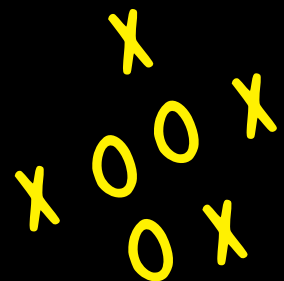


# corporate civic playbook



# what's inside

**01**

foreword

**03**

hello

**05**

understanding corporate civic engagement

**07**

building your business case

**11**

identifying best practices & case studies

**15**

case studies

**24**

creating your action plan

**24** level 01: support voting access

**28** level 02: connect with employees

**31** level 03: engage consumers

**35** level 04: encourage all stakeholders  
to strengthen democracy

**38**

glossary

**39**

about civic alliance

**40**

acknowledgements

**41** references



# corporate civic engagement is crucial in polarized times: here's how to do it

By Ben Ginsberg and Lisa Osborne Ross

Our democracy is being tested. A deeply divided populace – across the political spectrum – is reeling from the aftereffects of a tumultuous Presidential election, hard conversations about racial and social justice, a continuing public health crisis, and the economic aftershocks of a pandemic that never seems to end.

Business leaders may disagree over how to best address these issues, but most know that engaging in civic life is a good start and a necessary first step in contributing positively to the world around them. They also understand the importance of doing so in a way that is sensitive to and acknowledges the diverse customer bases, employees, and communities they serve.

While trust in all institutions including the government and the media is fraying, our society regards the private sector in a unique and prominent way. From their employers to business leaders and CEOs to the principled consumer brands, products, and services they buy, Americans are looking to the business world for answers and leadership.

This represents a new invitation for companies, as well as a new responsibility. At a time when companies are under increasing pressure to pursue purpose beyond profit, the need to engage in our civic life is more important than ever.

The question now is not “why” but “how.” How should companies rise to this challenge? How should they collaborate with the public sector to protect our democracy? How can they tackle their responsibility – and stakeholders’ growing expectations – to create positive change?

for e word

This playbook from the Civic Alliance offers ways to answer the call. It includes a clear and practical blueprint for how companies can be civically engaged in a constructive, non-partisan way – despite this very partisan environment.

The Civic Alliance Playbook stems from the core belief that a strong democracy cannot exist without meaningful participation. At a moment when our democracy faces threats, Americans may be disillusioned, leading to low levels of participation and therefore, a weaker democracy and nation. The Civic Alliance presents an antidote to the potential problem that will simultaneously aid society and produce benefits for a company's reputation, culture, morale, and bottom line.

The key, the Alliance says, is strong participation in the process of elections and governing. Given the wide range of views among customers and employees, the core of a responsible company's actions needs to be encouraging all stakeholders to be civically active. Encouraging employees, customers, and communities to use their civic voices and speak up about what they care about in a democratic fashion is an empowering message – and one that in today's context can make a true impact. A vocal democracy is a healthy democracy, and businesses should encourage all Americans to get involved in the process.

The Playbook presents four different levels in which companies can engage, helpfully recognizing that one size does not fit all but that there is a starting point at which companies should begin.

We saw companies of all different shapes and sizes step up to support our democracy amidst a global pandemic in 2020. And in 2022, business leaders must ensure that trend continues. Not only will their employees, consumers, and investors reward them for it, but the strength of our democracy may rely on it.



*Ben Ginsberg practiced election law for 38 years representing Republican candidates and parties.*



*Lisa Osborne Ross serves as Edelman's U.S. Chief Executive Officer.*

forward

The strength of democracy lies in the voice of the people being heard. When our nation's citizens collaborate, debate, or advocate for one another, our democracy thrives. And so do our businesses.

By actively supporting democracy, leaders demonstrate their commitment to inclusion, deepen employee connection, increase customer loyalty, and support local communities, while building the bottom line.

We know that there is a clear tie between civic engagement and business performance. Businesses with a culture of civic engagement earn higher market returns and improved financial performance – all while improving society and strengthening our nation.

We know there is still work to be done. Despite record voter turnout in 2020 and increased participation in our democratic process, the need to ensure accessible voting for all citizens has never been greater. We must work together to reduce barriers to voting and ensure that historically disenfranchised people are heard. We all have a role to play in securing these freedoms.

We also know it takes nonpartisan tools and resources to do this work well. This playbook pulls from decades of experience from Civic Alliance members and national thought-leaders to help you:

- build a business case for civic engagement**
- identify best practices**
- build an action plan to accomplish your civic priorities**
- engage your stakeholders in the democratic process**

We encourage you to leverage the best practices within your organization, share them with others and join our community of more than 1,250 leading companies who are committed to civic engagement. Together, we are building a future where everyone participates in shaping our country and where companies engage in nonpartisan activities that strengthen our communities and our country.

For democracy,



Natalie Tran  
Co-Founder, Civic Alliance  
Executive Director, CAA Foundation



Anjelica Smith  
Partner, Civic Alliance  
Program Director, Democracy Works



Steven Levine  
Director, Civic Alliance  
Co-Founder, Meteorite

hello

## **Cor•po•rate Civ•ic En•gage•ment:**

*'kôrp(ə)rət 'sivik in'gājmənt*

*(noun)*

How a company empowers people to participate in shaping the affairs of their community and nation through the democratic process. These company policies, practices, and communications—whether for employees or external audiences, and whether to encourage education or action—are conducted without regard to political party, platform, candidate, or outcome.

## understanding corporate civic engagement

We are at a unique turning point in our democracy. Although more Americans voted in the 2020 election than ever before in our nation's history, faith in government and other institutions is declining.<sup>01</sup>

**Furthermore, consumers now expect CEOs and companies to lead on social issues when the government does not.**<sup>02</sup>

Fortunately, evidence shows that business leaders have stepped up to the challenge, finding nonpartisan ways to support democracy by:

- ✓ **encouraging employees, customers, and communities to vote**
- ✓ **recruiting poll workers and supporting election officials**
- ✓ **participating in joint statements on democratic principles**

These activities led to record voter turnout, ensured safe access to the polls during a pandemic, and drove business returns.

**In fact, our research shows that Civic Alliance member companies that promoted civic engagement during and after the 2020 election significantly outperformed the S&P 500.**



Civic engagement efforts connect values, purpose, and mission to your stakeholders and support business strategy. They impact the bottom line by:

- ✓ **supporting company culture and enhancing business financials**
- ✓ **deepening employee engagement and a sense of purpose**
- ✓ **increasing consumer loyalty and enhancing brand perception**
- ✓ **creating more prosperous stakeholders and building equitable communities**

This playbook will help you create an action plan that's unique to your own culture and goals, that allows you to engage in a nonpartisan way to champion civic participation.

To begin, we recommend you use data and insights from the latest research to build an internal business case.

Next, consider best practices and case studies shared by Civic Alliance members and create your own action plan from the list of activities provided within each focus area or through the free toolkits available online for Civic Alliance members.

Finally, we invite all companies that support nonpartisan civic engagement to take the pledge and become a member for free at [civicalliance.com](http://civicalliance.com).

And remember, if you get stuck, the Civic Alliance is always here to help. You can reach us at [join@civicalliance.com](mailto:join@civicalliance.com).

