

Save Your Logo

“Many companies use an animal or plant in their logo. With Save Your Logo they can give back to the animal or plant species.”

1. Introduction

Five years ago, Save Your Logo (SYL) began as a program of the Fund Dotation pour la Biodiversité (FDB), a French foundation housed in Paris. In this program, companies that use animals or plants in their logo are linked to the protection of the same animal or plant species. The FDB has already conducted several programs with French partners, including Lacoste and Rhinos.

For establishing a Dutch foundation, SYL would like to determine if the same concept is also possible in the Netherlands. The interesting thing about the model is that many companies use a logo from nature. They do not simply do this without reason; there is a concept behind it. For example, a lion gives a company a stately image which is the reason for using the lion in their logo. However, companies do not give back to the animal or plant when using it in their logo. SYL wants to change that.

2. Principles

SYL is a foundation; therefore, there is no profit but only a positive result at the end of the year. It is important to minimize the cost so the amount that companies donate to SYL, for the most part, reaches the actual projects. Because the company has an ANBI mark, it is obligated to place an annual report on the ANBI website each year.

Therefore, an important principle of SYL is transparency. All knowledge is shared through reports. Companies need to know what happens with their money and, in this way, everyone has an overview of the costs, benefits, and donations.

3. Design

SYL in the Netherlands was created during a project in the Philippines where, on the edge of a National Park, an NGO was concerned with the extinction of the Philippine crocodile. There were only one hundred of these crocodiles still alive. The crocodile population has now grown to 300. An enormous event was organized in order to draw attention to the project. The French company Lacoste was present there as a donor.

In addition to protecting the rainforest and the species, these projects also aim to involve the local community. The people in the villages can catch a crocodile and set it free in their natural habitat. In this way, they contribute to a better world.

The Dutch foundation SYL is in the development stage and focuses on companies in the Benelux. SYL acts as an intermediary between companies that use animals and plants in their logos and charities such as the IUCN. SYL connects businesses with existing local projects. The plan is that projects from the IUCN can be introduced to the Dutch foundation and subsequently associated with Dutch companies. For IUCN, this is very interesting because this is generating additional income for them. Businesses can choose from several projects. On the basis of personal preferences, they receive ownership of a project. Through SYL, it is also possible to visit a project, making the project more real for the donors, and they can also get more opportunity to do something with it from a marketing perspective.

In addition to the financial transactions that ensure projects are conducted properly, there is transfer of knowledge from IUCN and local projects on environmental issues. SYL provides a service whereby approximately 85% of the donations actually support the projects. In addition, SYL facilitates communication and knowledge transfers between the parties. Because SYL has an ANBI-label, companies can deduct their donation from their profits, which leads to tax advantages for businesses.

As more companies join the SYL program, this could result in a chain affect. Companies are thus reminded of their responsibilities. Various projects can be seen together via SYL, and this can enhance sending a stronger message. SYL can also guarantee sustainability because companies must donate for a minimum amount of at least three years. Projects can then be completed and subsequently proceed independently.

4. Value Proposition

Many Dutch companies have recognizable logos and are willing to donate to a charity. SYL offers the opportunity to support a cause that accords to the company's values and their clientele. As a result, in addition to protecting the specific species, educational value is created for customers allowing them to increase their customer base. With their knowledge of the environmental and social impact, SYL can help companies in selecting an appropriate charity. A goal is selected on the basis of impact creation and is subject to monitoring and evaluation in order to be able to measure progress.

Throughout the world, there are companies with logos based on animal and plant species. This enterprise in which a logo is linked to an initiative to protect the species depicted in the logo is unique in the charity sector.

The corporate culture of the region or the country determines the degree of scalability, the economic prosperity, and favorable legislation. SYL is consistent with raising social awareness in developed countries, on the one hand, and nature conservation in underdeveloped countries on the other hand.

5. Community

The projects, IUCN, FDB, and the participating companies all belong to the community of SYL. As mediator, SYL plays a major role in the creation of values. In France, SYL was formed by the FDB. In the Netherlands, the foundation is not yet fully established and is still in the development stage. Initially, it was important to stimulate FDB to also set up SYL in the Netherlands. With their consent and shared information, Dutch companies were approached. When it is certain that there will be multiple long term companies donating, SYL can be established and launched officially in the Netherlands. It will then be clear whether the concept is viable here, however, there is already significant potential. When SYL is able to begin, a new agreement with FDB will be compiled on what information and data can be used in order to prevent the companies competing for clientele. The nature of the relationships within the community will be discussed and pre-arranged as substantial sums of money are involved.

6. Results

Ecological values are primarily realized through conservation of nature. From an economic perspective, preserving rainforests or species yields a large amount of money in the long term because it stimulates tourism in a country or a region. In addition, social values are realized. It is important that the projects are innovative, such as the project in the Philippines where the local population is involved. In addition to the conservation of nature, there are many indirect values considering that more than one billion people are dependent upon forests and produce from the forests as well as on the oceans and fish. It is about the entire ecosystem being maintained.

Negative values are the costs to keep the projects operating. The best thing would be if all donations would go directly to conservation. That is always a difficult decision for a foundation. To reduce costs, the board of the foundation will not be paid, and no workplace will be rented as long as the foundation remains small. In addition, it is stated that 85% of donations must be given to the projects.

7. Conclusion

With the breaking of established patterns and by even questioning a logo as well as by linking the private and non-profit sectors together, SYL reaches an enormous group of people in an innovative way. We need to improve how we deal with our world because it is deteriorating rapidly. Steps must be taken, and everyone needs to be involved. In particular, the developed countries need to help underdeveloped countries in sustainable development.

Contact: Steyn Hoogakker

E-mail: hoogakkersteyn@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.saveyourlogo.org>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDALeJc2ZYo>

Case Author: Nora Slotman, Student Business Administration, Radboud University Nijmegen