

where
generosity
moves beyond
the brands

Have you ever heard of a 14-year-old working for employment consultants dealing primarily in vocational rehabilitation?

The ideal of thinking of others before oneself was ingrained in Nathalie Hofsteede, founder and CEO of online charity, Givealittle, from a young age.

As well as working full time in the family business, Nathalie learnt out of necessity to do a lot of things on her own – a skill, she says she acquired from hardworking, self-employed parents. She also discovered that creativity didn't just mean being good at art or performance early in life.

"Creativity in business is equally as valuable," says the 25-year-old whose favourite part of school was the young enterprise programme.

In just two and a half years, Nathalie completed a Bachelor of Commerce majoring in international business and commercial law and a Bachelor of Arts in politics and international relations from Victoria University.

In 2007, at the age of 22, she started the online charity, Capital Cause.

"The aim behind [Capital Cause] was to hold fundraising events that appealed to a younger demographic. I felt that there was a significant disconnect between the traditional ways that charities communicate and fundraise and younger people.

"I started doing research around how the web was being used internationally to connect a whole generation of people who were opting to receive communications online. Through that process I became acutely aware of the issues around charitable fundraising."

With the backing of venture capital firm Movac, the same firm that backed Sam Morgan and Trademe, Nathalie instigated Givealittle in December 2007.

With about \$1 billion of public money going to not-for-profit organisations each year, Nathalie realised the internet could release a great deal of money for good causes. For every dollar it raises, 95 cents goes to the appropriate charity. The other five cents stays with the business as a service fee.

The development of the project was initially extended to accommodate the birth of Nathalie's first child in April 2008 and the website was launched in December the same year.

"During our research, many people indicated they felt fatigued by the continued requests to give after they donate, or that their personal details were being sold as part of donor databases," says Nathalie.

International research suggests that up to one third of all giving will be made online by 2010. Based on 18 months of research, consultation and development, Givealittle.co.nz aims to change behaviour and attitudes

to giving in New Zealand by offering a new way for everyday donors and business givers to engage with charity and the non-profit community online.

"Everyday we are bombarded with requests to give. We are asked to give into a white bucket on the street, put money in the post, view a TV advert then call a 0900 number. I think everyone's favourite has to be the phone call at dinner time. What we were hearing from people was an absence of the good feeling that we should have when we give. This site provides people with the opportunity to actually help people instead of just thinking about it."

People like a 22-year-old Victoria University student with advanced melanoma. So far over \$16,000 has been fundraised for her to receive alternative treatment in Perth.

The website was also used to raise funds to bring an injured New Zealander back from Vietnam. "That day when I saw a public cause go up and people respond with huge amounts of generosity and support. I've created a situation where generosity moves beyond brand names. It's about what people are prepared to do for people."

www.givealittle.co.nz

A note from Nathalie...

The greatest misconception about Gen Y is that we don't care and that we're self centred.

We just may not be communicating it in the same ways previous generations have.

Recognising that Gen Y does care as well as being up front about how your company approaches different issues around environment and social sustainability will capture the hearts of Gen Y employees.

And to all you Gen Ys out there, don't compromise yourself.

Grow and be successful without getting yourself into situations where you do something you don't like, say something you don't believe or sell something that doesn't have any value to you.

If you want to change something, change it. No one's going to do it for you. Stop complaining and make things happen.

ner inspiration

