

Relevant Restaurant Interests to Partnering with Non-Profit Organizations

**Tracey Schick, Marla Stephen,
William Keenan Oatway,
Adam Philips**

Abstract

Mealshare is a newly formed non-profit organization that partners with restaurants to feed persons in need. We conducted exploratory and quantitative research on Edmonton and Edmonton area restaurants to identify those restaurants with interest that lead to partnerships with non-profit organizations. By performing in-depth interviews with restaurant owners and managers, within Edmonton, we discovered main themes such as: the marketing benefits of social responsibility, preferences for charities to donate to, concerns about charity work, and influences on choosing social responsibility efforts. A questionnaire was developed and distributed to restaurant owners and managers, from which we derived tentative conclusions and recommendations to enhance the Mealshare brand and identify future opportunities. Based on the findings, we find that Mealshare should focus on configuring their marketing activities to emphasize community involvement, time constraint management, and marketing benefits, as well as tailor themselves for independently owned restaurants.

i. Problem Definition

The organization that we focused our research paper on was Mealshare, a non-profit organization that offers marketing services to restaurants. The business model of Mealshare includes partnering with restaurants, so that consumers can order a Mealshare branded item, and then Mealshare donates a meal to someone in need. By determining the current trends and behaviors of restaurants that participate in charity efforts, Mealshare will be able to discern how to best conduct their promotional and charitable strategies targeting potential partners.

Consequently, Mealshare's management problem is how to increase participation in their non-profit initiatives (i.e. donating a meal to someone in need) and gain knowledge regarding social responsibility activities currently used in restaurants.

Based on our research, we have considered many suggestions on how to tackle Mealshare's management problem. In order to identify current trends and opportunities we conducted a literature review to find common themes related to charity work by restaurants. The scholarly articles analyzed provided us with a framework for developing our discussion guide for the in-depth interviews. We then interviewed restaurant owners and managers from the Edmonton area to determine the following factors: why restaurants choose to contribute to charity or non-profits, what benefits they perceive by contributing, and what they think of partnering with non-profits, among others. From our exploratory research we were able to better understand the choices restaurants make in regards to charity and community efforts.

Through information obtained from our qualitative research we were able to further address these topics to develop the basis for our research and design and implement a second-stage quantitative research (e.g. survey). The focus of our research problem is on identifying restaurant interest in non-profit partnerships so that Mealshare can use those interests in its marketing strategy and increase participation in its program.

ii. Analytical Framework of the Research Problem

To develop our analytical framework, we review relevant literature on the topic and conduct in-depth interviews (a qualitative research method). We present our analysis as follows.

A) Literature Review: Analysis and Synthesis of Articles Selected

The objective of the literature review was to use various aspects of the role of business in social responsibility to discover common themes or variables to aid in our exploratory research. Some of the aspects explored in the literature review were: the main motivators for restaurants to participate in socially responsible activities, consumer behavior and social responsibility, the online presence of non-profit organizations, and the benefits of Cause-Related Marketing. By researching these topics we were able to identify key variables to construct an initial discussion guide for in-depth interviews. The key variables discovered were: the benefits of social responsibility as perceived by the firms, the benefits as perceived by the consumer, and the importance of marketing in social responsibility. In order for Mealshare to be considered valuable, it must offer some form of benefits. The benefits as perceived by a firm are: financial enhancement, positive perception of a brand, and competitiveness. Mealshare needs to capitalize on the "link to philanthropic activities with the strategic marketing goals of the firm" in order to provide and establish value (Thomas, Fraedrich, & Mullen, 2011, p. 113). Consumers expect a firm to prove their social responsibility and are even willing to change brands for an associated good cause (Demetriou, Papasolomou, & Vrontis, 2010, p. 272). In terms of gaining marketing benefits from social responsibility, there are plenty of perks that a

business can acquire. Whether it is an unconscious or conscious motive to gain these benefits, businesses will still feel their effects if they participate in socially responsible actions. Among restaurant owners, it is generally accepted that by participating in the community, as well as donating resources to charitable organizations, the restaurant in turn gains promotion of their business. The connection between the restaurant and the socially responsible action is believed to create interest among people, which can lead to an increase in potential customers. Beyond the affiliation with the action, bringing in new customers can potentially increase networking possibilities for the restaurant, as they can be introduced to different or new client bases. In addition, the restaurants could see more loyal customers if those people are strongly affiliated with the socially responsible cause the restaurant has adopted.

