

Goodwill of Greater Detroit

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CAMPAIGN PROPOSAL

Every Purchase Powers A
Transformation

Presented to:

Goodwill of Greater Detroit



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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & RESULTS



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & RESULTS

Background & SWOT Analysis

Background

Goodwill of Greater Detroit started in 1921 as a small effort to help local residents find work by repairing donated items. Today, it operates thrift stores, recycling services, and manufacturing programs that all fund job training and support services for people across metro Detroit. This campaign aims to boost brand awareness among Gen Z by clearly communicating that Goodwill is more than just a thrift store. By improving digital and social media strategies, the goal is to highlight Goodwill's mission and impact, helping audiences understand how their support directly benefits the Detroit community.

SWOT

Strengths:

- Strong national brand recognition
- Dual revenue model through retail, industrial recycling, and workforce development contracts
- Low-cost inventory through donated goods
- Proven job training infrastructure and community partnerships
- Recent expansion with new stores in Madison Heights and Southfield

Opportunities:

- Growing thrift shopping trend among Gen Z
- Circular economy movement and sustainability-focused consumer behavior
- Social media engagement through TikTok and Instagram for younger demographics
- Corporate ESG partnerships and sponsorships
- Increased demand for workforce training due to employer talent shortages
- Storytelling potential through success stories and impact narratives

Weaknesses:

- Limited public awareness of workforce development mission
- Heavy dependence on unpredictable donation quantity and quality
- Vulnerability to misinformation about executive compensation and fund usage

Threats:

- Strong competition from other thrift/consignment stores and online resale platforms (Salvation Army, Plato's Closet, Poshmark, Depop, eBay)
- Rapid spread of misinformation on social media damaging reputation
- Fast fashion oversupply reducing retail value of donated items
- Potential government funding cuts for workforce development programs

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & RESULTS

Primary & Secondary Research Efforts

Primary Research Methods:

The primary research involved conducting an online survey distributed via Qualtrics, which gathered responses from 102 participants. The sample was collected through convenience sampling on social media platforms and university class group chats. The survey included 23 questions in various formats, such as multiple-choice, Likert scale, ranking, and open-ended responses. These questions aimed to measure familiarity with Goodwill, motivations for engagement, understanding of its mission, and preferred communication channels. Additionally, 11 semi-structured interviews were conducted with college students, thrifting enthusiasts, Goodwill employees, and store managers. These interviews provided qualitative insights into perceptions of Goodwill's mission, shopping motivations, digital engagement, and store experiences. **To see the full survey results and interview guide, please see Appendices A and B. To see the full primary research report, please see Appendix C.**

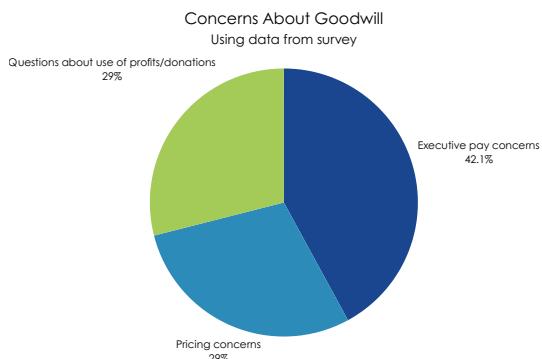
Secondary Research Sources:

Secondary research included reviewing academic studies, industry reports, and nonprofit communication strategies. Key sources included studies on Gen Z's values, media habits, and shopping behaviors, as well as research on sustainability, thrift culture, and nonprofit branding. Reports from organizations like ThredUp and GuideStar provided insights into the secondhand market and Goodwill's sustainability impact. Additionally, literature on combating misinformation and effective communication strategies for nonprofits was analyzed to inform the campaign's approach. **To see the full secondary research report, please see Appendix D.**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & RESULTS

Research Findings

Integrating primary and secondary research reveals a consistent pattern: consumers trust and engage with Goodwill as a low-cost thrift option but remain unclear about its nonprofit mission and skeptical about its internal practices. Secondary sources emphasize that this confusion is widespread and tied to long-standing myths about executive compensation and profit distribution (Gibbons & Hazy, 2015; Welch, 2010). Primary survey data supports this, with only 38% of respondents correctly identifying Goodwill as a nonprofit and many expressing uncertainty about where money from purchases goes. Despite Goodwill's strong sustainability outcomes, such as diverting millions of pounds of materials from landfills annually, consumers are largely unaware, indicating that this value is not being communicated effectively (ThredUp, 2025; Goodwill Industries International Inc., 2025).



As represented in this pie chart, consumers also identified key concerns that influence their willingness to shop or donate at Goodwill. These concerns included pricing, executive compensation, and uncertainty about how donations are used.

Digital communication weaknesses emerged strongly across both primary and secondary findings. Research into social media trends highlighted TikTok and Instagram as essential communication channels, yet interview participants noted that Goodwill's current digital presence feels minimal, unclear, or outdated (ThredUp, 2025; Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit, 2025). Participants expressed a desire for more authentic content, mission-focused storytelling, and behind-the-scenes transparency that demonstrates where donations go and who benefits. Store experiences varied widely, reinforcing perceptions of inconsistency, which is another key theme across both research types.

Overall, the combined findings show that Goodwill possesses strong mission-aligned assets: sustainability, community impact, and accessibility, but these strengths are overshadowed by communication gaps, persistent myths, and a lack of engaging digital presence. This research points to significant opportunities to clarify Goodwill's nonprofit identity, highlight mission-driven outcomes, improve store consistency, and modernize digital communication strategies to strengthen credibility and relevance. **Further quantitative results and thematic codes appear in Appendices C and D.**

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Your Finds Fuel Futures



SITUATION ANALYSIS

Goodwill of Metro Detroit is a well-known nonprofit organization with strong brand recognition in the community. While most residents associate Goodwill with thrift stores and donation centers, awareness of its nonprofit mission, job training programs, and social impact remains limited. Research shows that only 38% of people recognize Goodwill as a nonprofit, and just 23–31% associate it with job training and workforce development. This perception gap represents both a challenge and an opportunity for strategic communications.

The organization has recently reopened stores in Madison Heights and Southfield, expanding its local presence after a decade-long hiatus. These new locations provide a platform to increase community engagement and demonstrate Goodwill's broader mission. However, inconsistency in in-store messaging, limited digital engagement, and low awareness of the nonprofit status create hurdles in fully conveying the organization's social impact.

Gen Z and young adult audiences, particularly college students, represent a critical target group. These audiences value authenticity, sustainability, and social impact, yet they report limited exposure to official Goodwill content on platforms like TikTok and Instagram. At the same time, current shoppers and donors demonstrate transactional engagement focused on affordability rather than mission highlighting the need for storytelling and clear communication about how purchases and donations drive community impact.

The overarching goal of this campaign is to spread awareness of Goodwill's mission and the people it serves, emphasizing that it is more than just a thrift store and highlighting its social and economic contributions to the Metro Detroit community. By combining digital engagement, in-store enhancements, community partnerships, and transparency initiatives, this campaign aims to strengthen understanding, increase engagement, and drive meaningful participation across multiple audiences.

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Thrift with Impact



AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

We had a total of three audiences for Goodwill of Metro Detroit that we were trying to reach; young people ages 17-29, older customers ages 30-65+, and “now and then” customers ages 18-65+. These groups represented both external and internal audiences. To reach our primary target audience, we relied heavily on digital engagement like TikTok and Instagram, influencer collaborations, and short-form video storytelling.

