

Growth4Good survey April 2017: summary of results.

Introduction

These are the summary results of the Growth4Good survey that was conducted in April 2017. The results are helping to inform how Growth4Good creates content for, and about, purpose-led organisations. We want to help purpose-led business accelerate their growth by providing best practice examples and a forum for discussion and support.

Key findings

- 71% of respondents were already working for a purpose-led organisation. Despite that there was not a homogenised response to the questions - they were interested in a whole range of topics which reflected their specific challenges. They are very different organisations with a common mission-led approach.
- They are very engaged - half of the 35 respondents were keen to contribute content. They are individuals clearly passionate about what they do and keen to collaborate as a social business community - and what's more they want to promote the purpose-led way of doing business.
- **'The role of technology in enabling business growth' was the highest ranked topic. This is not surprising: the opportunities afforded by tech and its ever-changing nature mean it's a key consideration for all organisations. In second place was 'Staying true to your values' which is a particular challenge for mission-led organisations. Shortly behind in joint third was 'Attracting, retaining & developing talent' and 'The sales pipeline'. The war for talent remains a challenge for all enterprises and, of course, even with a social or environmental mission generating sales is crucial: purpose and profit go hand-in-hand.**
- **LinkedIn was the social network of choice for taking part in conversations about purpose-led business; it gained 50% of the vote. This is no surprise due to its work-related nature. However, there was a number of different suggestions and we are investigating the options and whether they provide the desired functionality. We are already on Twitter @growth4good so do join the conversation there.**

Background

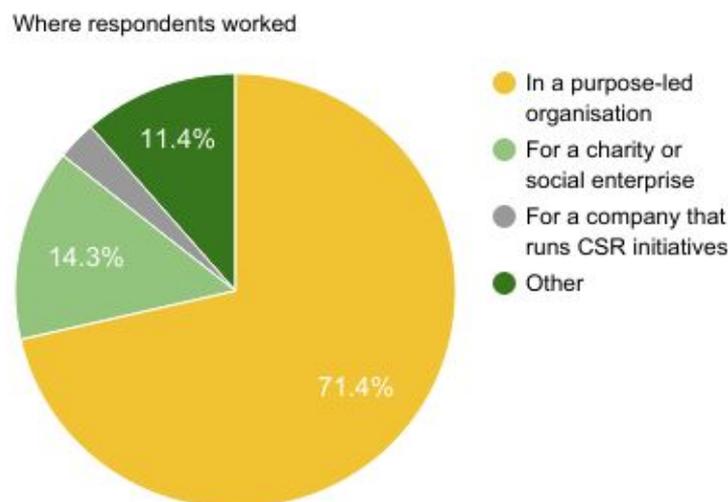
Growth4Good is an accelerator focused on partnering and investing in high growth social businesses in the digital media and technology sectors. The founder, Martin Leuw, believes that all organisations should have purpose at their heart. The survey asked purpose-led businesses, social enterprises and charities which topics would be of most interest to them and whether they would like to contribute to content we will produce. We think there's an opportunity to create a community of purpose-led organisations, firstly, to support each other and, secondly, to work together to show the wider world that business should be a force for good.

Methodology

This qualitative survey was sent to people we know (and passed on by them to relevant people) who are interested in the purpose-led business/social enterprise/charity sector. It is not representative of UK organisations or even those in this sector. The survey was anonymous although 80% of people provided their name and/or email address either to help contribute to content and/or receive a copy of the results. Consequently we know the majority are from small or medium sized organisations. The answers were randomised to allow for response bias. Where the percentages don't add up to 100% this is where they have been rounded up or down. The survey ran for 17 days from 5 April 2017 to 21 April 2017. 35 people completed the survey.

Results

First of all we wanted to find out where respondents worked:



In a purpose-led organisation	71%
For a charity or social enterprise	14%
For a company that runs CSR initiatives	3%
Other	11%

Other answers were: an incubator; a consultant for purpose-led business; impact fund; and a combination of the roles (which is representative of those in the purpose sector not necessarily fitting neatly into one category).

Then we wanted to explore which topics interested people the most. There was a broad response. This seems to reflect the particular expertise and knowledge that exists within each organisation.