Through the use of scholarly articles, we were able to identify relevant variables to be used in our qualitative and quantitative research. We first used synthesis of scholarly articles to develop a discussion guide for in-depth interviews. The use of in-depth interviews allowed us to expand on the key variables identified above, and present new variables that have not been considered. In a second stage, using results from in-depth interviews, we developed a survey.

B) Qualitative Research: In-depth Interviews

In addition to the literature review, we choose to do four in-depth interviews with Edmonton and area restaurants to gain insight on how restaurants perceive social responsibility and better explore our marketing research problem (See Appendix A). We interviewed managers and owners of restaurants to determine how they currently participate in social responsibility and understand their views. In-depth interviews allowed us to “uncover deeper insights about underlying motives” (Malhotra, 2012, p. 162) with more accurate results we may not have achieved from using a focus group. The restaurant industry is highly competitive making individuals unlikely to reveal information in a focus group setting in front of their competitors. In-depth interviews help avoid problems such as social pressure to conform, biased statements, and general social loafing. Charity involvement and monetary donations may be a confidential or sensitive subject for restaurant management to address. In-depth interviews allow participants to be more open and honest regarding their true feelings or motives especially in a personal matter such as social responsibility. Our target of the research we conducted was to find common themes among the participant responses to determine their perception of social responsibility. Our objective was to get genuine responses from participants using probing and projective techniques.

In order to follow ethical procedures, we adapted a given consent form to present to participants regarding their involvement in the study. For face-face interviews we provided a hard copy of the consent form and for telephone interviews we verbally communicated it. We explained our research motives and how the interview we conducted was for research study purposes for MacEwan

University. Due to confidentiality we would not distribute their names and interviews to third parties.

C) Analytical Framework: Identifying Restaurant Interest in Non-profit Partnerships

Intention to Partner:

Using literature reviewed and findings from our in-depth interviews, we have developed an analytical framework to explain and analyze a restaurant's intention to partner with non-profit organizations. Our model includes 4 components described subsequently. We will use this framework as the guide to develop our quantitative research and in particular to design our survey.

Component 1: Demographics of restaurants

In order to classify target restaurants, key information to be gathered is restaurant annual revenue, amount donated to charity per year, type of restaurant (independent-owned, franchise, or corporate), and position of respondent (manager, owner, or general manager). Social responsibility participation can be "explained as a value-driven journey, influenced primarily by the development of environmental consciousness and personal, socio-cultural and situational factors of the individual business owners" (Garay & Font, 2012, p. 336). We hypothesize that independent restaurants will be more likely to pair with Mealshare. This hypothesis was developed based on responses from our in depth interviews with restaurant owners. We found a strong response from independent restaurants surrounding community involvement and charitable efforts.

Component 2: Restaurant perceptions of advantages and disadvantages of charitable work

"What benefits does your business gain from participating in charitable activities?" This question is important in helping us understand what value gains are perceived by those restaurants willing to have a partnership with Mealshare, and what value gains are perceived by those restaurants not willing to have a partnership. From our literature review and in-depth interviews, we found that a main theme was personal satisfaction as a large benefit sought by restaurant owners. These restaurant owners placed a high value on altruism, as they enjoyed seeing their business benefits the community and their customers. We hypothesize that our survey will reflect similar results to our exploratory research.

"What disadvantages does your business find from participating in charitable activities?" What value losses are perceived by those restaurants willing to have a partnership with Mealshare, and what value losses are perceived by restaurants not willing to have a partnership? We hypothesize that a major disadvantage of charitable work for restaurants would be time constraints. Based on our

observations and experiences from the in-depth interviews, the restaurant industry is extremely fast-paced and may not have the time or resources to become involved in charity.