# Let's get started!

goals

---

---

---

---

---

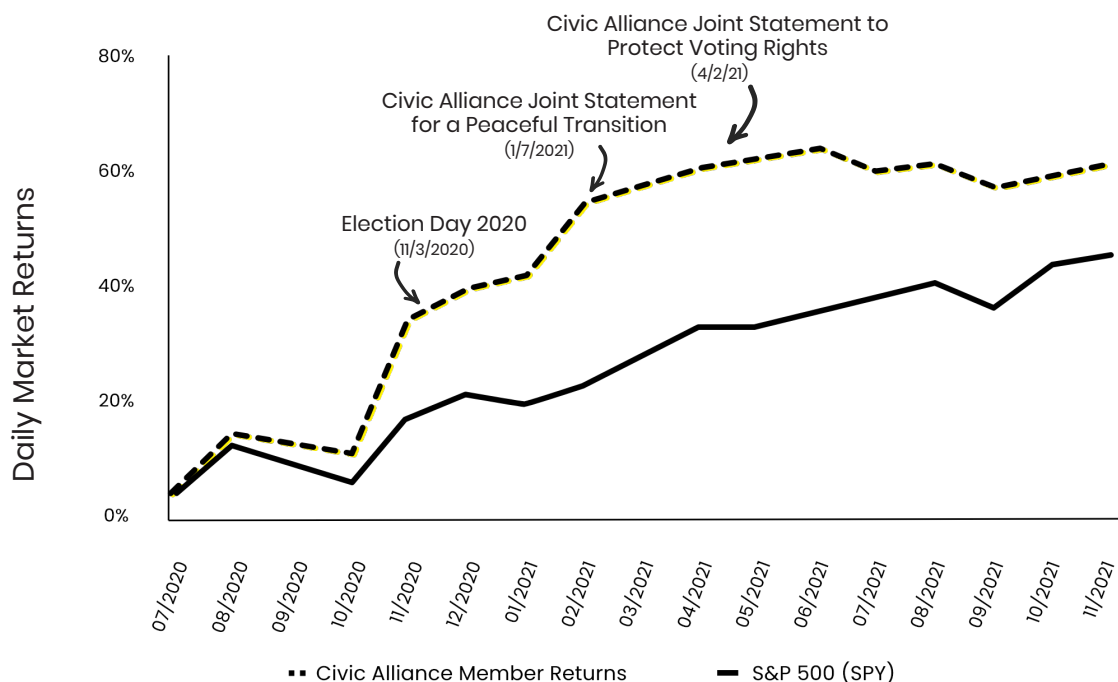
# building your business case

## benefit 01

### civic engagement enhances performance and rewards investors

- Publicly-traded Civic Alliance member companies demonstrated strong market returns versus the S&P500 — particularly during the 2020 election and in the consequential moments for our democracy in the months that followed.

### civic alliance members outperformed the S&P 500



For all data, correlation does not imply causation.

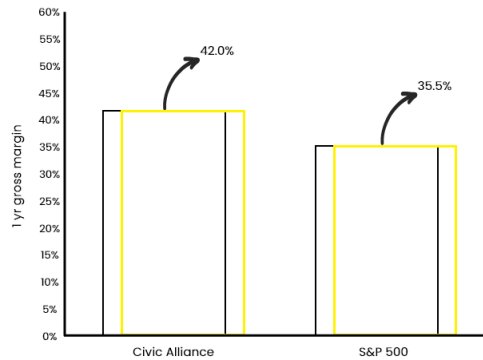
**Investors responded positively to businesses that publicly supported democracy, demonstrated by a strong market response.**

benefit 01, cont.

**Publicly-traded Civic Alliance member companies outperformed the S&P 500 average price/book value, gross margins, and total revenue over a one year period.**

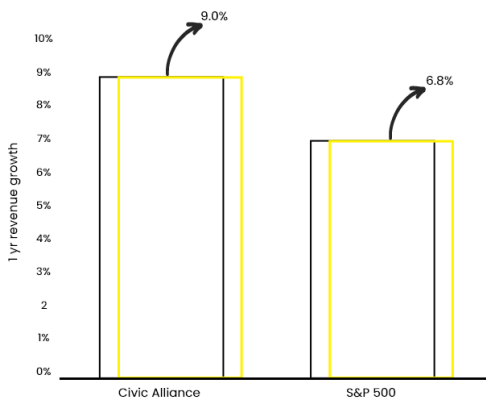
Source: Capital IQ, 9/24/2020 – 9/24/2021.

1 Year Gross Margin %



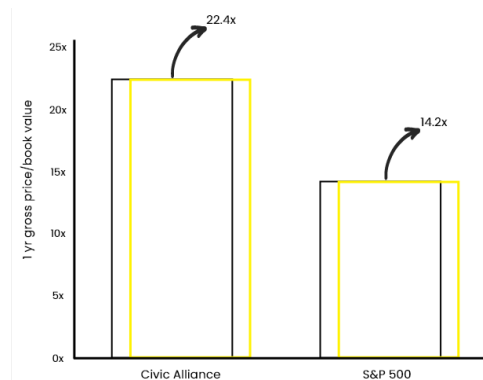
Civic Alliance member companies were more profitable, averaging gross margins **6.5 percentage points** higher than the overall S&P 500 (July 2021 vs. July 2020).

1 Year Revenue Growth %



Civic Alliance member companies grew faster, with revenue growth averaging **2.2 percentage points** higher than the overall S&P 500 (July 2021 vs. July 2020).

1 Year Gross Price/Book Value



Civic Alliance members were perceived as more valuable to investors, with a price/book value **8.2x higher** than that of the overall S&P 500.

## benefit 02

## civic engagement creates purpose and deepens employee engagement

- **76%** of consumers would be more likely to work for a company that promoted democracy.<sup>03</sup>
- **88%** of millennials feel their job is more fulfilling when they have an opportunity to address social or environmental issues.<sup>04</sup>
- **77%** of employees say their nonprofit board experience makes them better leaders or increases self-confidence.<sup>05</sup>
- Increased diversity and engagement efforts can increase profits by **46%** to **58%**.<sup>06</sup>



***“There’s no doubt that public policy impacts business in terms of tax, trade, and social issues. But we also have an opportunity to help our people become comfortable, confident, and passionate about ways to engage on social issues that are personally important.”***

*Hun Quach  
Senior Director,  
Government Relations,  
Under Armour*



***“Younger consumers want to spend their time and money in ways that align with their values. Business leaders that meet them where they are will be rewarded for it.”***

*Erika Soto Lamb  
Vice President, Social  
Impact Strategy, MTV  
Entertainment Group/  
ViacomCBS*

## benefit 03

## civic engagement connects with customer values and builds brand loyalty

- **81%** of consumers are more likely to buy a company’s products or services if it speaks out against restrictive voting laws.<sup>07</sup>
- **79%** of consumers agree that companies should take action on political and social issues<sup>08</sup>
- Customers described companies that never took a position on social issues as “out-of-touch,” “selfish,” and “unpatriotic.”<sup>09</sup>

## benefit 04

## civic engagement supports and builds communities

- **94%** of voters agree that ensuring all eligible Americans can vote is a nonpartisan issue.<sup>10</sup>
- Engaging in civic efforts is an effective strategy for developing leadership skills and a future workforce.<sup>11</sup>
- Higher rates of civic participation correlate to healthier stakeholders, including better psychological well-being, physical benefits, and emotional health.<sup>12</sup>

amazing!

The Democracy Fund logo, featuring the words "democracy fund" in a sans-serif font with a stylized graphic of three overlapping circles in blue, red, and grey to the right.

***“Civic engagement is the strategy to rehabilitate our democracy and provide human connection to our communities. For healthy democracy to become a reality, a comprehensive ecosystem of committed actors is required – including leaders from for-profit, philanthropic, and nonprofit organizations.”***

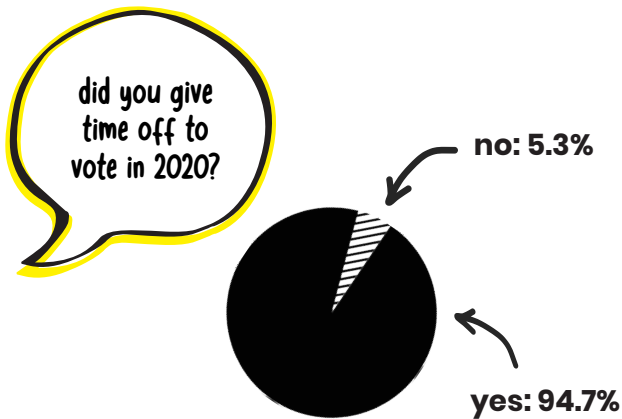
*Najma Roberts*

*Senior Director, Communications and Equity,  
Democracy Fund*

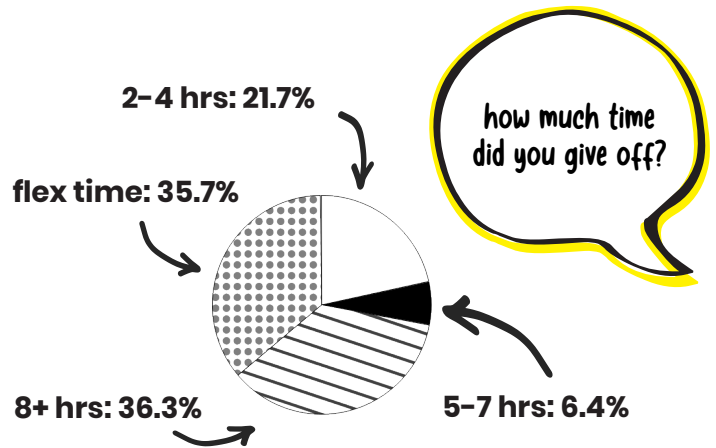
# identifying best practices

We asked Civic Alliance members how they implemented their civic engagement practices. Here's what we learned:

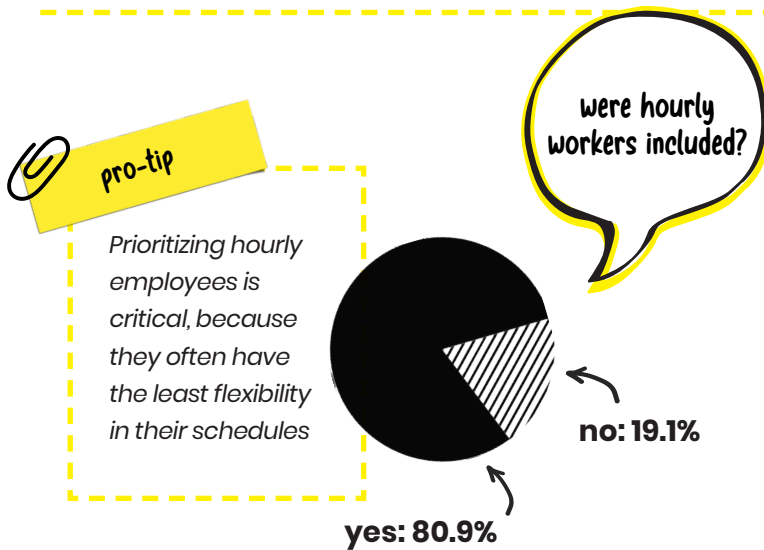
**Providing time off to vote (for both salaried and hourly workers) is a common way to ensure civic participation.**



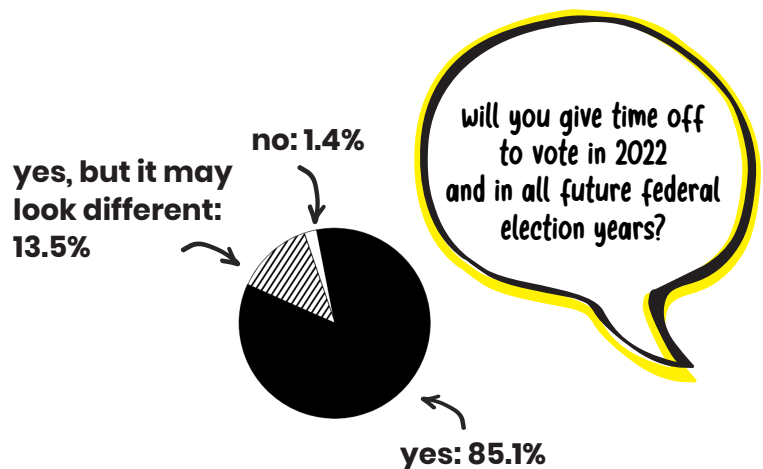
Over **94%** of respondent companies offered time off to vote in 2020.



In 2020, respondents offered employees a range of hours off to vote, with the most offering a full day off on election day, or flexible time to be used at the employee's discretion.

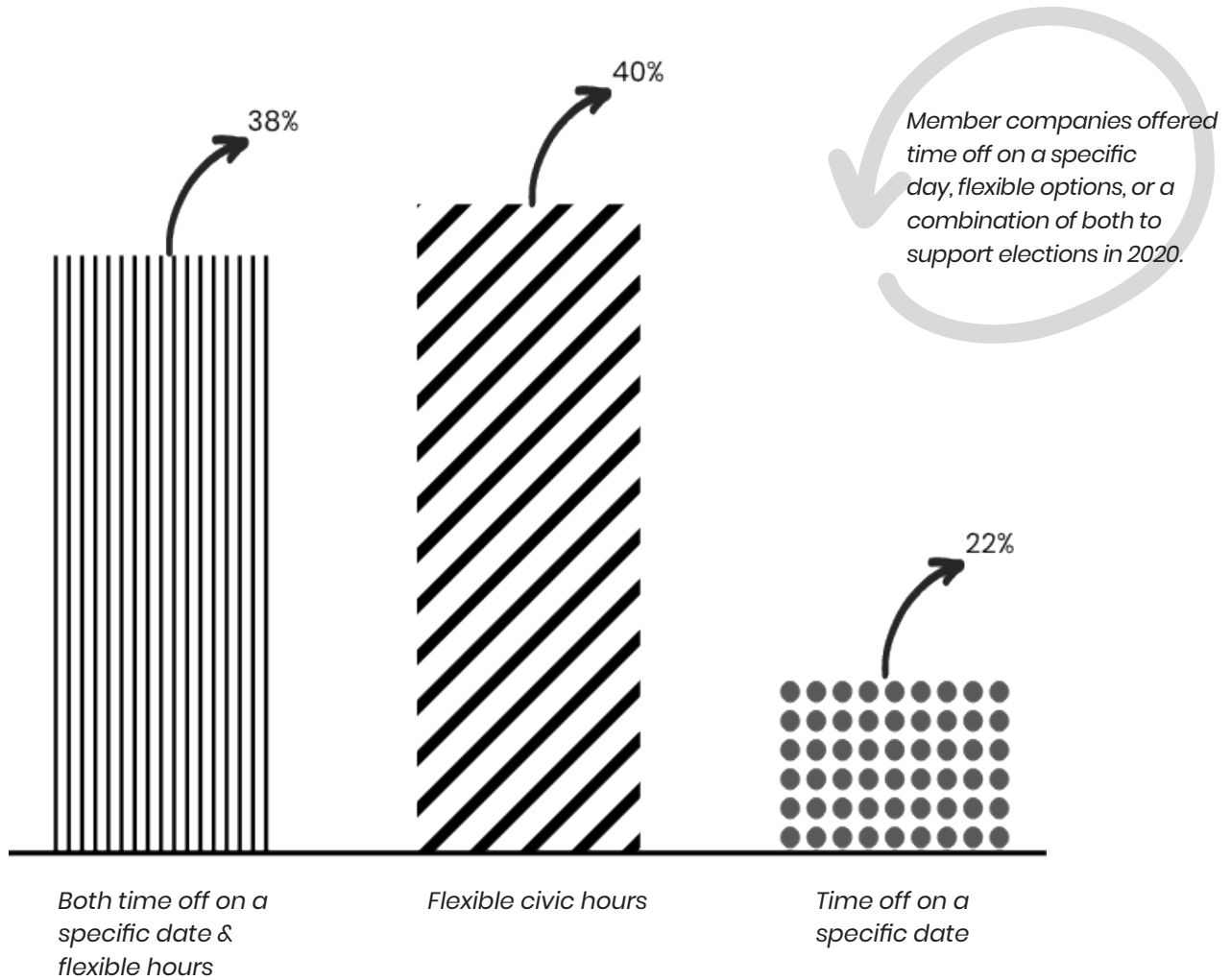


Four out of five member companies provided time off to vote for hourly workers as well as salaried workers in 2020.



The vast majority of respondents reported that they would offer similar time off to vote policies for future federal elections, even if they look a bit different.

