

# Investment Readiness

## The Giving Machine

“From the start, the team from Eastside Primetimers took the time to really understand our current business model and social proposition in depth. This led to the development of a revised marketing strategy and supporting business plan. Funders and advisors who reviewed our plan were keen to point out the quality of the delivered plans and this was a crucial factor in securing our social funding in 2017. Thank you Eastside Primetimers – if only every partner delivered to that quality!”

**Richard Morris, Founder and CEO**

of causes  
impacted:  
**3922**

Number  
of retailers  
generating  
donations:  
**1,332**

TheGivingMachine (TGM) is an online donation platform that converts sales commissions from customers' online purchases into free donations for charities. Through the website and associated apps, users can make donations through everyday purchases with over 2,300 retailers at no extra cost. Users can support up to four organisations from a choice of over 7,000 and have so far created over £1.5 million worth of donations across the UK, many to small community groups that have less access to fundraising.

### ① Outcomes

- Eastside Primetimers helped TGM secure funding from the Access Reach Fund, an investment readiness grant fund. The grant was used to help TGM become investment ready by:
- Developing a marketing plan
- Developing a business model that showed the scale of TGM's ability to repay social finance
- Commissioning an assessment of the technical architecture of the website, key business processes and admin systems to demonstrate their robustness

### ② Investment Need

Set up in 2006, TheGivingMachine had an annual growth of 7%, with minimal resources to leverage the platform to increase the rate of growth beyond organic growth. TGM sought to drive the growth rate of the site to 20%+ per annum and increase turnover to maximise social engagement, impact and donations to causes, and to achieve a sustainable surplus for the organisation. To achieve this, TGM required a more robust business model that attracted more users, increased the activity of current users and encouraged causes to market the concept to their supporters.

### ③ Solution

- Eastside Primetimers' assigned consultant, Howard Sharman, and business analyst, Emma Steele, helped deliver an investment readiness plan and sustainable business model that:
- Refined the cost base
- Modelled the impact of varying growth scenarios
- Understood the scope for taking on social finance
- Developed a marketing plan to improve messaging, methods and channels
- Validated the technological architecture with a review and report on the management information systems, database and business processes.

Eastside Primetimers' consultancy work has helped TGM become investment ready through better understanding and, crucially, better articulation of their social impact needs. A robust business plan and financial model ultimately helped TGM to initiate talks with and secure investment from funders.

## About Us

Eastside Primetimers is a management consultancy with a difference - working exclusively on behalf of not-for-profit organisations, we provide professional support for managers and boards who are seeking to transform their organisations to be fit for the future.

## The Reach Fund – what we offer

Eastside Primetimers is available as an advisor on the Access Foundation's social investment scheme, the Reach Fund. This fund tests a new model of social investment readiness support, where a set list of social investors ('Access Points') can help charities and social enterprises identify the type of support they need to prepare them to take on investment. Including investors in the process from the get-go will increase your chances of securing the investment you need to grow and develop life-changing services for your beneficiaries.

The first step for organisations wishing to secure investment is a high-level discussion with one of the Access Point investors about your needs and a quick diagnostic process, after which you can be invited to make a short six-question application. This is intended to help the Access Point better understand your eligibility and what kind of support is required – it might be governance, impact measurement, business planning or financial performance, for example.

If successful, you can secure a £5,000-£15,000 grant to spend with Eastside Primetimers as an advisor. With our strong relationships with social investors and having been one of the biggest providers on similar programmes like the Big Lottery Big Potential Fund, we are uniquely placed to build relationships between you and the Access Point investors. We will keep in touch with you throughout the process, working with you and the Access Points to help get the application submitted.

## Requirements

- You must be a Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisation or a social business in England
- You will need to be referred and approved by an Access Point, a defined list of social investors indicated on the Reach Fund website
- Eligibility will be based on a diagnostic tool
- Access Points will be looking to understand charities' support requirements around governance, leadership, impact and vision, market potential, financial performance and operations

**To discuss your eligibility and growth finance, please call us now on 020 7250 8334 or email [dawn@ep-uk.org](mailto:dawn@ep-uk.org) to arrange a conversation with us.**