Primary target audience: Gen Z, born between 1997-2012.

Values: sustainability, affordability, individuality, community involvement.

Media Habits: highly active on TikTok, Instagram, and short-form content.

Shopping Motivations: thrift culture, self-expression, and sustainability.

Needs: clarity on how Goodwill impacts people and the environment.

Barriers: limited awareness of job training programs and nonprofit mission.

33%

KNEW NONPROFIT STATUS

76%

BRAND FAMILIARITY

88%

VALUE AFFORDABILITY

57%

VALUE SUSTAINABILITY

INTEGRATED ADVERTISING & PR PLAN

**Unified thrift-focused
messaging**



INTEGRATED ADVERTISING & PR PLAN

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Increase Digital Engagement:** Achieve a 30% increase in digital engagement with Gen Z audiences on TikTok and Instagram within 12 months.
 - 2. Enhance Mission Awareness:** Increase public understanding of Goodwill's nonprofit status and mission by 15% within 6 months.
 - 3. Boost Store Traffic:** Drive a 10% increase in foot traffic at the newly reopened Madison Heights and Southfield locations within 12 months.
- 

Objective 1: Increase Digital Engagement

Position Goodwill as a trendy, affordable, and socially impactful brand that resonates with Gen Z's values of sustainability, individuality, and community involvement.

Every purchase powers a transformation

From thrift finds to changed lives: see the impact behind every item

Strategies:

- Utilize TikTok and Instagram as primary platforms to engage Gen Z audiences.
- Create authentic, trend-driven content that aligns with Gen Z's media habits and values.
- Foster community interaction through user-generated content and interactive challenges.

Tactics:

- Highlight personal stories of transformation through Goodwill's programs using short-form videos.
- Showcase thrift finds and sustainable fashion ideas to align with Gen Z's interest in self-expression and eco-consciousness.
- Use hashtags like #DetroitThrift, #ThriftTok, and #GoodwillDetroit to amplify reach and encourage participation.

INTEGRATED ADVERTISING & PR PLAN

Objective 2: Enhance Mission Awareness:

Reframe Goodwill as a mission-driven nonprofit that transforms lives and communities through job training, workforce development, and sustainability.

Strategies:

- Enhance in-store messaging with storytelling displays and impact walls to visually communicate Goodwill's mission.
- Build partnerships with local nonprofits to amplify credibility and extend reach.
- Launch a digital transparency campaign to address misinformation and clarify Goodwill's nonprofit status.\

Tactics:

- Use storytelling displays and "impact walls" in stores to humanize Goodwill's mission and showcase real-life success stories.
- Create a "Myth vs. Fact" section on the website to address misconceptions about executive compensation, pricing, and nonprofit status.
- Develop a "Where Does My Donation Go?" video series to visually explain the donation-to-impact pipeline.
-



Objective 3: Boost Store Traffic:

Establish Goodwill's Madison Heights and Southfield locations as community hubs for affordable, sustainable shopping and local engagement.

"Shop local, support your community, and make a difference, every visit to Goodwill helps build pathways to independence."

Strategies:

- Offer exclusive new-customer incentives and student discounts to attract first-time shoppers.
- Create a "Shop Local" partnership network with neighboring businesses to drive cross-traffic.
- Develop university and school partnership programs with student-focused events to engage younger audiences.

Tactics:

- Promote discounts and incentives through geo-targeted ads, social media, and direct mail campaigns.
- Collaborate with local businesses to host co-branded events and create a punch-card loyalty program.
- Host campus pop-up events and monthly student-focused events to build connections with Gen Z

COMMUNICATION PROGRAM PLAN

Strategy for Goodwill
outreach



COMMUNICATION PROGRAM PLAN

Campaign goal:

Raise awareness that Goodwill of Metro Detroit is more than a thrift store by clearly communicating its nonprofit mission and the social and economic impact it creates across Metro Detroit.

Objective 1: **Increase digital engagement with Gen Z by 30% within 12 months**

To reach Gen Z where they already are, this objective centers on establishing a consistent, authentic presence on TikTok and Instagram. Our research shows Gen Z drives thrift trends online, yet rarely sees official Goodwill marketing on those platforms, so the plan is to create content that feels native, real, and participatory rather than corporate.

Strategy one uses TikTok and Instagram as primary channels and posts short-form videos that highlight employee and participant stories, thrift finds, and trend-driven content. Tactics include 30–60 second Reels/TikToks with program participants, curated content with local thrifting creators (#DetroitThrift, #ThriftTok), and participation in relevant viral trends/challenges.

Strategy two keeps content consistent and high-quality across platforms by enforcing a posting cadence, a unified visual style, and series-based programming like "Mission Monday" (weekly success-story posts) plus weekly thrift guides and seasonal updates.

Strategy three prioritizes community interaction through monthly themed challenges, interactive Stories (polls, Q&As), and a digital rewards system to encourage user-generated content and repeat engagement.

How we'll measure this:

total followers, engagement rate (likes/comments/shares/saves), reach and impressions, video completion rates, website click-throughs, hashtag performance, and user-generated submissions. We will monitor analytics monthly and adapt content based on performance. The target is a 30% lift in digital engagement over 12 months.

COMMUNICATION PROGRAM PLAN

Objective 2: Increase mission awareness and nonprofit understanding by 15% within 6 months

A major insight from research is that many people recognize Goodwill's stores but don't understand its nonprofit mission or job training programs. To close that perception gap we'll combine stronger in-store messaging, local nonprofit partnerships, and a transparency-first digital campaign.

Strategy one upgrades in-store communications: impact walls, storytelling displays, and QR codes on donation bins, price tags, and receipts that link to a mobile-friendly landing page explaining the donation-to-impact pipeline. Implementation starts with flagship Madison Heights and Southfield locations in the first two months, followed by a system-wide rollout within 90 days; in-store content will rotate monthly to keep stories current.

Strategy two leverages local nonprofit partnerships to add credibility and extend reach. Tactics include a newsletter with reciprocal partner features, quarterly job-readiness workshops with workforce nonprofits, and coordinated donation redistribution to support partner missions. Partnership negotiations and recruitment will begin in month one, with the first collaborative newsletter within 60 days and workshops launching within 90 days.

Strategy three is a proactive digital transparency (myth-busting) campaign. We'll publish a "Myth vs. Fact" section online, produce a short "Where Does My Donation Go?" video series, and issue a press release announcing this Digital Transparency Initiative. The website and social posts will explain operations clearly and visually to build trust.

How we'll measure this: pre and post campaign surveys measuring nonprofit recognition and mission recall, website traffic to mission/transparency pages, QR-code scans, video views, press coverage and press pickup rates, and partner newsletter reach. Progress checks happen bi-monthly, and the success target is a 15% increase in mission awareness within six months. **Please see Appendix F to see the newsletter**

COMMUNICATION PROGRAM PLAN

Objective 3: Increase store traffic in new locations by 10% within 12 months

With **Madison Heights** and **Southfield** reopened after a long hiatus, the focus here is to drive consistent foot traffic and build local habits that keep customers returning. This objective targets both new community members and existing Goodwill shoppers by combining incentives, local partnerships, and student-focused programming.