## how member companies offered time off to vote



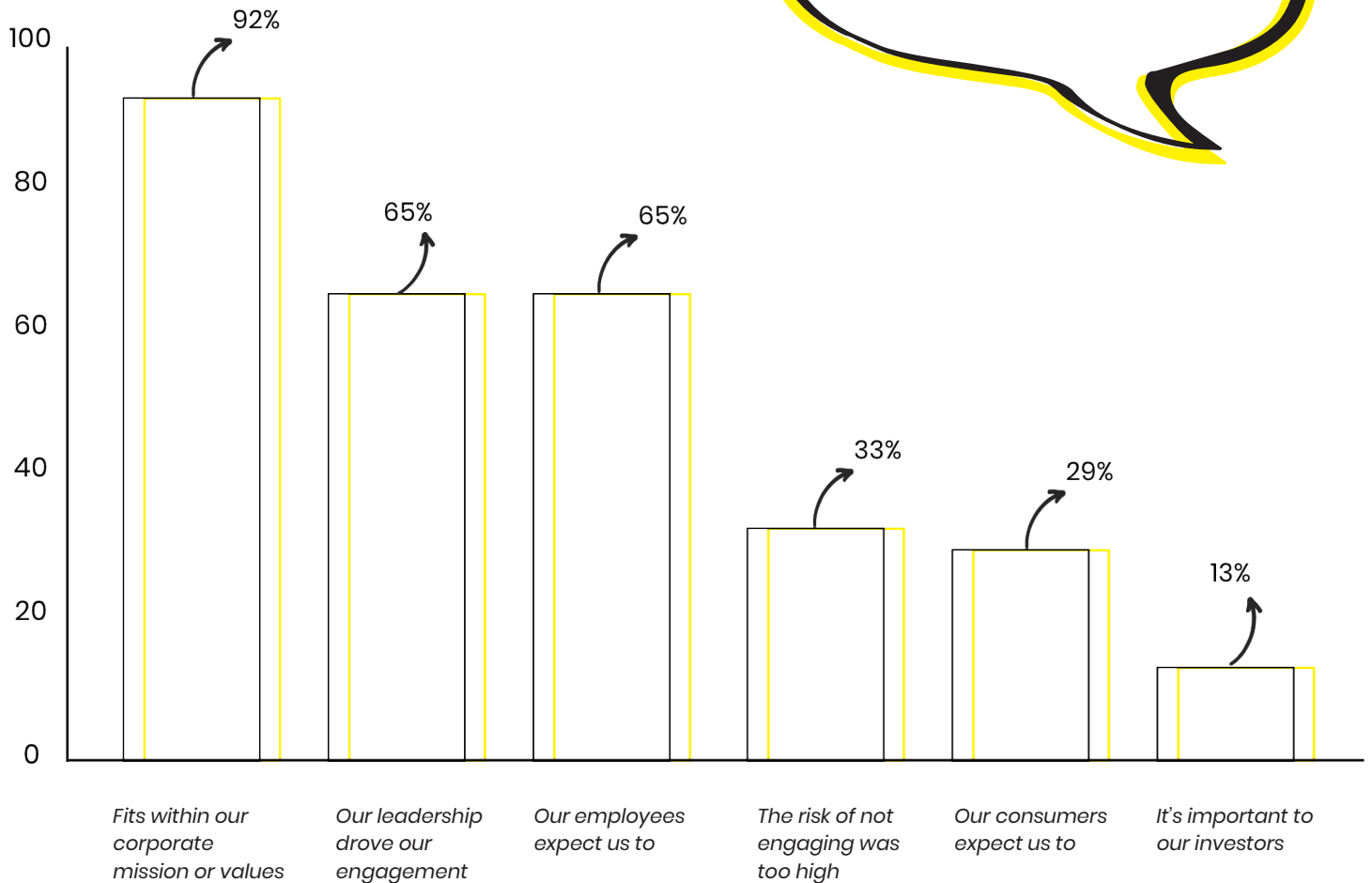
**“Helping ensure everyone’s voice is heard is good for our people, the planet, and business. That’s why, [in 2020], we gave all our US employees paid time off to vote, and we also joined the Civic Alliance – the right to vote is essential to a strong democracy and must be protected.”**

Jim Fettering  
CEO, The Dow Chemical Company



# civic engagement efforts are important to a wide variety of stakeholders

why does your company participate in civic engagement efforts?  
(Respondents selected as many as applied)

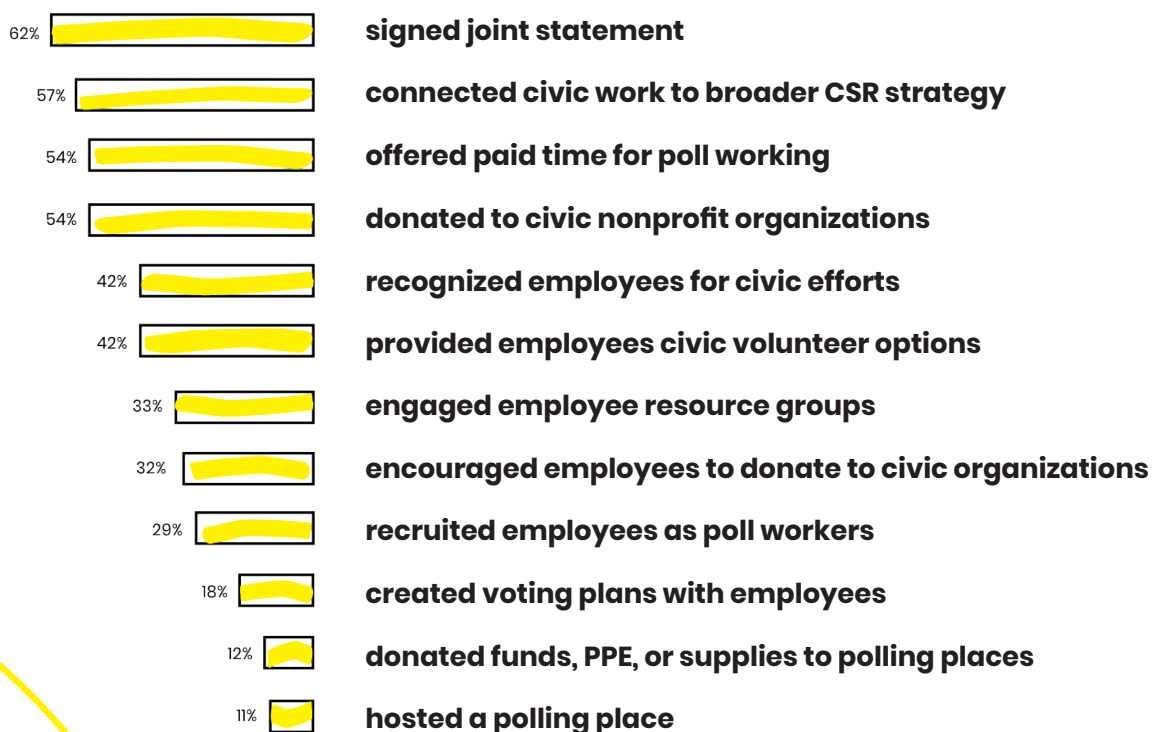


Member companies shared a variety of motivations for engagement, with alignment to mission being among the most important.



# there are many different ways for brands to engage both employees and consumers in civic participation

*Respondents identified many ways their companies support elections, with communications and flexible time to vote among the most frequently cited efforts.*



notes

---



---



---



---

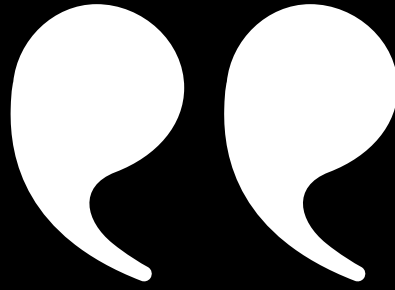


---



---

cases studies



**“At its core, corporate civic engagement is the ultimate way to encourage ‘middle-out, bottom-up’ leadership across an organization.”**

*Eric Liu*  
*CEO, Citizen University*



## case study 01

# old navy provides employees time to power the polls

## OLD NAVY

### the challenge

A lack of poll workers due to the COVID-19 pandemic threatened to close polling places and increase wait times, making voting less accessible.

### the solution

Old Navy proactively recruited poll workers from its 50,000 employee base, providing eight hours of paid time if an employee was selected to work as a poll worker. The company also provided up to three paid hours to vote and established a “no meetings” day to increase scheduling flexibility on Election Day in 2020. Old Navy also invited customers to volunteer as poll workers through their website, recruiting hundreds of individuals across the country.

