

CASE STUDIES: DEXTERITY VENTURES INC.



Have you ever wondered what it was like to work with Dexterity Ventures Inc.? Or how our philanthropy technology solutions can be successfully implemented at your organization? In this document, we take a look at four case studies of how people have worked with DVI and what the outcomes of these projects were.

Case Studies:

DEXTERITY VENTURES INC.

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COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS & PHILANTHROPY ADVISORS – CASE STUDY

The philanthropy advising space is getting crowded. Community Foundations are experiencing first-hand the shift in the market as more institutions establish [Donor Advised Funds](#) (DAF), and more private family and multi-family offices engage philanthropy advisors beginning to work on social capital questions with their clients.

What role do independent Philanthropy Advisors play in the community foundation context? We support community foundations in the areas of research and leveraging relationships with other donors to drive greater impact. We also act as a stepping stone for younger donors or newer philanthropists to experience strategic philanthropy and charity planning before making the bigger commitment to a foundation.

On average, as a Philanthropy Advisor, we spend about 10 hours profiling a charity, in addition to conducting site visits and ongoing relationship building. We look at six core indicators based on Jim Collins' book [Good to Great](#), and an article by Stanford Social Innovation Review "[Creating High Impact Organizations](#)".

In the case of one consulting client, we mapped out their overall social objectives and, in working with their financial advisor, what the best giving vehicle was to achieve their short-term and long-term goals:

- determining the vehicle - DAF, Private Foundation, or Charitable Trust
- getting their fund off the ground
- building relationships with a few organizations
- identifying the systemic issues that they want to address
- creating a portfolio of giving that will be executed overtime
 - which lead to their legacy plan:
 - the role of their children and grandchildren within the foundation
 - the execution timeline - did they want to support the projects in perpetuity?

In the case of this specific client, they were a couple who were interested in fostering Jewish identity and informal education. The issue that they were tackling was around accessibility to affordable Jewish education, and engagement with the broader community. Though there were several organizations that were addressing this issue from day schools to summer camps to religious organizations, the couple decided that the solutions they wanted to fund needed to reach as many people as possible, should not be tied to a specific denomination, and should be such that it could be embraced by the community as a whole. A tall order when it came to Jewish education in Canada.

Our research connected us to a project called [PJ Library](#) that was started by the [Harold Grinspoon Foundation](#) (a philanthropist who recently joined the "[Giving Pledge](#)"). PJ Library is modeled after the [Imagination Library](#) that Dolly Parton launched in Tennessee. What makes this project interesting, unique, and successful is how they connected with local philanthropists to maximize the impact of program. Mr. Grinspoon commits to funding 50% of the project costs and it is up to the local community to fund the other half. Since launching this program in Massachusetts the organization has grown from 200 families receiving FREE books every month, to a global movement that is using literacy and parent engagement to teach social values of charity, community engagement, and *tikun olam*. Even though it started as a Jewish initiative it has been so successful that the program has expanded into Arab communities in Israel. Books are now printed in English, Spanish, Hebrew, and Arabic and are delivered. The initiative has created a market for children's literature in a publishing industry that has seen a decrease in market-share. More importantly, because Mr. Grinspoon has made the program implementation in a community dependant on other philanthropists the ownership and success is spread out.

The role of the Philanthropy Advisor in this relationship was to make the connections through the various agencies and to develop the overall charitable plan that includes not only the PJ Library, but several other programs addressing the issue of Jewish education, which in combination drives measured results.



I knew that I wanted to start a not for profit and I knew the subject matter that I wanted to address but had no clue how to get started. Gena walked me through the different options, introduced me to organizations with similar agendas and helped focus my attention to areas of the greatest need. It would have taken my innumerable hours to research all that she knew off the top of her head. In addition to help focusing my vision and introducing me to key stakeholders in the area Gena liaised with financial advisors, accountants and lawyers to ensure that the set up on the organization accords with my family's ideas of philanthropy. Legacy planning and family involvement are very important to us and she make certain that Silver Gummy's set up addresses these objectives. - Chanel Avarello, Silver Gummy

EVOLUTION OF AN NGO – DENTISTRY FOR ALL CASE STUDY

Have you ever thought about how organizations evolve? Dexterity Ventures Inc. (DVI) CEO & Founder Gena Rotstein does. This particular case began with a conversation with a colleague about risk tolerance and trust. Typically individuals evaluate how they interact with each other, businesses, and organizations on a scale of trust. The more transparent an organization acts, or the more self-disclosure an individual provides, the greater the risk tolerance of those parties.