Component 3: Motives to become involved in charitable work

When deciding which charities a restaurant becomes involved with, we asked respondents to rank 5 factors on a Likert Scale in order to discover their motives for charitable involvement. Based on our exploratory research, we hypothesized that employee interest, and friends and family interest will rank of high importance to restaurant managers/owners. These hypotheses were developed based on the responses of our in-depth interviews. The interviewees expressed a tendency to choose charitable activities based on personal connections to certain causes.

Component 4: Marketing Efforts

“Are marketing benefits relevant for those restaurants willing to have a partnership with Mealshare?” We were curious to find out if different types of restaurants would value marketing benefits more than others. Marketing efforts are essential in “obtaining competitive advantages..., sales increases, new market opportunities, and enhances company images” (Garay & Font, 2012, p. 330).

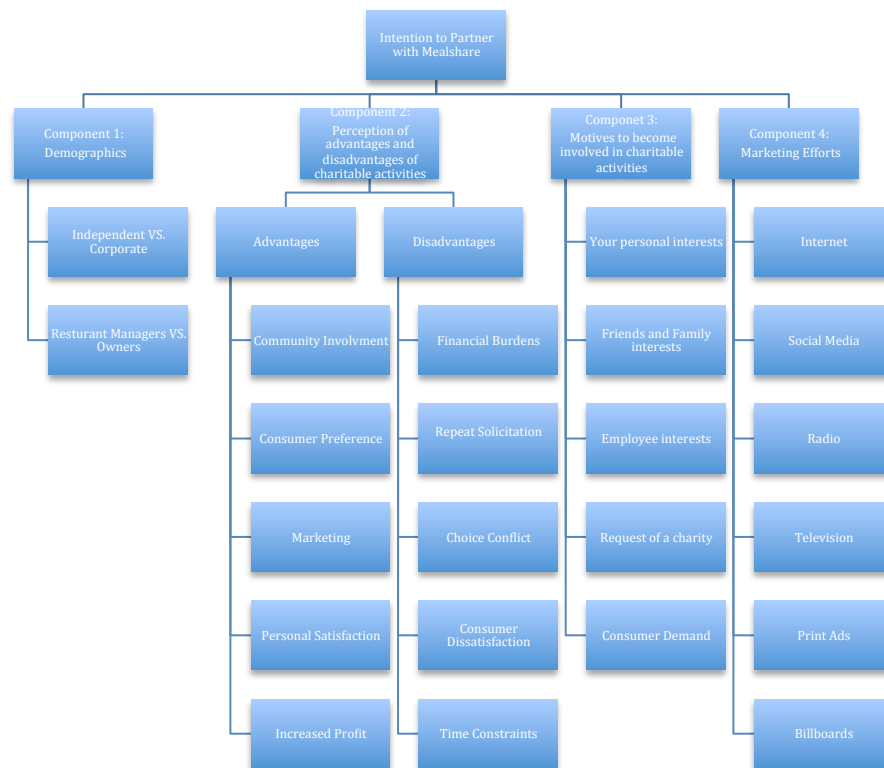


Figure 1: Analytical Model of Problem Definition

We hypothesized that restaurants would find marketing benefits to be a very important benefit to charitable involvement. We also hypothesize the top three types of marketing used by restaurants will be internet, social media, and print ads based on the survey results we collected. Mealshare's business model provides marketing opportunities for the restaurants they partner with through their website and social media endeavours. By stressing the importance of these marketing benefits, Mealshare may increase the likelihood to partner.

iii. Survey Research Design

We collected survey data from 19 respondents. Our method of gathering these respondents was by using an online survey and the non-probability techniques of judgmental and convenience sampling. We used these methods as online surveys would be more effective in gathering a larger amount of responses in a shorter period of time. We recognize the limitations presented by using an online email survey. We faced the challenges of low response rates and we explained them in the limitations section.

Characteristics of the Sample

According to our sample characteristics (see Figure 2), it can be determined that nearly a majority, 47.4%, of the respondents did not want to disclose their annual sales revenue. However, 36.8% of respondents said that they earn \$500,001 to \$1,000,000 in annual revenue, whereas 10.6% said they earned less than \$500,000.