### the impact

Thousands of hours of poll support resulted from this effort, and Old Navy’s election program was awarded Employee Benefit of the Year by HR Dive. Old Navy’s parent company, Gap Inc., expanded the program across all of its brands to further increase the positive momentum. The initiative resulted in more than 2 billion earned media impressions, and the highest social media buzz the brand had ever received in a single day.



*“At Old Navy, inclusivity and opportunity have always been part of our DNA. With 50,000 employees in our stores across the country, we saw an opportunity, and a responsibility to help. That’s why we are empowering our employees to get involved this Election Day, without the concern of missing a paycheck.”*

Nancy Green  
CEO, Old Navy



## case study 02

# under armour seeks to educate and encourage voter turnout



### the challenge

Based in Baltimore, which historically has one of the lowest voter turnout rates of any metropolitan area in the United States, Under Armour launched its initial **'Run to Vote'** program to make election-related information more accessible and encourage voter participation.

### the solution

Under Armour equipped teammates and its community with the information and resources needed to vote through a publicly available website. To extend the reach of their efforts, the company partnered with local nonprofit organizations and provided paid time off for their employees to vote, reducing a barrier to voter turnout for thousands of employees in Baltimore and around the country.

### the impact

With Under Armour's support, one community partner produced 10,000 "Party at the Mailbox" voter education kits tailored for elections in Baltimore and other markets. In Maryland, 2020 voter turnout increased by 4.1% over the 2016 elections.



*"At Under Armour, we empower those who strive for more. Rooted in our value - Stand for Equality - we focus on meaningfully supporting the communities we serve, including our teammates, athletes, and consumers, so everyone trains for and actively participates in Election Day."*

Patrik Frisk

CEO, Under Armour



## case study 03

# salesforce sees civic engagement as a competitive advantage

salesforce

### the challenge

Salesforce, long a leader in leveraging civic engagement, sought a way to deepen inclusiveness for all of its employees, and to expand existing civic tools and resources for the benefit of consumers and corporate partners.

### the solution

Bolstered by the support of senior leadership, Salesforce broadened their civic engagement program to include nonpartisan educational tools, candidate forums, and Get Out the Vote efforts, including allowing employees to use volunteer hours to serve as poll workers.

### the impact

More than 2,000 employees registered for election reminders in 2020, an almost 100% increase in participation, while nearly 700 individuals signed up to serve as poll workers. Additionally, employees expanded these educational efforts to local high schools and colleges to recruit additional voters and poll workers.



*“Employee civic engagement has long been a priority for Salesforce, but we knew employees were looking for even more tools and educational opportunities. By expanding our Government Affairs Speaker Series with voting-related topics and expanding our employee communications around key opportunities to get involved like voter deadlines, we saw our highest level of employee engagement.”*

*Katie Meares*

*Manager, US State & Local Government Affairs, Midwest, Salesforce*



## case study 04

# levi strauss & co. empowers employees and consumers to be active citizens

LEVI STRAUSS & CO.



*“We must use our voice and resources to support our people and communities, providing the support they need and taking stands on issues from gun violence to voter participation to racial justice to gender equity.”*

Chip Bergh

President and CEO, Levi Strauss & Co.

## the challenge

Levi Strauss & Co. has always lived by its values of originality, empathy, integrity, and courage, and has a long history of employee volunteerism and philanthropic efforts. The company has consistently stood up in support of the social issues that have defined our times. But in a time when voting rights are under attack and voter turnout is low, and as employees and customers look to business leaders to take further action on social issues, Levi Strauss & Co. responded with an ambitious plan to engage employees and customers in the democratic process through their vote.

## the solution

Levi Strauss & Co. empowered employees to become active, informed, and vocal citizens in their communities by encouraging voter registration, engaging them in get-out-the-vote efforts, recruiting poll workers, and leveraging its social media accounts to encourage civic discussion between customers, employees, and thought leaders. Next, they doubled down on philanthropic giving by supporting voter rights and engagement nonprofits, giving paid time off to volunteer, and matching financial donations and volunteer time from employees.

## the impact

Levi Strauss & Co.'s efforts drove strong civic engagement across its employees and customers by empowering 75 vote captains in their corporate, retail, and distribution centers to encourage employees and people in their communities to vote, recruiting 200 poll workers to serve across the U.S. and connecting with more than 15 million individuals on social media about the importance of civic discussion.

Its efforts to create profit through principles paid off, activating employees to increase their own philanthropic giving efforts to civil rights, social action, and advocacy causes by a stunning 471%. These efforts and many more earned Levi Strauss & Co. a spot on Fortune's World's Most Admired Companies in both 2020 and 2021.

## case study 05

# snap, inc uses in-app tools to promote deeper civic engagement



Snap Inc.

### the challenge

With its unique reach among young Americans, as the 2020 election approached Snap Inc. built tools within Snapchat to help young voters register to vote, make a plan to vote, and learn about what's on their ballot. In 2021, Snap Inc. set out to build an approach to civic engagement that would be “always-on” and encourage Snapchatters to take civic actions beyond voting.

### the solution

In fall 2021, Snapchat launched the “Run for Office” mini to help shape the next generation of leaders and a more reflective and equitable democracy. Through this in-app tool, Snapchatters can learn about elected positions in their community, nominate their friends to run, and connect with 10 diverse candidate recruitment organizations that will help them take key next steps.

### the impact

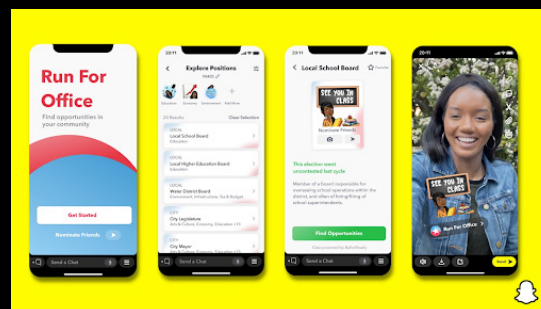
Within one week, Snapchat saw incredible levels of engagement, with over 2 million individuals using the “Run for Office” mini. More than 24,000 Snapchatters expressed interest in working with one of 10 partner candidate recruitment organizations. Additionally, more than 46,000 users nominated a friend to run. As a result, the company is helping to shape the next generation of American leadership.



**“Snapchat reaches 90% of American 13–24 year olds. We hope launching the ‘Run for Office’ mini changes the idea of who can be in office — that no matter who you are, where you come from, that you can make a difference in your local community by running for office based on the issues you care most about.”**

Sofia Gross

Head of Policy Partnerships and Social Impact, Snap Inc.



## case study 06

## mtv entertainment group convenes and inspires civic programs



*“Every rite of passage is celebrated in order to mark its importance and that is why we were proud to bring together over 2,700 world-class brands, NGOs, and public officials to create a new national holiday to help voters celebrate and ritualize the act of voting early.”*

Chris McCarthy

President and CEO, MTV Entertainment Group

### the challenge

Brands like MTV have a long history of driving their audiences and consumers to register to vote. When it comes to driving turnout, however, many brands wait until Election Day to encourage their communities to go vote. By then, it's too late to get out the vote. Over the last decade, early voting and voting by mail have become increasingly popular but, unfortunately, rules vary by jurisdiction, so it's hard for national companies to play a big role encouraging voters to cast their ballots before Election Day. What if we could help communities to vote early?

### the solution

Identifying this opportunity, MTV Entertainment Group brought together a dozen leading civic engagement experts from across the nonprofit, philanthropic, and corporate community (e.g., Twitter, Snapchat, Democracy Works, Students Learn Students Votes, and more) to design a new civic holiday called Vote Early Day. Vote Early Day - first celebrated on October 24, 2020 - became a national movement of nonprofits, businesses, election administrators, and creatives working to ensure all Americans know their options to vote early. Like National Voter Registration Day or #GivingTuesday, it was designed to be an open-source and brand-agnostic holiday so partners have the freedom to celebrate in whatever way works best for them.