Strategy one centers on exclusive new-customer incentives. Because price is the main motivator for thrift shoppers, we'll offer targeted deals such as 20% off a first in-store purchase and promote student discounts through college influencers. Channels include Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, email, campus outreach, in-store signage, local flyers, and geo-targeted digital ads. Monthly "Shop for a Cause" events will donate a percent of sales to a featured charity to drive visits while reinforcing the mission. *Please see Appendix E to see the flyer.*

Strategy two builds a "Shop Local" partnership network of neighboring businesses. We'll recruit 5–10 partners per location initially and expand to 15–20 over the year. Tactics include co-branded promo materials, social cross-posts, a punch-card loyalty program rewarding cross-shop visits, and quarterly co-hosted events to keep Goodwill embedded in the local shopping ecosystem.

Strategy three activates universities and schools with targeted events and a Student Ambassador Program. On-campus pop-ups will happen during welcome week and other key academic moments, ambassadors will promote Goodwill through social content and mini-events; recurring student events will run primarily during the academic year to maintain steady engagement.

How we'll measure this: daily foot-traffic comparisons against baseline, transaction volume and average purchase, discount-code redemptions (new customer tracking), student program participation, event attendance, partnership engagement metrics, social check-ins/location tags, and ambassador content performance. We'll review monthly and provide quarterly summaries, the target is a 10% increase in store traffic within 12 months

PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEDIA EFFORTS

**Promoting Goodwill's
community impact**



PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEDIA EFFORTS

Based on our three objectives:

Increase digital engagement with Gen Z audiences by 30% within 12 months

To engage Gen Z audiences, Goodwill will launch a digital challenge called the [#GoodwillofMetroDetroitGlowUp](#) challenge on TikTok and Instagram. This challenge will encourage Gen Z shoppers to share their thrift finds, sustainable fashion finds, or any upcycling projects that they create. This digital effort will help modernize Goodwill's image and create more meaningful and shareable content that resonates with its younger audiences.

Increase mission awareness and nonprofit status by 15% within 6 months

To increase mission awareness and nonprofit recognition, Goodwill will introduce a press campaign called "Goodwill Gives Back" or "GGB" that focuses on educating the public about how every purchase and donation supports the community in some way, shape, or form, as well as job training programs. Press releases and potential media partnerships with Channel 7, a local news station in Detroit, will highlight inspiring stories of individuals whose lives have been transformed by Goodwill's services. We will also create a digital documentary series called "The Faces of Goodwill," highlighting employees, donors, and program graduates. These stories will be shared on social media platforms, YouTube, and Goodwill's website, providing a more personal, emotional, and connected look into the impact Goodwill has had on people. Please see Appendix G to see the press release

Increase store traffic in new locations by 10% within 12 months.

To increase store traffic in new locations, Goodwill of Metro Detroit will host grand opening events that feature live music, local food trucks, and exclusive thrift deals. Invitations will be sent to local media outlets to encourage reporters, photographers, and radio hosts to attend as well.

ADVERTISING & SALES PROMOTION

Showcasing deals and
donations



ADVERTISING & SALES PROMOTIONS

The advertising and sales promotion content of Goodwill of Greater Detroit's campaign has been designed to clearly reinforce the overall goal: to increase awareness of Goodwill's mission beyond the thrift stores. These initiatives combine both authentic storytelling with tangible consumer incentives. This not only positions Goodwill as a top leader in sustainable retail but also a leader in social impact.

Advertising Strategy

Objective 1: Increase digital engagement with Gen Z audiences by 30% in 12 months

To successfully reach younger audiences and shift perceptions of Goodwill beyond a simple thrift store, we must meet Gen Z where they are: on the platforms they trust and engage with daily. Primary research demonstrates that TikTok and Instagram serve as the primary channels shaping thrift shopping behaviors among Gen Z, and interview participants consistently noted they see thrift-related content on these platforms, but not official Goodwill marketing. This represents both a missed opportunity and a clear pathway forward. This objective focuses on building authentic digital connections through strategic content creation, consistent brand presence, and community-driven engagement that resonates with Gen Z values of sustainability, social impact, and authenticity.

Our primary channels will be [TikTok](#) and [Instagram](#) for primary use, [Facebook](#) for secondary for broader reach. The medium will be short-form video content (15-60 seconds), [Instagram Reels](#), [TikTok videos](#), [Instagram Stories](#), [carousel posts](#).

This will launch within the first month of campaign implementation, with content posted 4-5 times per week consistently throughout the 12-month period. Peak posting times aligned with Gen Z usage patterns (evenings 6-9pm, weekends). Trend-responsive content posted to maintain relevance.

Tactic 1: Highlight personal stories from employee programs using TikTok and Instagram Reels, featuring 30-60 second videos with real Goodwill employees and program participants sharing transformation stories.

Tactic 2: Target local thrifting and fashion TikTok creators, potentially having them curate sections of merchandise, using hashtags including [#DetroitThrift](#), [#DetroitFashion](#), and [#ThriftTok](#).

Tactic 3: Create popular and trending content to align Goodwill with pop culture, capitalizing on viral trends, challenges, and audio clips.

ADVERTISING & SALES PROMOTIONS

Sales Promotion Strategy

Objective 3: Increase store traffic in new locations by 10% within 12 months.

Goodwill of Greater Detroit has reopened stores in Madison Heights and Southfield after a decade-long hiatus, marking a critical expansion that requires strategic communication to drive consistent store and donation traffic. This objective focuses on attracting both new customers unfamiliar with these locations and loyal Goodwill shoppers from other areas, while building local community connections that sustain long-term traffic.

Social media platforms ([Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), and [Facebook](#)), [email marketing](#), [campus partnerships](#), [in-store signage](#), [local community boards](#), [geo-targeted digital advertising](#), and [direct mail](#) to surrounding ZIP codes will serve as the primary communication channels. Digital promotional graphics, email announcements, social media posts and Stories, influencer collaborations, [printed flyers](#), in-store window displays, SMS text alerts, and direct mail postcards will be used as the supporting mediums to engage target audiences and drive participation.

Tactic 1: Offering 20% off first in store purchase for new customers/residents.

Tactic 2: Promote student discounts using College influencers to drive students to visit new locations.

Tactic 3: Partner with nearby local nonprofits and community organizations to host monthly "Shop for a Cause" events, where a percentage of in-store sales is donated to a featured local charity. **See poster for event in Appendix F.**

SPECIAL EVENTS

Events with an Impact



SPECIAL EVENTS

Special Events Strategy Overview

Goodwill of Greater Detroit's special events strategy is designed to authentically engage Gen Z through immersive, community-oriented experiences that reflect their thrifting habits, social values, and digital lifestyles. Events and activations will be promoted through campus pop-up booths, ambassador-driven social content, digital signage, email newsletters, flyers, and experiential touchpoints. Programming will run September through April, with lighter summer engagement focused on maintaining student ambassador relationships. Seasonal priorities include an intensive back-to-school activation (August–September) and a spring cleaning and dorm move-out push (April–May).

Campus Pop-Up Events

The first major event will be Campus Pop-Up Events hosted on local college campuses. These will be integrated into high-traffic student moments such as welcome week activities, career fairs, student organization fairs, mid-semester events, and finals week. Each pop-up will feature branded booths, promotional materials, student discount codes, and built-in social media moments.

Objective: Create immediate visibility, connect with Gen Z in their environment, introduce the mission behind Goodwill, and identify potential student ambassadors who can help expand reach throughout the academic year.