A majority of respondents, 52.6%, stated that they were independent restaurants, while the remainder classified themselves as corporate or franchise. In terms of donation sizes, 57.9% declared that they donated \$10,000 or less per year, while the minority reported donating more than \$10,000. Of the 19 respondents, 52.6% said they were an owner or partner, while 47.4% reported that they were managers.

Operationalization of components

In order to operationalize the components of our Analytical model, we must indicate how each component is measured using the questions from our survey.

Schick, Stephen, Oatway, Philips

Annual sales revenues of the restaurant:		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
\$250,001- \$500,000	1	5.3
\$50,000 or less	1	5.3
\$500,001- \$1,000,000	7	36.8
I don't want to disclose this information	9	47.4
Total	19	100.0
Type of Restaurant:		
Independent	10	52.6
Corporate/franchise	8	42.1
Total	18	94.7
System	1	5.3
Total	19	100.0
Donation to charity per year (\$)		
\$10,000 or less	11	57.9
More than \$10,000	7	36.8
Total	18	94.7
System	1	5.3
Total	19	100.0
Role in Restaurant Industry:		
Generalmanager/manager/regmanager	9	47.4
Owner/partner	10	52.6
Total	19	100.0

Figure 2: Characteristics of the Sample

Intention to Partner with Mealshare

In order to answer our research problem, we used the "Intention to partner with Mealshare" as a base for our analytical model. This primary component was explored using 3 questions in our survey: "How important is involvement in charity to your business?" "How likely would you be to partner with a charity that offers marketing benefits to your business?" and "What is your level of interest in partnering exclusively with a non-profit organization?" This allowed us to rank the level of interest in partnering with an organization; in this case Mealshare, and compare to other relevant finding such as marketing benefits.

Demographics

In order to gain an idea of the classification of respondents to our survey, we used 4 questions. These questions were: "Which of the following best describes your role in the restaurant industry?" "How much does your establishment generally donate to charity in a year?" "What are the annual sales revenues of the restaurant?" and "How do you classify the restaurant you are currently employed at?" The questions in the classification section of our survey were all multiple choice. Respondents were not forced to disclose any information and were able to bypass questions if they desired. By providing set answers in multiple choice questions we were able to set ranges for the questions that had responses in dollar amounts. We were also able to choose the type of role and classification of restaurants from our findings in the exploratory research.

Perception of advantages and disadvantages of charitable activities

To gain insight into respondents' views of advantages and disadvantages of donating to charity we used 2 questions: "What benefits does your business gain from participating in charitable activities?" and "What disadvantages does your business find from participating in charitable activities?" Both of these questions provided multiple responses, allowing restaurant owners/managers to choose from 5 pre-set responses and "Other." The pre-set responses for both questions were made based on the significant themes discovered in all 4 in-depth interviews. By using a multiple-response type of question, we were able to gain data on more than one perceived advantage or disadvantage.

Motives to become involved in charitable activities

To learn more about respondents' motivations for charitable involvement we used: "When deciding which charities you become involved with, what is the importance of each of the following factors". We used 5 factors that were found to be consistent among interviews with restaurant owners during exploratory research: personal interests, friends and family interests, employee interests, solicitation, and consumer demand. By using another Likert Scale we were again able measure level of importance on a 5 point scale, 1 being "Not Important" and 5 being "Very Important."

Marketing Efforts

In order to learn about the respondents marketing efforts, we used two questions: "What kind of marketing methods does your restaurant currently utilize?" and "To what extent do you consider marketing benefits when choosing a charitable organization to donate?" The first question was a multiple response question. We created 6 options for respondents to check all that apply from the main marketing methods discovered in our in-depth interviews. By using multiple response, we were able to gain data on more than one marketing method utilized by restaurants using one question. The second question was measured using level of importance. By using the Likert Scale we were again able measure level of importance for marketing benefits on a 5 point scale, 1 being "Not Important" and 5 being "Very Important."

For development of the survey, we came up with a list of potential questions to use. We then analyzed each question one by one to determine whether it needed to be reevaluated or cut completely from our study. By the end of this process, we ended up with one double-sided page document worth of questions. We pre-tested the questionnaire during which we received constructive feedback from our peers. Following this, our survey was reevaluated to accommodate necessary alterations. Once finalized, the survey was ready for distribution.