During the growth stages of an organization, typically seen and experienced at points of major transition, transparency is important for all stakeholders. Gena witnessed this first-hand during a 10 day trip in Guatemala with [Dentistry for All \(DFA\)](#), a Canadian NGO.

17 years ago DFA started as a “voluntourism” trip for dentists to travel to Guatemala to pull teeth. Today the organization is still 100% volunteer run and is **evolving** into an agency that is exploring its role within Guatemala’s dental and medical communities. (For more information on the difference between voluntourism and philanthropic travel please click [here](#))

Part of the evolutionary process is to ask questions. Basic questions that DFA is asking itself include:

1. In what ways are we making a difference if we only come to Guatemala six weeks out of the year?
2. What are the best ways to partner with local businesses, community agencies and NGO’s?
3. How can we work with the indigenous culture and still encourage good oral hygiene (something that is not part of their daily routine)?
4. What piece in the Community Economic Development (CED) and International Development web do we play as a dental organization?

These questions were asked and answered in several ways ranging from operational changes to governance structures. Gena was a part of the transition at the governance level, having worked with DFA and their key volunteer leadership in formalizing their board procedures and operations. The board is seeing positive impact on the ground operations of the agency as a result of this work. Some of the most notable changes are in the way that data is being collected, recorded, and stories are being told. For example, during the aforementioned trip the group journeyed to a village called La Reforma. DFA had been going to this village for a few years, but that year was first time that the organization started tracking details on the dental procedures, demographic information of their patients, and if they had attended a DFA clinic in previous years. The purpose for tracking this information was not only to see demographics, but also to begin to be able to see whether the individuals and families that were treated were able to keep up with some oral hygiene. This information could then be used for strategic decisions around timing of trips, types of professional skills to have on hand to meet the needs of the patients and timing for growth of programs and services.

It was not, and still is not, just about treatment numbers though. It is about relationships between the dentists, their assistants and their patients, who have been going to the clinic year-after-year. Dr. Shane, the on-the-ground director, is loved and respected in these communities. On the trip mentioned above, a woman stopped the truck the team was driving in just to find out how Dr. Shane Fisher was doing and how

the clinic was running. Dr. Allan Ross, an oral surgeon from Saskatchewan was also in Guatemala for another year. Through his connections he had created a pen-pal relationship with a local school and one in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The kids in Winnipeg raised funds to ensure that the breakfast program in the Guatemalan school was funded; the teachers connected as professionals and the children led the way through their letters and storytelling.

A final piece of this evolution was succession planning for the group. Measures have been developed to ensure that the leadership - both on the volunteer level and the management level - will have a relatively seamless transition when it is required.

By no means were these the only questions and steps that this agency undertook through the evolutionary process. Nor did it all happen at once. Done systematically and with open communication the transition from one evolutionary stage to the next was managed and, most importantly, was fun!

During the 48 hour time period described above the team of volunteers saw over 100 patients, worked with two different NGO's ([Ammid](#) & [US Peace Corps](#)), and trained three non-dental support staff. All of this was in an effort to be a piece of a larger solution to international development.

Your role as strategic and adaptive donors to very complex puzzles like this one, is to support organizations that are exploring these evolutionary steps, and to provide guidance and resources as required.

As our non-profit organization grew in size and complexity Dexterity helped us to create a solid board structure for future growth - from a small, operationally focused organization we have now grown and matured into a more organized, strategic and longer-term planning organization while still fulfilling our operational obligations. We went from literally spinning our wheels... to creating processes that helped strengthen our foundation.

- Brad Krusky, Executive Director, Dentistry for All

ESTATE PLANNING – STRATEGY PARTNERS INC. CASE STUDY

Strategy Partners Inc. is a firm focusing on tax planning, estate planning, business succession, and insurance. The following is an SPI client case. SPI is a part of the Dexterity Ventures Inc.'s consulting arm's network of financial advisors.