However, it's little surprise that with technology such a business enabler and the ever-changing nature of tech it was the most popular topic area. In second place was 'Staying true to your values'. Shortly behind in joint third was 'The sales pipeline' and 'Attracting, retaining & developing talent'. Therefore although these organisations are values-led, generating sales is of primary importance: purpose and profit go hand-in-hand. It would be interesting to explore the particular issues they have with attracting, retaining and developing talent. Do they share the same challenges as non purpose-led companies? Are there skill shortages across the board? However, clearly companies with a mission are an attractive place to work. Is the differential between salaries in mission and non-mission-led organisations a factor?

All the topics we proposed were of interest to the audience. They all gained similar rankings although 'Why develop an advisory board' was the least popular. Whether the organisations already have an advisory board in place, have not considered one or it's simply less important than other topics can be explored further. Analysis of the open ended answers showed some respondents wanted advice on business strategy and leadership.

Ranking in order of importance (1 being the most important, 10 being the least important):

	Rating average
1.The role of technology in enabling business growth	4.39
2. Staying true to your values	4.63
3. Attracting, retaining and developing the best talent	4.76
3. The sales pipeline	4.76
4. Measuring impact	5.06
5. Getting investment for a purpose-led business	5.13
6. Storytelling & PR as lead generation	5.63
7. Why purpose matters	5.72
8. What skills you need in-house and when you should outsource	6.78
9. Why develop an advisory board	7.91

New topic areas that were suggested:

	Number of people who listed the topic
Effective networking between leaders of purpose-driven organisations and peer mentoring	2
Leadership in business/ managing entrepreneurial organisations	2

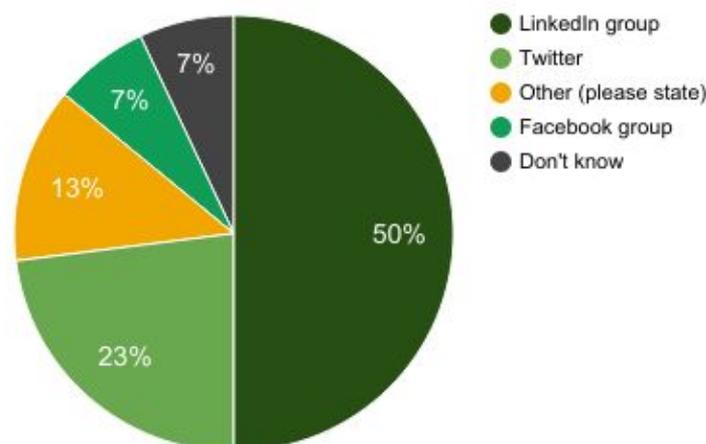
General business strategy advice	2
How to drive consumer behavioural change/mobilisation of the community to create change	2
Communicating impact to staff and external stakeholders	1
How to give back to communities	1

Exactly half of the respondents (17) were interested in contributing to content. We were really pleased to see this. Their stated areas of expertise encompassed technology, sustainability, energy, impact measurement, raising capital, understanding and managing risk, employing ex-offenders and purpose-led businesses in general.

We also asked: “We’d like to help facilitate conversation about purpose-led organisations. Which one of the following would be your preferred means of taking part in these conversations?”

The answers were varied perhaps reflecting people’s favourite social networks. LinkedIn, with its work-focus, was the top choice. Twitter came in second place.

How would you take part in conversations about purpose-led business?



LinkedIn group	50%
Twitter	23%
Other (please state)	13%
Facebook group	7%

Don't know	7%
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There were interesting comments under 'Other'. These ranged from Google Hangouts to Slack (because of its functionality that allows subjects to be organised by thread) and Google+ Communities for the same reason as Slack. Email and face-to-face were also mentioned.

This shows the variety of platforms that people use. It's important to facilitate discussion through different touchpoints but also assess the functionality afforded by each platform to support a community.

Conclusion

The survey found that, despite their common values-led approach, they were very different organisations with varying requirements and needs depending on their skills and knowledge base. What was apparent is that the respondents clearly shared Growth4Good's passion for business as a force for good. They are keen to network as a community and to support and learn from each other. Furthermore, they want to spread the message about business's role to do good in the wider world and, in some cases, also help bring about consumer change to address our global problems.

www.growth4good.com

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