In terms of ethical issues, we found that many survey participants asked to have their restaurant information and contact information remain confidential. This issue was addressed through the use of our confidentiality agreement and the diligence of our group members in assuring all parts of the agreement were upheld.

iv. Data Analysis and Results

For our analysis, we conducted various statistical tests to acquire relevant information from the responses. To begin with, we used frequency tables to obtain clear information on the characteristics of our sample. From there, we performed a univariate analysis to determine the sample's interest in partnering with Mealshare based on the variables of likelihood to partner, level of interest, and importance of involvement. A cross-tabulation, with a chi-square test, was conducted to determine which type of restaurants considered partnering exclusively more important. One-way ANOVA tests were performed to identify the links between restaurant levels of interest and their motives for charitable actions, as well as their value of marketing obtained from such actions. Finally, we created multiple frequency tables to delve further into the relationships that a restaurant's level of interest has; we used the variables of marketing methods currently used, advantages and disadvantages of charitable activities, and current charitable efforts to do so.

Using univariate analysis, we found that a large majority of respondents, 84.2%, viewed pairing with a charity that offered marketing benefits as very

positive (see Figure 3). However, in contrast, only 36.8% of respondents had higher interest in pairing exclusively with a charitable organization. Overall, though, 94.7% of the respondents stated that it is highly important to be involved in charitable activities.

To determine if there is a relationship between the type of restaurant and interest in partnering exclusively with a non-profit organization, we performed a cross-tabulation Chi-square analysis (see Figure 4).

Intention to Partner		Percentage (%)
Likelihood to pair	Yes	84.2
	No	10.5
Level of Interest	Lower(1-3)	63.2
	Higher(4-5)	36.8
Importance of Involvement	Lower(1-3)	5.3
	Higher(4-5)	94.7

Figure 3: Univariate Analysis of Intention to Partner with Mealshare

Our hypotheses are:

- Ho = Type of restaurant and level of interest in partnering exclusively with a non-profit organization are independent of each other.
- Ha = Type of restaurant and level of interest in partnering exclusively with a non-profit organization are NOT independent of each other.

Due to the small sample size used, the confidence level is 80%, so therefore, alpha is 0.2.

In order to analyze the potential for relation between factors of importance when choosing a charity and level of interest when partnering with a non-profit organization, we conducted a one-way ANOVA test. We used a confidence interval of 80% and an alpha of 0.2 to compare our obtained P-values from the test (see Figure 5).

Type of restaurant * What is your level of interest in partnering exclusively with a non-profit organization? Cross-tabulation

			What is your level of interest in partnering exclusively with a non-profit organization?		Total
			Lower interest	Higher interest	
type of restaurant	Independent	Count	7	3	10
		% within type of restaurant	70.0%	30.0%	100.0%
	Corporate/ franchise	Count	5	3	8
		% within type of restaurant	62.5%	37.5%	100.0%
Total		Count	12	6	18
		% within type of restaurant	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1- sided)
Pearson	.113 ^a	1	.737		
Chi-Square					
Continuity	.000	1	1.000		
Correction ^b					
Likelihood	.112	1	.738		
Ratio					
Fisher's				1.000	.563
Exact Test					
Linear-by- Linear	.106	1	.744		
Association					
N of Valid Cases	18				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is 2.67.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Figure 4: Level of Interest (Intention) vs. Type of Restaurant (Independent/Corporate)

Our hypotheses are

- Ho: Mean of Higher Interest = Mean of Lower Interest
- Ha: Mean of Higher Interest \neq Mean of Lower Interest

Friends and Family Interests proved to be the only significant variable with a P-value of 0.149. This allows us to conclude that at 80% confidence level, those restaurants that are more interested in partnering with a non-profit organization tend to give more importance to Friends and Family Interests when deciding which charities to become involved with.

Descriptive statistics produced with the ANOVA test show a relationship between Friends and Family Interests and those who are more interested in partnering with a non-profit organization. A mean of 3.67 for higher interest is significantly different from a mean of 2.89 for lower interest. From this, we can conclude that those that are more interested in pairing with a non-profit find Friends and Family Interests a significant motivation.