Monthly Student-Focused Events

To maintain ongoing engagement, Goodwill will also introduce Monthly Student-Focused Events beginning at the start of each semester (August and January). These recurring events—such as study nights, open mic nights, clothing swaps, or DIY workshops—offer students consistent opportunities to engage with the brand beyond shopping. Participants will receive perks like small discounts, social shoutouts, and experiential rewards.

Objective: Build regular touch points that foster emotional connection, strengthen brand loyalty, and position Goodwill as a trusted community presence.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Updates for Goodwill



INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

It is crucial for Goodwill of Greater Detroit to incorporate an [internal communication strategy](#) to implement to the staff inside the organization.

Staff members, volunteers, and the leadership team must all understand each of the campaign's goals, messages, and expectations in order to effectively represent the organization. This internal communication plan will ensure that every employee will be equipped with the skills to reinforce the message that Goodwill of Greater Detroit is more than just a thrift store. It is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating a lasting impact on the communities it serves.

A form of internal communications that should be considered is the implementation of a website to be used as the primary communication channel. The [website](#) would be supported by coordinated promotion across social media, email newsletters, in-store QR codes, and local media outreach. The website will feature an informative section presented in an FAQ format, enhanced with infographics, short videos, written explanations, and linked supporting documents. Complementary communication mediums, including [promotional social media posts](#), direct mail announcements, and [press releases](#), will further amplify awareness and engagement for this objective.

Website development and content creation will begin immediately, with [a launch within 60 days of campaign start](#). Press release distribution simultaneous with website launch to generate media coverage. Social media promotion begins at launch with ongoing posts directing traffic to transparency resources. [Monthly content updates to address emerging questions and maintain currency](#).

Included in this [website](#), Goodwill of Greater Detroit will implement a series of tactics that are specifically designed to strengthen trust and address misinformation. The first will be a "Myth vs Fact" section on the website. Having this section will allow for a direct confrontation against the common misconceptions such as executive compensation, pricing strategies, profit use, and nonprofit status. Each myth will be converted into a fact with explanations that are supported by clear data, charts, and infographics.

The next tactic will be the production and distribution of a "Where Does My Donation Go?" video series. These videos would range from 30 to 60 seconds and feature real Goodwill employees explaining the complete journey from drop-off through processing, pricing, sale, and program funding. Each video will be a behind-the-scenes look at how Goodwill of Greater Detroit turns community contributions into a measurable impact.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The third and final tactic that will be incorporated into the website will be to issue a [press release](#) announcing Goodwill of Greater Detroit's Digital Transparency Initiative. In this release, detailed reasoning on why Goodwill is prioritizing transparency and will outline what consumers can expect from this new online resource. Doing this will contribute to Goodwill's commitment to accountability. To generate enough media coverage, the press release will be distributed to local news outlets, other non-profit organizations, and community partners. **Please see Appendix G for the press release.**

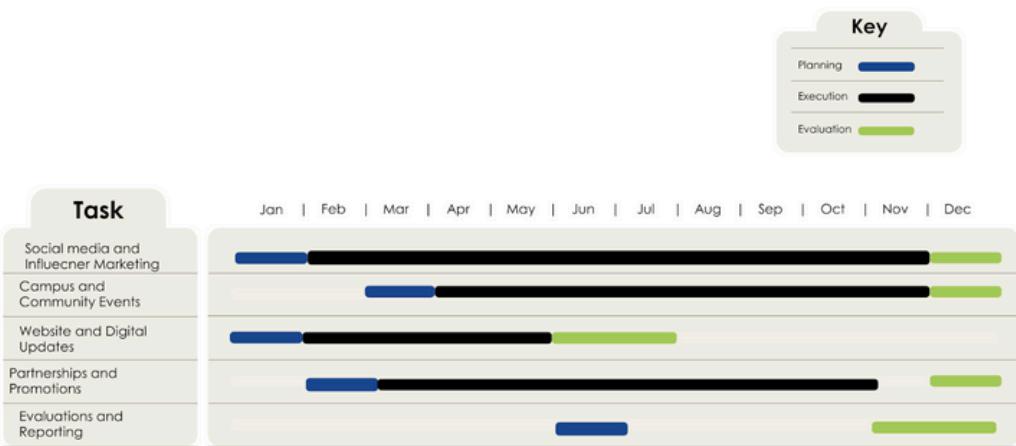
The success of Goodwill of Greater Detroit's internal communications will be measured by the organization's ability to foster alignment, engagement, and advocacy amongst its staff members and volunteers. The implementation of these tactics will play a critical role in strengthening public trust and reinforcing their identity. This internal communication effort will not only enhance the effectiveness of this campaign but also strengthen the organization's overall culture inside and outside the walls.

CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

Schedule of campaign
activities



GANTT CHART TIMELINE



The Gantt chart is structured to align each objective with its realistic execution period and deliverable timeline. Objectives 1 and 3 span the full year, as digital engagement and store traffic growth require consistent messaging, community interaction, and promotional momentum from January through December. Objective 2 runs for six months, focusing on building mission awareness and transparency early in the campaign to strengthen public understanding before the year's major promotional pushes. This staggered structure ensures resources are distributed efficiently, awareness builds before engagement is at its peak, and each objective supports the next for a cohesive year-long impact.

CAMPAIGN BUDGET

Allocating funds for reach



CAMPAIGN BUDGET

Investment	Amount (\$)	Frequency
Digital Engagement		
Tiktok and Instagram influencer content	\$12,000	Quarterly
Social media content creation and scheduling	\$10,000	Monthly
Community giveaways and UGC challenges	\$8,000	Monthly
Mission Awareness and Nonprofit Messaging		
In-store impact walls and signage	\$10,000	Quarterly
Nonprofit Partnership Events and Materials	\$8,000	Bi-Monthly
Transparency Website and Press release	\$7,000	Launch (6 months, January-June)
Store Traffic and Local Partnerships		
New customer incentives (direct mail, discount promotions)	\$15,000	Seasonal
Local business partnerships and co-branded events	\$10,000	Quarterly
University and school pop-up activations	\$15,000	Fall + Winter
Administration and Evaluation		
Surveys, analytic tools, printing, reporting	\$5,000	Ongoing
TOTAL	\$100,000	

This budget breakdown strategically divides Goodwill of Greater Detroit's \$100,000 campaign across digital engagement, mission awareness, and store traffic initiatives to maximize impact over the 12-month period. The largest portion supports in-person and partnership-driven efforts to increase store visits and community involvement, while digital and social media investments focus on engaging Gen Z audiences through authentic storytelling and influencer content. Funding for in-store messaging and a transparency website reinforces Goodwill's nonprofit mission, helping clarify misconceptions about the brand. A small portion is reserved for evaluation and reporting to ensure accountability and data-driven adjustments throughout the campaign.

EVALUATION

Pulling It All Together



EVALUATION

To measure the success of the campaign, several metrics will be tracked. Social media analytics will be monitored to assess growth in followers, likes, comments, shares, video views, and hashtag performance on TikTok and Instagram. Engagement rates and user-generated content submissions will also be evaluated to determine the effectiveness of digital strategies. Pre- and post-campaign surveys will be conducted to measure changes in mission awareness and nonprofit recognition. Website traffic will be analyzed, focusing on visits to mission-related pages, including the “Myth vs. Fact” section and the “Where Does My Donation Go?” video series. QR code scans from in-store materials, such as donation bins, price tags, and receipts, will be tracked to measure engagement with mission-focused content. Additionally, daily foot traffic comparisons at Madison Heights and Southfield locations will be recorded, along with transaction volumes and first-time customer redemptions. Event participation will be measured through attendance at student-focused events, campus pop-ups, and community partnership events.