The Problem - How much is enough? Having a comfortable retirement and leaving a legacy

During their retirement years, and as their passion for making a difference in their community increased, the clients determined that, where possible, they would prefer to direct capital towards their charitable efforts instead of to the government (for the payment of taxes). The clients were of the viewpoint that this "redirected capital" would be better managed and could create more benefit if the stewards were not government controlled. In addition, the clients were concerned that, in the absence of proper planning, the existing "accrued income tax" associated with their estate would reduce future estate values below and acceptable level. The clients were interested in reducing the income tax exposure to their estate.

The Solution - A financial management plan for retirement AND leave a legacy

Through a series of discussions, we developed a deep understanding of the existing financial situation of the client. In particular, we came to understand how they intended to utilize their capital during retirement and how much of this capital would be required to provide sufficient income to satisfy annual lifestyle requirements.

It was determined that "excess" capital was available to make philanthropic investments on either a current or deferred (i.e. at time of death) basis. We then helped the client design a strategic charitable gifting program that enabled the client to make timely gifts to their preferred charities. The gifting strategy provided the client with significant immediate tax credits that were used to eliminate income tax on large gains realized in the same taxation year. In addition, the program was structured in a manner that generated additional income tax credits that could be used by the client on an annual basis until the passing of the last survivor.

Finally, in addition to making a significant impact in their community, the plan design allowed the client to recover the value of the gifts made in order to preserve estate values for their beneficiaries.

ANYONE CAN BE A PHILANTHROPIST – MICROFOUNDATIONS CASE STUDY

Once, at a Co-op liquor store in Calgary, our CEO & Founder Gena Rostein was in the checkout line when the woman in front of her said - “Oh you’re that woman who works with philanthropists.” Gena smiled, laughed, and confirmed her statement. She then asked how the woman knew who she was and the woman mentioned that she had heard Gena speak at an Association of Fundraising Professionals conference a couple of years ago. When the woman left the store, a man in his late 50s turned to Gena and said, “I don’t think I have ever met a philanthropist before.” That made her laugh. She has experience educating people on [who is a philanthropist](#) (hint: pretty much everyone is a philanthropist) and the mindset hasn’t shifted much.

It is for this reason that we created [myPlace2Give](#). A site dedicated to creating your own personalized MicroFoundation. You get to pick the charities, set the disbursement amounts and the timelines, share with your friends and we take care of all the reporting. Why did we do this? Because anyone can have their own foundation, you don’t need to have millions of dollars to create meaningful impact in the world.

To date we have several MicroFoundations focusing on themes - [social justice](#), community projects, [international aid](#), [poverty reduction](#) and the [environment](#). Other funds are geographically based, like the [Oceanside fund](#) which supports projects in Mexico. And still others are just a combination of organizations that meet the donors giving criteria.

You don’t have to spend thousands on legal and accounting fees - we take care of all of that for you. We will even send you a report at the end of the year and also updates from the charities that you have supported.

So anyone can be a philanthropist - even you! Your foundation can be live within a day and ready for you to share with friends, family, colleagues, clients, and whomever you want to invite to join in the giving.

What is a MicroFoundation?

A collection of charities, usually of a similar theme, category or mission, where each charity is given a percentage of each donation the MicroFoundation receives. The percentage that each charity gets is defined by the MicroFoundation creator. Be strategic, and define a MicroFoundation that speaks to the issues that you care about. MicroFoundations are great for people interested in moving the needle on a specific issue, or for corporations who would like to support a specific group of charities that fit with their corporate values.

About Dexterity Ventures Inc.

Dexterity Ventures Inc. (DVI) is the leader in Strategic Giving. We are a B2B organization selling Donation Tools to organizations that want to incorporate giving and social good into their products or online presence. As well, DVI powers Canada's first philanthropic brokerage firm (Dexterity Consulting), and the Place2Give Foundation, which can be found on Place2Give.com (North America's largest charity search engine).

About Place2Give.com

Place2Give is a Canadian Registered Charity (Donor Advised Fund), and a donor-centered charity search engine. It provides donors with the tools they need to search, match, and give to North American charities that align with their passions. Using DVI's proprietary algorithms and prescriptive data analytics, Place2Give.com matches donors to charities.

*For more information about Dexterity Ventures Inc. and how we work with our clients,
please visit <http://www.dexterityventures.com>.*

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