To understand the relationship between the levels of interest in partnering with the consideration of marketing benefits, we again performed a one-way ANOVA. With a confidence interval of 80% and an alpha of 0.2, we defined our hypotheses as:

- Ho: Mean of Higher Interest = Mean of Lower Interest
- Ha: Mean of Higher Interest \neq Mean of Lower Interest

Restaurants more interested in partnering with a non-profit organization tend to consider more marketing benefits when choosing a charitable organization (see Figure 6). This is proved by the P-value of 0.146. Since this P-value is less than the alpha, we reject Ho, proving that there is a significant relationship between a higher level of interest in partnering with non-profit organizations and the extent of which marketing benefits are considered.

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Your Personal Interests	Lower interest	9	3.11	.601	.200	2.65	3.57	2	4
	Higher interest	5	3.60	.894	.400	2.49	4.71	2	4
	Total	14	3.29	.726	.194	2.87	3.71	2	4
Friends and Family Interests	Lower interest	9	2.89	.782	.261	2.29	3.49	2	4
	Higher interest	3	3.67	.577	.333	2.23	5.10	3	4
	Total	12	3.08	.793	.229	2.58	3.59	2	4
Employees' Interests	Lower interest	10	3.10	.876	.277	2.47	3.73	2	4
	Higher interest	4	3.50	.577	.289	2.58	4.42	3	4
	Total	14	3.21	.802	.214	2.75	3.68	2	4
Request of a charity	Lower interest	10	3.30	.675	.213	2.82	3.78	2	4
	Higher interest	5	3.60	.894	.400	2.49	4.71	2	4
	Total	15	3.40	.737	.190	2.99	3.81	2	4
Consumer Demand	Lower interest	9	3.67	.500	.167	3.28	4.05	3	4
	Higher interest	6	3.67	.516	.211	3.12	4.21	3	4
	Total	15	3.67	.488	.126	3.40	3.94	3	4

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (P-VALUES)
Your Personal Interests	Between Groups	.768	1	.768	1.514	.242
	Within Groups	6.089	12	.507		
	Total	6.857	13			
Friends and Family Interests	Between Groups	1.361	1	1.361	2.450	.149
	Within Groups	5.556	10	.556		
	Total	6.917	11			
Employees' Interests	Between Groups	.457	1	.457	.694	.421
	Within Groups	7.900	12	.658		
	Total	8.357	13			
Request of a charity	Between Groups	.300	1	.300	.534	.478
	Within Groups	7.300	13	.562		
	Total	7.600	14			
Consumer Demand	Between Groups	.000	1	.000	.000	1.000
	Within Groups	3.333	13	.256		
	Total	3.333	14			

Figure 5: Level of Interest vs. Motives

With determining the preferred marketing methods and how they relate to the level of interest in pairing with a non-profit organization, the top three methods overall were internet, social media, and radio (see Figure 7). We found that for the more interested respondents, social media, internet, and print were the most preferred and already used methods of marketing. However, for those less interested in partnering, radio was the top choice, while internet and social media were the next ideal methods.

Descriptives

To what extent do you consider marketing benefits when choosing a charitable organization to donate to?

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Lower interest	11	3.45	.688	.207	2.99	3.92	2	4
Higher interest	7	4.00	.816	.309	3.24	4.76	3	5
Total	18	3.67	.767	.181	3.29	4.05	2	5

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.273	1	1.273	2.333	.146
Within Groups	8.727	16	.545		
Total	10.000	17			

Figure 6: Level of Interest vs. Value of Marketing

Marketing Methods	ALL (n=19)		More Interested		Less Interested	
	# of Responses	% of cases	# of Responses	% of cases	# of Responses	% of cases
Internet	16	84.2	5	71.4	11	91.7
Social Media	17	89.5	6	85.7	11	91.7
Radio	15	78.9	2	28.6	13	108.3
TV	1	5.3	0	0	1	8.3
Print	9	47.4	4	57.1	5	41.7
Billboards	5	26.3	2	28.6	3	25.0
Other	5	26.3	4	57.1	1	8.3

Figure 7: Level of Interest and Marketing Methods

Regardless of their level of interest in pairing with a non-profit, community involvement was found to be the greatest advantage in participating in charitable activities (see Figure 8). Marketing and personal satisfaction were considered the next best advantages, though for those businesses that were more interested in partnering, personal satisfaction was valued at a higher level than marketing. Increased profit was not valued very highly comparatively by any of the respondents.