### the impact

The first Vote Early Day cultivated more than 2,700 partners from across the country - driving more than 3 million votes (the most ever on the Saturday, 10 days before Election Day). On social, celebrities with a combined following of more than 350 million called on people to vote early and #VoteEarlyDay trended on Twitter for more than 10 hours (hitting the #1 spot). The day had more than 120M impressions, more than 1.4M engagements, and 110,000+ unique authors on social media. From parades to BBQs, there were celebrations across the country - including MTV-funded public art in 20 cities across the country. Vote Early Day is now an annual holiday and you can join us at [www.voteearlyday.org](http://www.voteearlyday.org).

# creating your action plan

Building a voter-friendly workplace is an easy, effective way to signal your company’s support of democracy to all stakeholders.

Most organizations begin building a civic foundation by ensuring employees are informed, prepared, and able to vote in local and national elections, then extend their efforts to activate and connect with customers, partners, and investors.

Ultimately, a culture of civic engagement helps your employees understand and advocate for themselves, aligns stakeholders, reinforces your values, and supports organizational goals – all while strengthening our democracy.

**There’s more than one path to creating your nonpartisan civic initiatives. As you build your plan, there are four common questions you may want to consider:**

- 1** *Have we ensured our employees have the time to vote, are aware of their upcoming elections, and are able to access the polls?*
- 2** *How can we leverage civic knowledge and participation to deepen employee engagement?*
- 3** *What brand resources do we have that will engage our customers in authentic, nonpartisan civic efforts?*
- 4** *How can civic engagement support or align with our strategic priorities?*

---



---



---



---



---

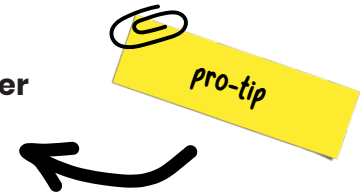


---

workbook

Once those questions have been answered, you can choose which activities most closely align with your organization's culture and mission. For simplicity, we've outlined the key focus areas into four levels. You can choose to highlight multiple activities in one level, or instead select activities across multiple levels. But no matter which approach you choose, make sure you address voting access (level 1) before moving on.

**Level 1 activities ensure your employees have the information and access they need to cast their vote. This is the foundation of all other civic engagement work – don't skip it.**



## LEVI STRAUSS & CO.

***“Customers want brands to align with their values; educating and activating on issues not only helps us recruit talent, but it also keeps us relevant to our customers.”***

Alexis Bechtol

Director, Community Affairs and Social Impact, Levi Strauss & Co.



***“Culture change is rarely a big splashy thing. Instead, we do it by normalizing activities such as voting; by acknowledging difficult challenges; by fostering personal experiences.”***

Ashley Spillane

Founder, Civic Responsibility Project

## level 01: support voting access

### encourage employee voter registration and participation

- Inform your employees about their elections with reliable, timely, nonpartisan reminders about local, state, and federal elections and voter registration deadlines
- Inspire participation by highlighting personal stories of how your leadership or specific employees participated in elections by voting, serving as a poll worker, volunteering civically, or running for local office
- Share digital voter registration tools with your employees to help them register to vote before their state voter registration deadline
- Encourage your employees to register to vote before their voter registration deadlines, including on National Voter Registration Day in September
- Help your employees understand the options they have to vote early in their state – either by mail, in person, or both – and celebrate Vote Early Day in October
- Leverage nonpartisan messaging and toolkits available to members of the Civic Alliance, where you can find verified dates for upcoming elections and trusted tools for voter registration, poll working opportunities, and more

### create a voter-friendly workplace

- Work with your HR team to add voter registration prompts in your company's new hire onboarding, employee orientation, and change-of-address process
- Ensure employees have time and/or flexibility to vote by establishing and promoting one or more of the following policies:
  - Provide paid time off for employees to vote, including hourly workers
  - Issue each employee a bank of paid "civic hours" that they can use to vote early, complete absentee ballots, go to the polls, or take part in other defined civic activities
  - Shorten your company's operating hours on Election Day
  - Establish Election Day as a "no meetings day" to increase schedule flexibility (Note, this approach often only benefits salaried employees)
- If local law permits, provide access to printers and postage stamps to help employees request and return their absentee ballots.

level 01



**“100% of our colleagues will receive resources to register, information to support the polling process, and flexibility and continued encouragement to exercise their right to vote.”**

Glen Walter

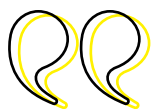
President North America, Mondelez



**“Civic engagement efforts help employees and communities to stay aware of issues that are important to them, make their voice heard, and hold elected officials accountable.”**

Arturo Vargas

CEO, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund



**“I believe that the most important constituency for any company is its employees—and at PayPal we work to put our employees first. As a founding member of the Time to Vote campaign, we are committed to ensuring that all our employees in the United States have the time and ability to participate in local and national elections.”**

Dan Schulman

President and CEO, PayPal



**best practices**

- Ensure employees are aware of their elections and have the time to participate.
- Leverage existing HR and communications efforts to share these messages.
- Measure your employees' engagement in the voting resources and tools you share.
- Develop plans that include both salaried and hourly employees.

**watch-outs**

- Don't miss this step before moving on – employees rely on their employer for trusted information and scheduling flexibility.
- Don't forget to review your internal policies and practices before communicating about voting.
- Don't overlook your colleagues in administrative, security, logistics, custodial, or retail positions, who often need scheduling flexibility the most.



notes

---



---



---



---

## additional resources

timing	topic	tool
ongoing	<p><b>voter registration</b></p> <p>Learn how to register to vote: Understand upcoming elections: Sign up for election reminders, get help with voter registration, voting by mail, and more:</p> <p><b>make a plan to vote</b></p> <p>Find your polling place: Preview your ballot:</p> <p>Check your voter ID laws:</p> <p><b>time to vote</b></p>	<p><a href="https://howto.vote">howto.vote</a></p> <p><a href="https://ballotpedia.org">ballotpedia.org</a></p> <p><a href="https://turbovote.org">turbovote.org</a></p> <p><a href="https://gettothepolls.com">gettothepolls.com</a></p> <p><a href="https://ballotready.org">ballotready.org</a></p> <p><a href="https://vote411.org">vote411.org</a></p> <p><a href="https://voteriders.org">voteriders.org</a></p> <p><a href="https://maketimetovote.org">maketimetovote.org</a></p>
09.20.2022	<b>National Voter Registration Day</b>	<a href="https://nationalvoterregistrationday.org">nationalvoterregistrationday.org</a>
10.28.2022	<b>Vote Early Day</b>	<a href="https://voteearlyday.org">voteearlyday.org</a>
11.08.2022	<b>Election Day</b>	<a href="https://gettothepolls.com">gettothepolls.com</a>

### **Civic Alliance Members:**

Consult the Quick Start Guide to support your efforts in Level 1

### **Not a Member Yet?**

Take the pledge and join for free at [civicalliance.com](https://civicalliance.com)



## level 02: educate + activate employees

### educate employees about civics

- Support voter registration and poll worker recruitment drives
- Educate employees on how government systems work and the responsibilities elected officials hold, so they are better prepared to vote in elections and reach out to their elected officials
- Guide employees through the process of learning who their elected officials are and how employees can contact them to share their perspectives on issues they care about
- Create Employee Advisory Committees or engage Employee Resource Groups to advise on and lead civic engagement efforts
- In the run-up to an election, host 'lunch & learns' with candidates from across the political spectrum or issue area experts to better inform employees about their options. Check with your legal counsel for best practices.

### encourage employees to participate in civic activities

- Encourage employees to volunteer in the community through a volunteer program or corporate giving effort
- Offer employees opportunities to increase voter turnout in local communities through nonpartisan phone banking and letter writing events
- Partner with nonpartisan nonprofit organizations to increase voter registration and turnout in local communities
- Provide employees with nonprofit board member training to advance both the skill set of your team and the efficacy of your community programs
- Create an internal campaign to celebrate employees that sign a nonpartisan pledge to be civically active
- Leverage the Civic Alliance's Election Day of Service initiative to declare Election Day a Day of Service at your company, encouraging employees to serve as poll workers and by donating products or physical space to elections officials, ensuring safe and accessible elections in your community
- Help employees identify ways to activate on areas of personal importance, including running for elected positions, becoming U.S. citizens, or contacting their representatives about causes they care about

keep going!



