



Submitted by:
Brown & Company Design

What was the challenge or opportunity?

Several nonprofits came to us regularly to ask for donation work and we kept saying yes to all of them — stretching ourselves too thin by over committing.

What was your approach or solution?

In 1998, A Safe Place came to our office to share the story of their work and its impact on the community. The entire staff was mesmerized by what they had to say and continued the discussions long after they left. It was at that point that we created the pro-bono partnership program, selecting one nonprofit a year to focus on.

We decided that selecting one nonprofit to donate a full year of design service to would allow several advantages: -- it would allow for a more meaningful relationship with the nonprofit we were serving, allow us to have more impact by concentrating more resources into one body of communications projects, and allow us to really know the organization we were working with so we could be strong ambassadors for them.

What is the impact (on your bottom line? In the community?, etc.)

- Our ability to create real impact for the nonprofit we partnered with increased dramatically.
- Our ability to manage our nonprofit pro-bono work effectively became much greater — one big project as opposed to many small ones.
- The staff really comes to understand these nonprofit community partners and their work, a great benefit for both the company and the nonprofit.
- We spend the same if not less design time per year donated, and yet our impact for these nonprofits has grown tremendously.
- Our program earned us national exposure through industry publication HOW Magazine.