Advantages Perceived	ALL (n=19)		More Interested		Less Interested	
	# of Responses	% of cases	# of Responses	% of cases	# of Responses	% of cases
Community Involvement	31	163.2	12	171.4	19	158.3
Marketing	17	89.5	6	85.7	11	91.7
Personal Satisfaction	17	89.5	7	100.0	10	83.3
Increased Profit	8	41.2	3	42.9	5	41.7
Other	1	5.3	0	0.0	1	8.3

Figure 8: Level of Interest and Advantages

The greatest disadvantage of participating in charitable efforts overall is time constraints. However, those restaurants more interested in partnering valued time constraints as a greater disadvantage than those less interested (see Figure 9). Restaurants who are not as interested value time constraints as a disadvantage equal with the conflict of choosing a charitable activity, which is not as great a concern for more interested businesses. As well, less interested respondents appeared to value the disadvantages of financial burdens greater than more interested respondents.

	ALL (n=19)		More Interested		Less Interested	
	# of Responses	% of cases	# of Responses	% of cases	# of Responses	% of cases
Disadvantages Perceived						
Financial Burdens	5	27.8	1	16.7	4	33.3
Repeat Solicitation	9	50.0	3	50.0	6	50.0
Choice Conflict	9	50.0	2	33.3	7	58.3
Consumer Dissatisfaction	1	5.6	0	0.0	1	8.3
Time Constraints	12	66.7	5	83.3	7	58.3
Other	2	11.1	0	0.0	2	16.7

Figure 9: Level of Interest and Disadvantages

For charitable efforts, we believe that there may have been confusion in regards to the response set. This is due to the fact that local donations received zero responses, and based on our research, we believe that this is highly unlikely. It is possible that we made the question misleading, possibly in the fact that choices such as fundraisers and sponsorship can be considered local or international (see Figure 10). The choice of local donations may have appeared as something other than what we intended it to be, to the respondents. However, what we can gain from this set of responses is that fundraisers are the most used charitable activity, while the "other" category is the next. We hypothesized that the "other" category contains a variety of charitable activities that we unfortunately cannot determine.

Charitable Efforts	ALL (n=19)		More Interested		Less Interested	
	# of Responses	% of cases	# of Responses	% of cases	# of Responses	% of cases
Local Donations	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
International Donation	5	26.3	3	42.9	2	16.7
Sponsorship	10	52.6	4	57.1	6	50.0
Fundraisers	19	100.0	7	100.0	12	100.0
Other	18	94.7	7	100.0	11	91.7

Figure 10: Level of Interest and Charitable Efforts

v. Conclusions and Recommendations

The objective of the current research problem was to identify those restaurants interested in non-profit partnerships. We performed a two-stage research. In the first stage, we reviewed the literature and developed in-depth interviews. The information obtained in the first stage guided the second stage of our research which involved implementing a survey-based research. Using our findings altogether, we present the implications of our research for Mealshare in particular, and for non-profit organizations in general.

Community Involvement

Based on our findings from both the exploratory and quantitative research, community involvement was found to be the main benefit of charitable activities. According to our analysis of restaurant interest in partnering with Mealshare, we found that one of the major advantages of performing charitable actions was community involvement. In addition, a major motive for deciding charitable involvement was Friends and Family Interests. This further reinforces the impact of locally inspired causes and their importance to restaurant owners/managers. Mealshare should acknowledge the fact that restaurants prefer local donations than international donations, and that they could shift their focus to all charities in the local communities.

Another recommended option for Mealshare would be to allow restaurants to choose which charities they would like to donate to. Our quantitative research showed that the businesses more interested in pairing with Mealshare placed a high value on personal satisfaction as an advantage to charitable activities. To address this, Mealshare could possibly offer several, or a few choice, charities that are community based and are focused on providing food for those in need; this way, restaurant owners feel involved in the charity work and Mealshare remains true to their brand.