**BEST  
BUY.**

***“Best Buy encourages employees to be engaged in the communities where we live and work. For our democracy and business to thrive, it is critical to have engaged citizens who are knowledgeable about the democratic process and willing to participate in it. As part of the Turn up the Vote program, Best Buy encourages employees to vote and provides civic tools and resources on an intranet site in addition to providing PTO for employees who volunteer at the polls on Election Day.”***

Mike Hiltner

VP of Government Affairs and Corporate  
Responsibility, Best Buy

## additional resources

topic	tool
<p><b>civic education</b></p> <p>Live and online courses: Elections encyclopedia: Youth engagement:</p> <p>Naturalization:</p>	<p><a href="https://citizenuniversity.us">citizenuniversity.us</a> <a href="https://ballotpedia.org">ballotpedia.org</a> <a href="https://historymadebyus.com">historymadebyus.com</a> <a href="https://thecivicscenter.org">thecivicscenter.org</a> <a href="https://circle.tufts.edu">circle.tufts.edu</a> <a href="https://naleo.org/citizenship">naleo.org/citizenship</a></p>
<p><b>service &amp; engagement</b></p> <p>Election Day of Service:</p>	<p><a href="https://civicalliance.com/service">civicalliance.com/service</a></p>

### **Civic Alliance Members:**

Refer to the 2022 Elections Toolkit to support your activities in Level 2

### **Not a Member Yet?**

Take the pledge and join for free at [civicalliance.com](https://civicalliance.com)



***“Today’s workforce expects their place of employment to align with their values. Employees are more willing to shift to new roles in order to achieve work-life integration beyond wages and hours.”***

Virginia Kase Solomón  
CEO, League of Women Voters

## level 03: engage consumers

### encourage civic participation among your consumers

- Inform and inspire audiences to shape their communities through civic participation through your company's marketing, packaging, and external communications efforts
- Incorporate reminders for voter registration deadlines, early voting dates, and elections into consumer-facing emails, social media posts, mobile apps, receipts, packing slips, shipping boxes, and websites
- Encourage your consumers to register to vote before their voter registration deadlines, including on National Voter Registration Day in September
- Mobilize your consumers to understand the options they have to vote early in their state – either by mail, in person, or both – and celebrate Vote Early Day in October
- Encourage consumers to serve as poll workers

### enlist your consumers to support your nonprofit partners

- Educate your consumers about your nonprofit partner organizations, providing them an opportunity to support the organizations through volunteer service or donations
- Donate proceeds from the sales of certain products or from sales on certain days to benefit civic nonprofit organizations and enroll your consumers in the cause
- Spotlight your nonprofit partners through your external marketing and communications efforts and draw a clear line between your company's values and their impact

you've got this!



Public Affairs Council

**“Companies have a unique relationship with their customers that is built on trust. Polls show that expectations are rising as many Americans – young and old – look to major companies to make a positive difference in the world. Corporations that provide non-partisan, civic information and services are demonstrating their commitment to live up to their stated values.”**



Douglas Pinkham

President, Public Affairs Council



**“Civic participation from employees and consumers can take a range of forms, but it comes down to proactive problem-solving; advocacy for self, community, and country; critical thinking; and the knowledge and skills needed to create change.”**

Caroline Klibanoff

Managing Director, Made By Us,  
Smithsonian’s National Museum of  
American History



let's do this!

## best practices

**Ensure all messaging is authentic to your brand.**

**Include colleagues from Marketing, Communications, CSR, Government Affairs, and Employee Resource Groups in your planning.**

**Think creatively about how to engage customers using existing resources — how can your company uniquely support your community or consumers?**

**Measure based on brand perception surveys and customer engagement metrics.**

## watch-outs

**Don't forget to highlight how your civic initiatives help your company live up to its values.**

**Don't miss the chance to involve diverse perspectives as you develop your consumer messaging and creative.**



## consumer engagement

topic	tool
<p><b>driving brand alignment</b> Civic storytelling: Corporate civic case studies:</p> <p><b>customer participation</b> Poll worker recruitment: Service &amp; volunteerism opportunities: Election Day of Service:</p> <p>See additional resources in Level 01 (<a href="#">page 24</a>) for ways to engage customers in voting.</p>	<p><a href="http://civicalliance.com/member-resources">civicalliance.com/member-resources</a> <a href="http://civicalliance.com/impact-report">civicalliance.com/impact-report</a></p> <p><a href="http://powerthepolls.org">powerthepolls.org</a> <a href="http://pointsoflight.org">pointsoflight.org</a> <a href="http://civicalliance.com/service">civicalliance.com/service</a></p>

**Civic Alliance Members:**

Email [service@civicalliance.com](mailto:service@civicalliance.com) for information on participating in Election Day of Service as part of your efforts in Level 3

**Not a Member Yet?**

Take the pledge and join for free at [civicalliance.com](http://civicalliance.com)



workbook

---



---



---



---



---

## level 04: engage all stakeholders to build democracy

### activate stakeholders for impact

- Connect your company's values to your commitment to civic engagement, a strong democracy, and other relevant social issues
- Encourage your suppliers, vendors, and partners to support nonpartisan civic engagement
- Provide transparency on lobbying or funding efforts within your organization and keep those efforts separate from your nonpartisan civic initiatives
- Consider donating to civic and civil rights organizations that align with your company's culture and values
- Regularly evaluate your philanthropic donations and political contributions against your company's stated values to assess both risk and opportunity
- Speak to civic issues that impact the business through your annual reports, impact reports, and investor calls
- Identify, review, and consistently address emerging civic issues with key leaders inside your organization, always ensuring alignment with your company's values

level up!

### lead through innovation

- Recruit and encourage other business leaders to participate in civic engagement efforts
- Join state and local chambers of commerce to learn about community needs and identify ways to address those needs by offering available company resources
- Utilize social innovation principles to identify new product or service offerings that address pressing social issues<sup>13</sup>
- Participate in joint statements that demonstrate your company's commitment and nonpartisan action towards the principles of a strong democracy
- Share the successes, lessons learned, and best practices from your company's civic programs to better inform your peers

you've got this!

## best practices

Position civics as part of your strategic priorities and public reporting.

Encourage functional areas across your business to promote civics in their own initiatives.

Ensure leadership is aligned and onboard with civic engagement as an important part of organizational culture.

Measure based on brand perception, customer engagement, peer collaborations.

## watch-outs

Don't miss the opportunity to build long-term relationships with nonprofit partners.



**“The right to vote is a pillar of American democracy, a privilege that we should all appreciate and exercise. I’m proud of our sport’s role in encouraging baseball fans and communities throughout the country to perform their civic duty and actively participate in the voting process.”**

Rob Manfred

Commissioner, Major League Baseball<sup>14</sup>

additional resources

topic	tool
<p><b>brand activation</b></p> <p>Election Day of Service:</p> <p>Public Affairs Council:</p> <p>Run for Office:</p>	<p><a href="http://civicalliance.com/service">civicalliance.com/service</a></p> <p><a href="http://pac.org">pac.org</a></p> <p><a href="http://recruitment.civicense.com">recruitment.civicense.com</a></p>

**Civic Alliance Members:**

Refer to the 2022 Elections Toolkit to support your efforts in Level 4

**Not a Member Yet?**

Take the pledge and join for free at [civicalliance.com](http://civicalliance.com)



workbook

---



---



---



---



---



**“Corporate civic engagement aligns the company’s purpose, skills, and domains to the needs of a larger community. Leaders must have a strong vision and dedication towards engagement and ongoing execution and demonstration of their commitment.”**

*Kei Kawashima-Ginsburg*

*Director of the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement*

# glossary

**Absentee Voting or Vote By Mail:** A ballot cast by a voter other than in-person on election day. Some jurisdictions use the term synonymous with mailed ballots while other jurisdictions use the term synonymous with early voting.

**Ballot:** The official presentation of all of the contests to be decided in a particular election. Either in paper or electronic format, the mechanism for voters to show their voter preferences

**Constituent:** A person who is represented politically by a designated government official or officeholder, especially when the official is one that the person represented has the opportunity to participate in selecting through voting.