Progress will be tracked for each campaign objective to ensure success. For digital engagement, the goal is to achieve a 30% increase in engagement across TikTok and Instagram within 12 months. Mission awareness will be measured by achieving a 15% increase in nonprofit recognition and mission awareness within six months, as indicated by surveys and website traffic. Store traffic will be evaluated by achieving a 10% increase in foot traffic at Madison Heights and Southfield locations within 12 months, using store visit data and event participation metrics.

Regular progress reviews will be conducted to ensure the campaign stays on track. Digital engagement and store traffic will be reviewed monthly, while mission awareness will be assessed bi-monthly. Adjustments to strategies and tactics will be made based on performance data to optimize results and ensure the campaign objectives are met effectively.

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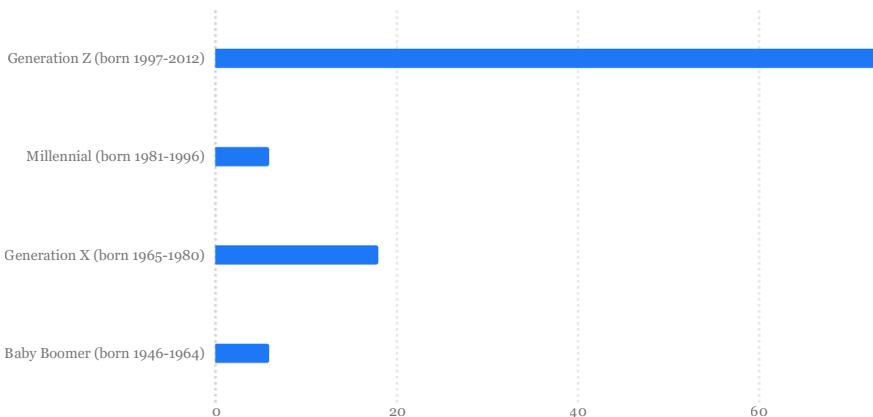
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APPENDIX A

What generation do you belong to? 103 ⓘ



What generation do you belong to? 103 ⓘ

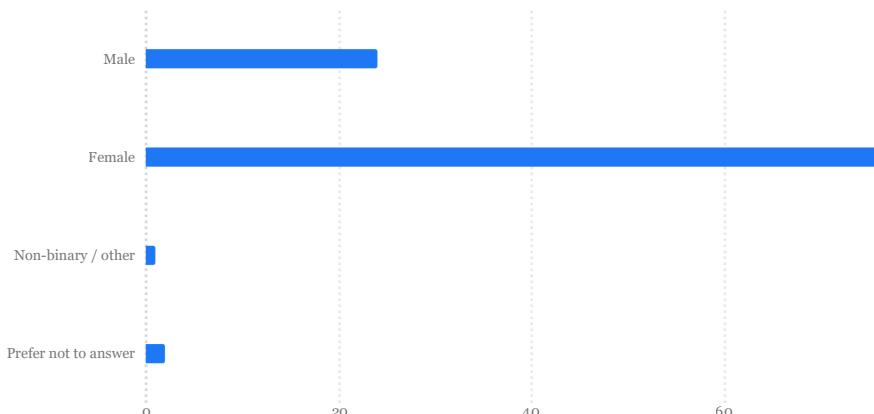
QID1 - What generation do you belong to?	C count	C count
Generation Z (born 1997-2012)	71%	73
Millennial (born 1981-1996)	6%	6
Generation X (born 1965-1980)	17%	18
Baby Boomer (born 1946-1964)	6%	6

APPENDIX A

What generation do you belong to? 103 ⓘ

Average (QID1 - What generation do you belong to?)	1.58
Minimum (QID1 - What generation do you belong to?)	1.00
Maximum (QID1 - What generation do you belong to?)	4.00
Standard Deviation (QID1 - What generation do you belong to?)	0.97
Count	103

What is your gender identity? 103 ⓘ



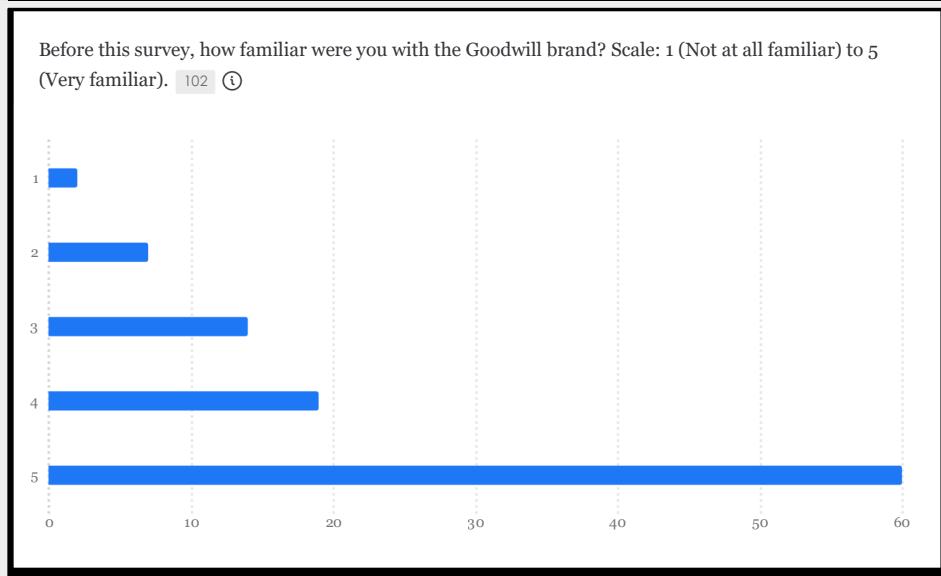
What is your gender identity? 103 ⓘ

Q2 - What is your gender identity?	Count	Count
Male	23%	24
Female	74%	76

APPENDIX A

Q2 - What is your gender identity?	Count	Count
Non-binary / other	1%	1
Prefer not to answer	2%	2

What is your gender identity? 103 ⓘ	
Average (Q2 - What is your gender identity?)	1.82
Minimum (Q2 - What is your gender identity?)	1.00
Maximum (Q2 - What is your gender identity?)	4.00
Standard Deviation (Q2 - What is your gender identity?)	0.54
Count	103



APPENDIX A

Before this survey, how familiar were you with the Goodwill brand? Scale: 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Very familiar). [102](#) [ⓘ](#)

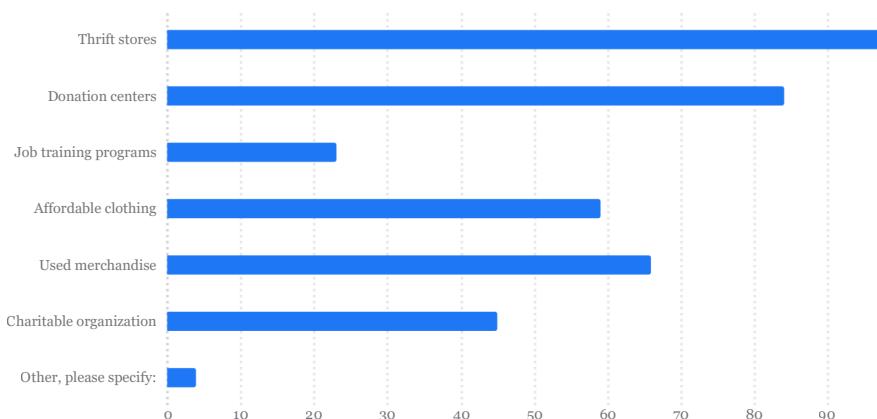
Q3 - Before this survey, how familiar were you with the Goodwill brand? Scale: 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Very familiar).	Count	Count
1	2%	2
2	7%	7
3	14%	14
4	19%	19
5	59%	60

