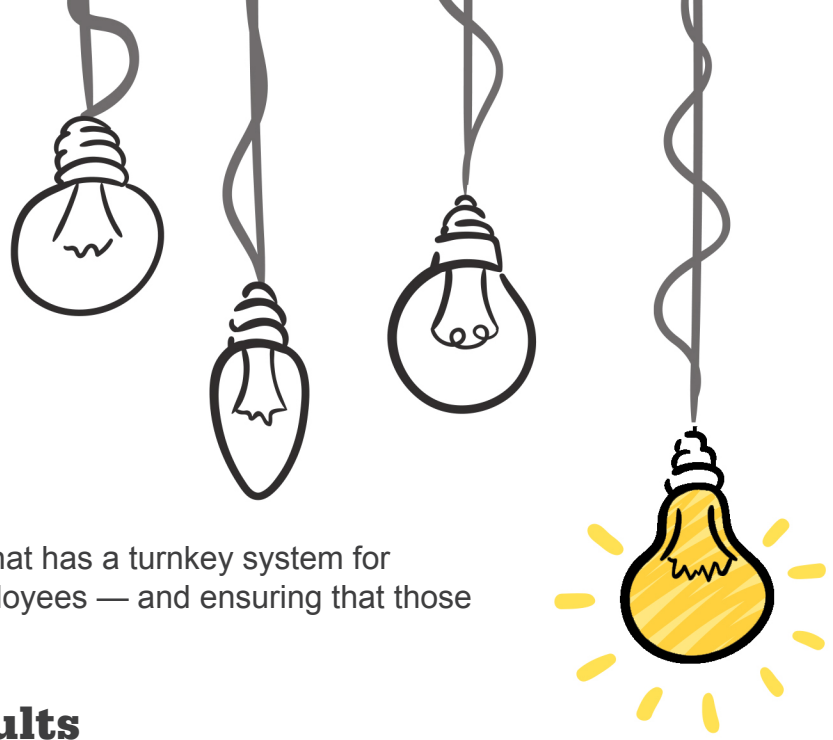
By working with America's Charities, Optimizely didn't have to worry about building its program on its own. Instead, it could tap the expertise of a company that works with hundreds of companies and organizations who manage giving programs that benefit more than 10,000 national and local charities.

It was also able to work with an organization that has a turnkey system for collecting and processing donations from employees — and ensuring that those contributions reach the right nonprofits.

## Doubling and Tripling Results

For Leonard and his company, the results exceeded their own lofty expectations. The company kicked off the campaign with a happy hour party attended by more than half of the staff at its headquarters. At the party, senior executives volunteered as bartenders and collected more than \$500 in tips that were donated to three nonprofits who had booths at the party.

**Shown Below:** Senior executives volunteering as bartenders at Optimizely's OPTIGIVE campaign kick-off.



Overall, of Optimizely's 340 employees, 175 contributed to the OPTIGIVE campaign — a number that is particularly impressive given the fact that 85 percent of its workforce are millennials and are housed in offices around the globe. In fact, giving was strong across all global offices, with 56 percent participation in the London and Cologne, Germany, offices; 51 percent in the San Francisco office; and a whopping 89 percent in the New York office, Leonard said.

Not only did more employees give, they also gave more. The average contribution per donor more than tripled, from \$55 to \$175.

Leonard attributed the growth to two key drivers — allowing payroll deduction and encouraging recurring donations. Half of Optimizely's donors chose to give through payroll deduction and 25% made recurring contributions.

Optimizely uses the Causecast online giving platform, a strategic partner of America's Charities, to make the campaign seamless and easy for employees to donate with just a few clicks.

"The campaign strategy from America's Charities provided the guidance I needed to really optimize our employees' charitable impact," he said. "Now I have a roadmap to make next year's campaign even more successful!"

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— John Leonard, Optimizely



***Shown Above:*** Nonprofits engage with employees at Optimizely's campaign kick-off.

## America's Charities Can Help You

From basic donation-only campaigns or stand-alone solutions like strategic advice and funds management solutions, to supporting employee engagement and CSR more holistically through workplace giving, peer-to-peer fundraising, volunteering, volunteer grants, in-kind giving, storytelling, social media and international giving, America's Charities helps employers of all sizes with their charitable giving needs. To learn more and tell us about your unique needs, please visit [www.charities.org/portfolio](http://www.charities.org/portfolio), or contact America's Charities Vice President of Business Development Kim Young at [kyoung@charities.org](mailto:kyoung@charities.org) or 703-674-5358.

## Acknowledgements

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