Time Constraints and Choice Conflict

From our research results, time constraints are the biggest deterrent of charitable activities in the restaurant industry. It is considered a major concern for restaurants that are more interested in pairing with a non-profit. Less interested businesses considered it a major concern as well, but they were equally concerned about choice conflict when choosing a charity. In order to alleviate these concerns, Mealshare can promote itself to restaurants that they can help reduce the work load of taking on charity work. In addition, by having Mealshare charity options available, as mentioned previously, the conflict of choice is reduced for restaurants. This may entice less interested restaurants to consider a Mealshare partnership.

Marketing Benefits

Our findings have shown that marketing benefits are important to restaurant management and owners. Overall, respondents to the survey stated that the top three types of marketing methods were internet, social media, and radio. Since Mealshare is already using internet and social media platforms, we believe they will find valuable use out of radio marketing methods. Radio stations most likely have set demographics of listeners; therefore, Mealshare would be able to pinpoint or access certain communities and

consumers. This further reinforces the value of local benefits of charities to restaurant owners.

Mealshare can further emphasize the marketing benefits of partnering with them by providing potential participants with statistical evidence on how the marketing will benefit their organization. This evidence can be collected through consumer surveys, website

analytics, or sales data from partner restaurants. Chain or franchise restaurants may not value the marketing benefits as much as independent restaurants as most already have established marketing methods.

Type of Restaurant

From our research results, we can conclude that restaurant income and type of restaurant are factors affecting partnership with Mealshare. Building on our exploratory research, we can recommend that Mealshare should focus on opportunities in the independent owned industry. Potential limitations presented by franchises or chains are pre-implemented marketing strategies and pre-determined charitable foundations or involvement.

Conclusion

Mealshare can consider implementing the recommendations put forward in order to address their management problems. By adapting their business model, Mealshare may be able to increase restaurant participation in their partner program. By conducting exploratory and quantitative research we were able to gain a better insight in to the needs of the restaurant owners and how it impacts Mealshare involvement. With the current trends towards social responsibility Mealshare has the opportunity to make a difference in non-profit partnerships.

vi. Limitations

The main limitation of our research was our limited sample size of our quantitative research. Since restaurant owners and managers can be very pressed for time we had difficulty in achieving high participation in our survey. In further research, a higher sample size could provide a more accurate depiction of restaurant views on charitable work that could be generalized across the industry. Another limitation is that our survey participants were mainly from independent restaurants and franchises therefore lacking representation of chain restaurants. Chain restaurants can be difficult to contact, as many of their head offices are located in areas outside of Alberta.

Appendix

Appendix A

	Restaurant A	Restaurant B	Restaurant C	Restaurant D
Profile of Participant	Male participant, restaurant owner in Sherwood Park	Female participant, restaurant manager	Male participant, restaurant owner and manager	Male participant, restaurant owner and manager
Setting	Telephone conversation	Quiet, comfortable office setting	Quiet corner of the restaurant	Telephone conversation
Time Duration	34 minutes	32 minutes	43 minutes	26 minutes
Recording	Interview was recorded and transcribed onto the computer	Interview was transcribed onto the computer	Interview was recorded and transcribed onto the computer	Interview was recorded and transcribed onto the computer

References

- Demetriou, M., Pappasolomou, I., & Vrontis, D. (2010). Cause-related marketing: Building the corporate image while supporting worthwhile causes. *Journal of Brand Management*, 17(4), 266-278. doi:10.1057/bm.2009.9
- Garay, L., & Font, X. (2012). Doing good to do well? Corporate social responsibility reasons, practices and impacts in small and medium accommodation enterprises. *International Journal Of Hospitality Management*, 31(2), 329-337.
- Malhotra, N. K. (2012). *Basic Marketing Research* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Thomas, M. L., Fraedrich, J. P., & Mullen, L. G. (2011). Successful cause-related marketing partnering as a means to aligning corporate and philanthropic goals: An empirical study. *Academy Of Marketing Studies Journal*, 15(2), 113-132.