Before this survey, how familiar were you with the Goodwill brand? Scale: 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Very familiar). [103](#) [ⓘ](#)

Average (Q3 - Before this survey, how familiar were you with the Goodwill brand? Scale: 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Very familiar).)	4.25
Minimum (Q3 - Before this survey, how familiar were you with the Goodwill brand? Scale: 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Very familiar).)	1.00
Maximum (Q3 - Before this survey, how familiar were you with the Goodwill brand? Scale: 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Very familiar).)	5.00
Standard Deviation (Q3 - Before this survey, how familiar were you with the Goodwill brand? Scale: 1 (Not at all familiar) to 5 (Very familiar).)	1.05
Count	103

APPENDIX A

What do you associate with the Goodwill brand? (Select all that apply) 103 ⓘ



What do you associate with the Goodwill brand? (Select all that apply) 103 ⓘ

Q4 - What do you associate with the Goodwill brand? (Select all that apply) - Selected Choice	Count	Count
Thrift stores	94%	97
Donation centers	82%	84
Job training programs	22%	23
Affordable clothing	57%	59
Used merchandise	64%	66
Charitable organization	44%	45
Other, please specify:	4%	4

APPENDIX A

What do you associate with the Goodwill brand? (Select all that apply): Other, please specify: - Text

103 ①

Other, please specify:

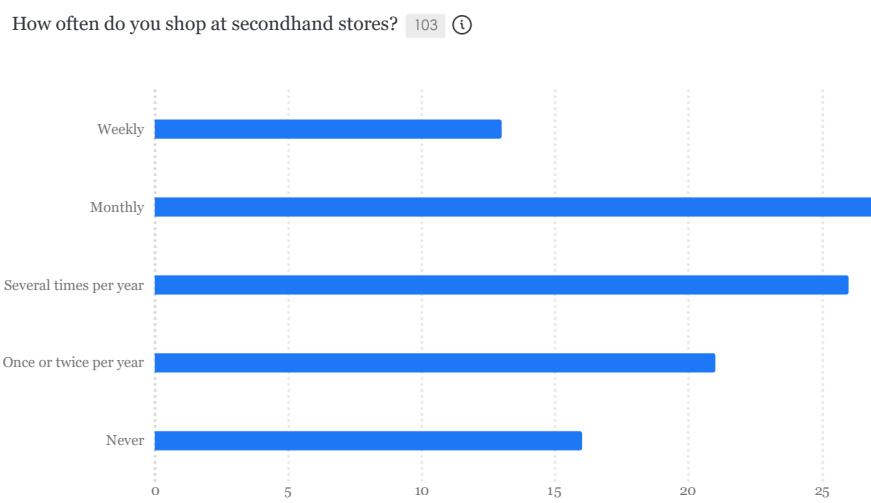
They are a for-profit excuse of a "thrift store". Upcharge for free donations and don't treat their employees well

corporate greed is kinda ruining it

A place to dispose of my old things.

APPENDIX A

Other, please specify:



APPENDIX A

How often do you shop at secondhand stores? 103 ⓘ

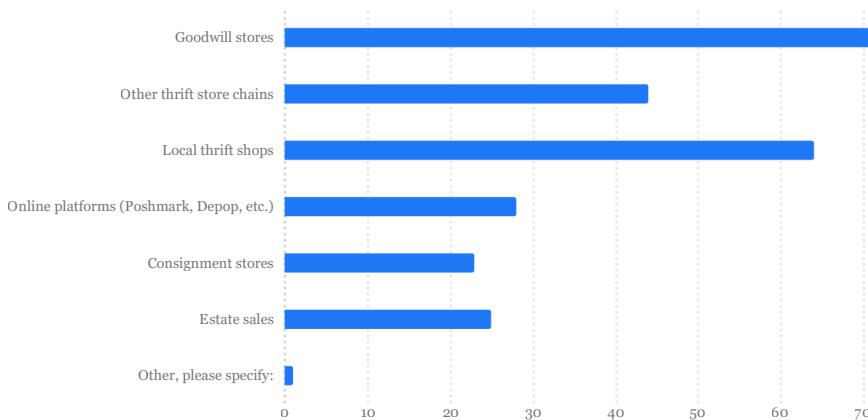
Q5 - How often do you shop at secondhand stores?	C ount	C ount
Weekly	13%	13
Monthly	26%	27
Several times per year	25%	26
Once or twice per year	20%	21
Never	16%	16

How often do you shop at secondhand stores? 103 ⓘ

Average (Q5 - How often do you shop at secondhand stores?)	3.00
Minimum (Q5 - How often do you shop at secondhand stores?)	1.00
Maximum (Q5 - How often do you shop at secondhand stores?)	5.00
Standard Deviation (Q5 - How often do you shop at secondhand stores?)	1.26
Count	103

APPENDIX A

Which secondhand shopping options do you use? (Select all that apply) 87 ⓘ



APPENDIX A

Which secondhand shopping options do you use? (Select all that apply) 87 ⓘ

Q6 - Which secondhand shopping options do you use? (Select all that apply) - Selected Choice	Count	Count
Goodwill stores	83%	72
Other thrift store chains	51%	44
Local thrift shops	74%	64
Online platforms (Poshmark, Depop, etc.)	32%	28
Consignment stores	26%	23
Estate sales	29%	25
Other, please specify:	1%	1

Which secondhand shopping options do you use? (Select all that apply): Other, please specify: - Text

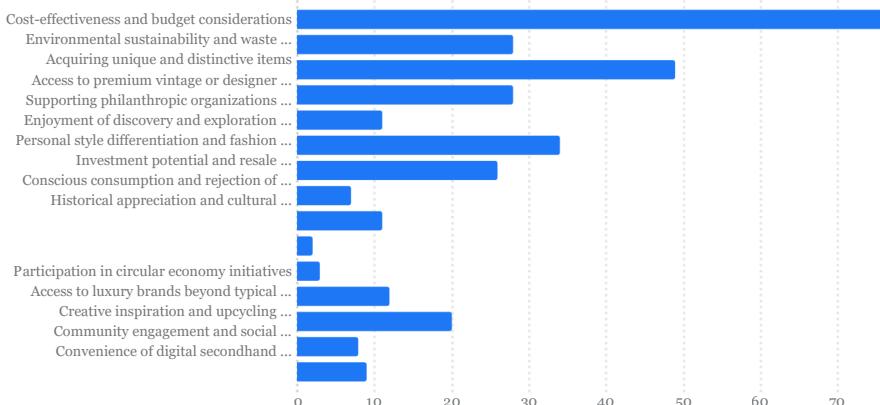
103 ⓘ

Other, please specify:

platos closet, uptown cheapsakes

APPENDIX A

What motivates you to shop secondhand? (Select 3 that apply) 87 ⓘ



What motivates you to shop secondhand? (Select 3 that apply) 87 ⓘ

Q7 - What motivates you to shop secondhand? (Select 3 that apply) - Selected Choice	C count	C count
Cost-effectiveness and budget considerations	87%	76
Environmental sustainability and waste reduction	32%	28
Acquiring unique and distinctive items	56%	49
Access to premium vintage or designer merchandise at reduced prices	32%	28
Supporting philanthropic organizations and charitable causes	13%	11
Enjoyment of discovery and exploration experiences	39%	34
Personal style differentiation and fashion expertise de m o n str atio n	30%	26
Investment potential and resale opportunities	8%	7