**District (also Ward):** A political subdivision established within a specific geographic area.

**Early Voting:** Voting before election day where the voter completes the ballot in person at an elections office or other designated polling site prior to election day. Early voting can also include voting with a mailed or absentee ballot prior to election day.

**Election Official:** Individuals who have been elected to hold public office or candidates appointed in lieu of being elected to a public office.

**General Election:** Election in which all eligible voters, regardless of party affiliation, are able to vote for candidates to fill public office and/or vote on ballot measures. General elections happen at a local, state, and national level.

**Incumbent:** A candidate who is currently serving in an office they were appointed to, and they are a candidate for election to the same office.

**Midterm Election:** Elections that take place between presidential elections.

**Political Party:** An organization that coordinates candidates to compete in a country's elections. It is common for the members of a political party to have similar ideas about politics, and parties may promote specific ideological or policy goals.

**Polling Place (Polling Station):** Facility to which voters are assigned to cast in-person ballots.

**Poll Worker:** The official responsible for the proper and orderly voting at a polling location or an election process.

**Precinct (Election District, Voting District):** Election administration division corresponding to a contiguous geographic area that is the basis for determining which contests and issues the voters legally residing in that area are eligible to vote on.

**Primary Election (Open and Closed):** Election held to determine which candidate will represent a political party for a given office in the general election. Some states have an open primary, while others have a closed or modified closed, primary. Sometimes elections for nonpartisan offices and ballot issues are held during primary elections.

**Provisional Ballot:** A ballot cast by a voter who was not on the list of eligible voters, whose information was incomplete or not accurate, or who had already received a ballot in the mail and was allowed to vote. Fail-safe ballots are usually kept separate from the other ballots until an election official can determine if the voter is eligible to vote. These ballots are sometimes called fail-safe ballots.

**Referendum:** Process whereby a state law or constitutional amendment may be referred to the voters before it goes into effect.

**Registered Voter:** A voter who is listed on an electoral roll for the jurisdiction where a voter resides.

**Special Election:** Primary, general, municipal, proposition, run-off, or recall election that is not held on a date and time regularly scheduled through statute. A special election may be combined with a scheduled election.

**Term:** The period of time for which a person is elected or appointed to hold a public office. Terms of elected office are usually 2, 4, or 6 years.

**Term Limit:** A legal restriction that limits the total number of terms an officeholder may serve in a particular elected office.

**Voter Identification (Voter ID):** A means of proving a person's identity for the purposes of voting, according to the laws of the jurisdiction. Common forms of identification are Driver's Licenses and Passports.

# last but not least

**civic  
alliance**

The Civic Alliance is America's premier nonpartisan coalition of businesses united by a commitment to our democracy, which we believe depends upon active participation in safe, accessible, and trusted elections. Founded by Democracy Works and the CAA Foundation, the Civic Alliance supports its member companies as they inspire their employees and consumers to engage in civic life and their communities.

Companies join the Civic Alliance by making a nonpartisan pledge to encourage their employees and/or consumers to vote and be civically active. There is no financial requirement to become a member. In exchange for your commitment to civic engagement, we provide member companies with research-backed toolkits and programming to help you develop effective civic initiatives.

**Take the pledge and become a member for free at [civicalliance.com](https://civicalliance.com).**

The Civic Alliance was founded by:

**CAA** community  
& impact

**Democracy  
Works**

The Civic Alliance is powered by:

**Meteorite**

take the  
next step!

## about the playbook

The Civic Alliance Corporate Civic Playbook was sourced through firsthand research Dora Lutz conducted with Civic Alliance members and industry experts. Financial data (pages 7–9) compared publicly traded civic alliance member companies against the S&P 500 and sourced from Capital IQ. The Member survey (pages 11 – 14) was gathered in September 2021 with 97 members responding. For all data, correlation is not intended to imply causation. All raw data is available by request at [civicalliance.org](http://civicalliance.org).



## acknowledgments

### The Civic Alliance would like to thank:

CAA Foundation  
 Civic Responsibility Project  
 Democracy Fund  
 Democracy Works  
 Dora Lutz, GivingSpring | Purdue University  
 Meteorite  
 Civic Alliance members for their openness and willingness to share best practices with others.

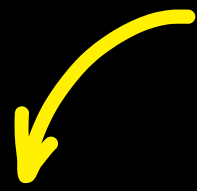
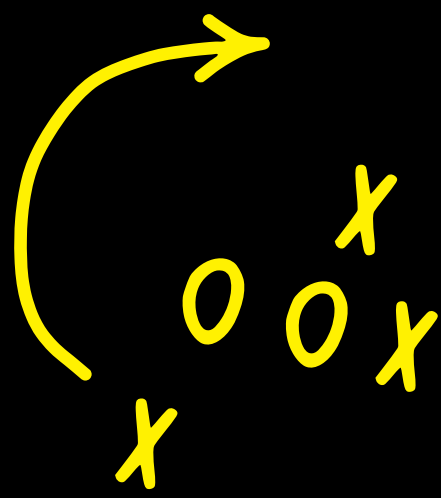
### Additional thanks to Civic Alliance partners for their thought leadership and insights that brought this project to life:

Alexis Bechtol, *Levi Strauss & Co.*  
 Arturo Vargas, *NALEO Educational Fund*  
 Ashley Spillane, *Civic Responsibility Project*  
 Caroline Klibanoff, *Made by Us | Smithsonian National Museum*  
 Eric Liu, *Citizen University*  
 Erika Soto Lamb, *ViacomCBS*  
 Hun Quach, *Under Armour*  
 Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, *CIRCLE at Tufts University*  
 Sofia Gross, *Snap, Inc.*  
 Teddy Landis, *Snap, Inc.*  
 Virginia Kase Solomón, *League of Women Voters*

for extra inspiration and support, join us at [civicalliance.com](http://civicalliance.com) (it's free!)

## references

- <sup>01</sup>. United States Census Bureau, Public Information Office. (2021, April 29). [2020 Presidential Election Voting and Registration Tables Now Available \[Press release\]](#).
- <sup>02</sup>. Edelman. "[2022 Edelman Trust Barometer](#)". Edelman 2022.
- <sup>03</sup>. Democracy Works & Ward, M. (2018, November 14). "[Civic engagement now makes good business sense](#)".
- <sup>04</sup>. Cone Communications. (2016, April) [Millennial employee engagement study](#).
- <sup>05</sup>. Alice Korngold. (2018). [Better world leadership nonprofit board leadership study](#). Korngold Consulting.
- <sup>06</sup>. Badal, S., & Harter, J. K. (2013). Gender Diversity, Business–Unit Engagement, and Performance. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 21(4), 354–365.
- <sup>07</sup>. Democracy Works & Ward, M. (2018, November 14). "[Civic engagement now makes good business sense](#)".
- <sup>08</sup>. Global Strategies Group. (2019). [Doing Business in an Activist World: 6th Annual Business & Politics Study](#).
- <sup>09</sup>. Global Strategies Group. (2019). [Doing Business in an Activist World: 6th Annual Business & Politics Study](#).
- <sup>10</sup>. Civic Responsibility Project & Global Strategies Group (2021, April 22). *Americans see role for companies in securing voting access*.
- <sup>11</sup> Lewis, A., Pratt, J., & Volkmuth, J. (2006). [Training Citizens While Training Workers: Strengthening Ties Between Civic Engagement and Workforce Development Efforts](#). Minnesota Campus Compact.
- <sup>12</sup> Kim S, Kim CY, You MS. Civic participation and self-rated health: a cross-national multi-level analysis using the world value survey. *J Prev Med Public Health*. 2015;48(1):18–27.
- <sup>13</sup>. Soule, S. A., Malhotra, N., & Clavier, B. (2021). [Defining Social Innovation](#). Stanford Graduate School of Business.
- <sup>14</sup>. Associated Press & Major League Baseball. (2020, September 16). [MLB joins alliance pushing for higher voter turnout \[Press release\]](#).
- <sup>15</sup>. United States Election Assistance Commission. (2021). [In Glossary of Election Terminology](#) (1.1 ed.). The U.S. Election Assistance Commission.



# corporate civic playbook