APPENDIX A

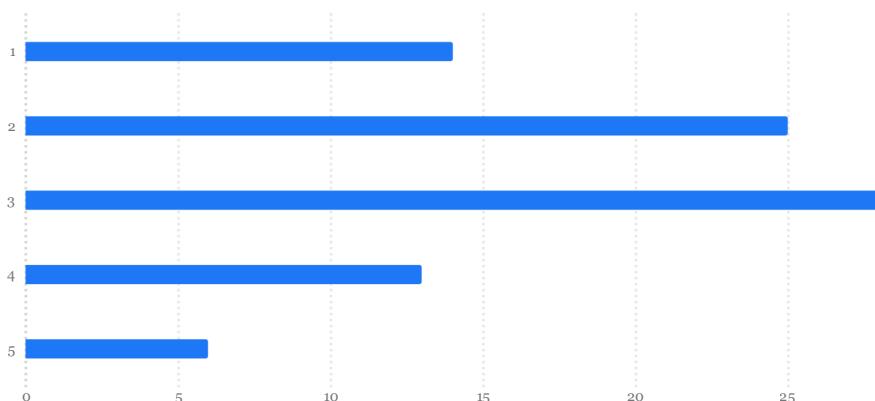
Q7 - What motivates you to shop secondhand? (Select 3 that apply) - Selected Choice	Count	Count
Conscious consumption and rejection of fast fashion practices	13%	11
Historical appreciation and cultural connection	2%	2
Participation in circular economy initiatives	3%	3
Access to luxury brands beyond typical budget constraints	14%	12
Creative inspiration and upcycling opportunities	23%	20
Community engagement and social interaction	9%	8
Convenience of digital secondhand marketplaces	10%	9

What motivates you to shop secondhand? (Select 3 that apply): Other, please specify: - Text 103 (i)

Other, please specify:

APPENDIX A

How much does social media influence your thrifting and shopping choices? Scale: 1 (No influence) to 5 (Major influence). 86 ①



How much does social media influence your thrifting and shopping choices? Scale: 1 (No influence) to 5 (Major influence). 86 ①

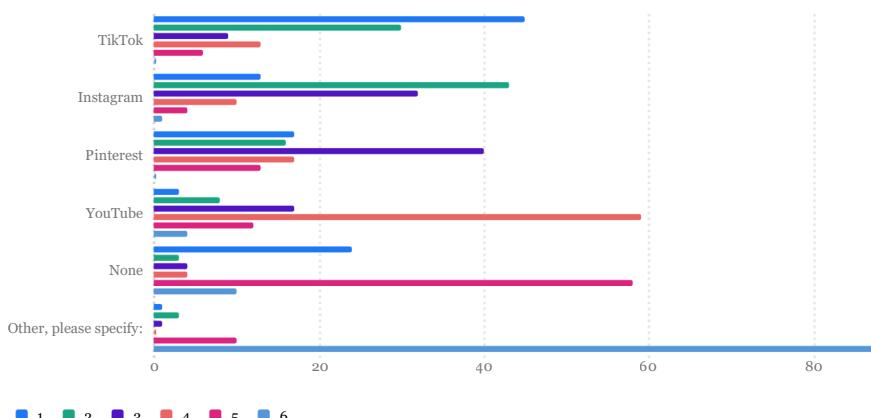
Q8 - How much does social media influence your thrifting and shopping choices? Scale: 1 (No influence) to 5 (Major influence).	Count	Count
1	16%	14
2	29%	25
3	33%	28
4	15%	13
5	7%	6

APPENDIX A

How much does social media influence your thrifting and shopping choices? Scale: 1 (No influence) to 5 (Major influence). 103 ①

Average (Q8 - How much does social media influence your thrifting and shopping choices? Scale: 1 (No influence) to 5 (Major influence).)	2.67
Minimum (Q8 - How much does social media influence your thrifting and shopping choices? Scale: 1 (No influence) to 5 (Major influence).)	1.00
Maximum (Q8 - How much does social media influence your thrifting and shopping choices? Scale: 1 (No influence) to 5 (Major influence).)	5.00
Standard Deviation (Q8 - How much does social media influence your thrifting and shopping choices? Scale: 1 (No influence) to 5 (Major influence).)	1.13
Count	103

Which social media platforms influence your thrifting decisions? (Rank them... 103

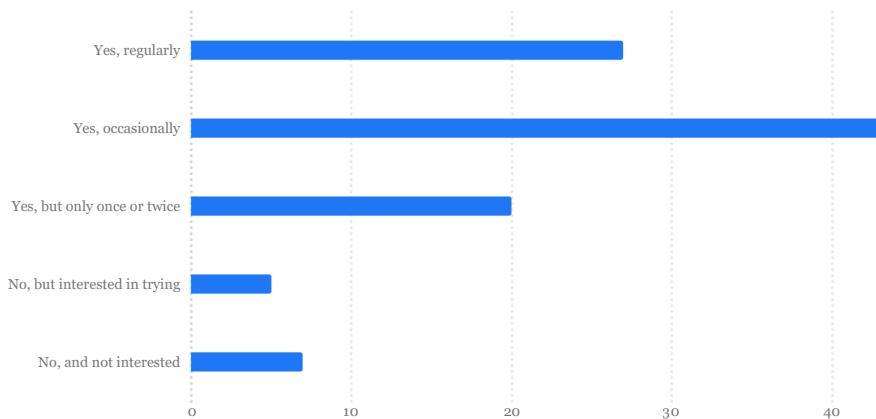


APPENDIX A

Which social media platforms influence your thrifting decisions? (Rank them... 103)

Which social media platforms influence your thrifting decisions? (Rank them...)	1	2	3	4	5	6
TikTok	45	30	9	13	6	0
Instagram	13	43	32	10	4	1
Pinterest	17	16	40	17	13	0
YouTube	3	8	17	59	12	4
None	24	3	4	4	58	10
Other, please specify:	1	3	1	0	10	88

Have you ever shopped at a Goodwill store? 102 ⓘ



APPENDIX A

Have you ever shopped at a Goodwill store? 102 ⓘ

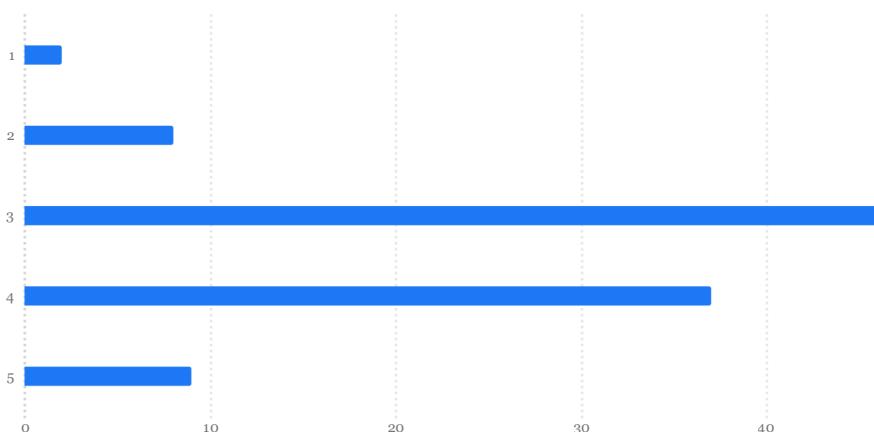
Q10 - Have you ever shopped at a Goodwill store?	Count	Count
Yes, regularly	26%	27
Yes, occasionally	42%	43
Yes, but only once or twice	20%	20
No, but interested in trying	5%	5
No, and not interested	7%	7

Have you ever shopped at a Goodwill store? 103 ⓘ

Average (Q10 - Have you ever shopped at a Goodwill store?)	2.24
Minimum (Q10 - Have you ever shopped at a Goodwill store?)	1.00
Maximum (Q10 - Have you ever shopped at a Goodwill store?)	5.00
Standard Deviation (Q10 - Have you ever shopped at a Goodwill store?)	1.10
Count	103

APPENDIX A

What is your overall impression of Goodwill? Scale: 1 (Very negative) to 5 (Very positive) 102 ①



What is your overall impression of Goodwill? Scale: 1 (Very negative) to 5 (Very positive) 102 ①

Q11 - What is your overall impression of Goodwill? Scale: 1 (Very negative) to 5 (Very positive)

	Count	Count
1	2%	2
2	8%	8
3	45%	46
4	36%	37
5	9%	9

APPENDIX A

How often have you encountered negative information about Goodwill online or through other sources?
Scale: 1 (Never) to 5 (Very frequently) 103 ⓘ

Average (Q13 - How often have you encountered negative information about Goodwill online or through other sources?
Scale: 1 (Never) to 5 (Very frequently)) 2.43

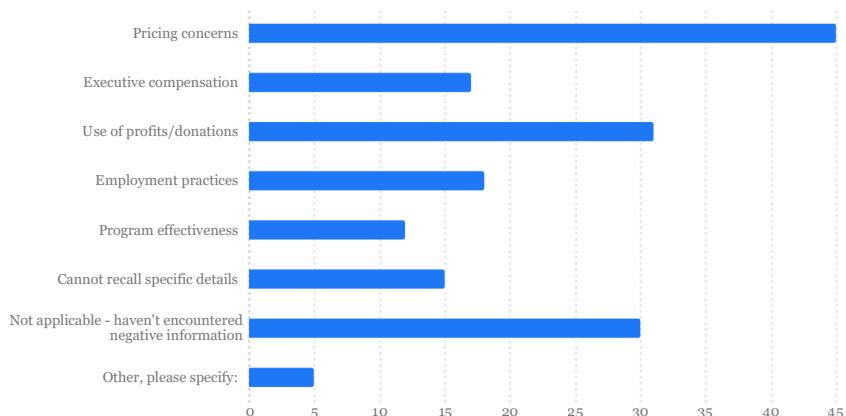
Minimum (Q13 - How often have you encountered negative information about Goodwill online or through other sources?
Scale: 1 (Never) to 5 (Very frequently)) 1.00

Maximum (Q13 - How often have you encountered negative information about Goodwill online or through other sources?
Scale: 1 (Never) to 5 (Very frequently)) 5.00

Standard Deviation (Q13 - How often have you encountered negative information about Goodwill online or through other sources? Scale: 1 (Never) to 5 (Very frequently)) 1.15

Count 103

If you have encountered negative information about Goodwill, what topics di... 98 ⓘ



APPENDIX A

If you have encountered negative information about Goodwill, what topics di... 98 ⓘ

Q14 - If you have encountered negative information about Goodwill, what topics did this information address? (Select all that apply) - Selected Choice	Count	Count
Pricing concerns	46%	45
Executive compensation	17%	17
Use of profits/donations	32%	31
Employment practices	18%	18
Program effectiveness	12%	12
Cannot recall specific details	15%	15
Not applicable - haven't encountered negative information	31%	30
Other, please specify:	5%	5

If you have encountered negative information about Goodwill, what topics di...: Other, please specify: - Text 103 ⓘ

Other, please specify:

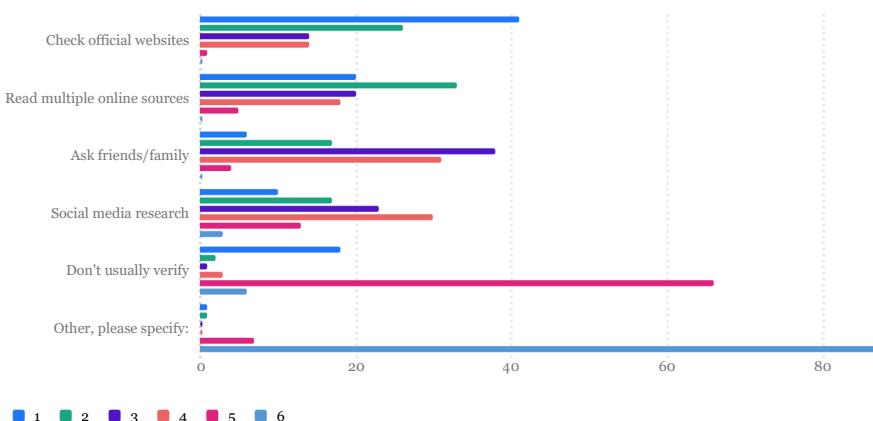
Not great finds/thrifting desert

Things are becoming too overpriced and overwhelming (ex: fast fashion only)
Places going up too much

APPENDIX A

Other, please specify:

How do you typically verify information about brands or organizations? (Ran... 96)



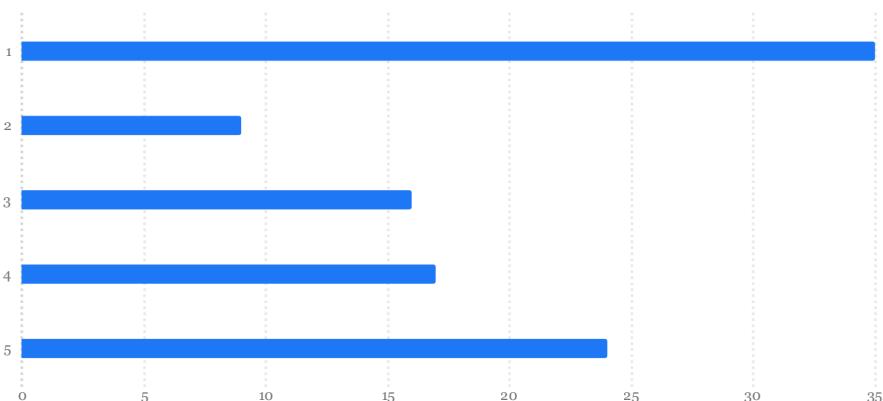
How do you typically verify information about brands or organizations? (Ran... 96)

How do you typically verify information about brands or organizations? (Ran... 96)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Check official websites	41	26	14	14	1	0
Read multiple online sources	20	33	20	18	5	0

APPENDIX A

How do you typically verify information about brands or organizations? (Ran...	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ask friends/family	6	17	38	31	4	0
Social media research	10	17	23	30	13	3
Don't usually verify	18	2	1	3	66	6
Other, please specify:	1	1	0	0	7	87

Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware) 101 ⓘ



Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware) 101 ⓘ

Q16 - Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware)	Count	Count
1	35%	35

APPENDIX A

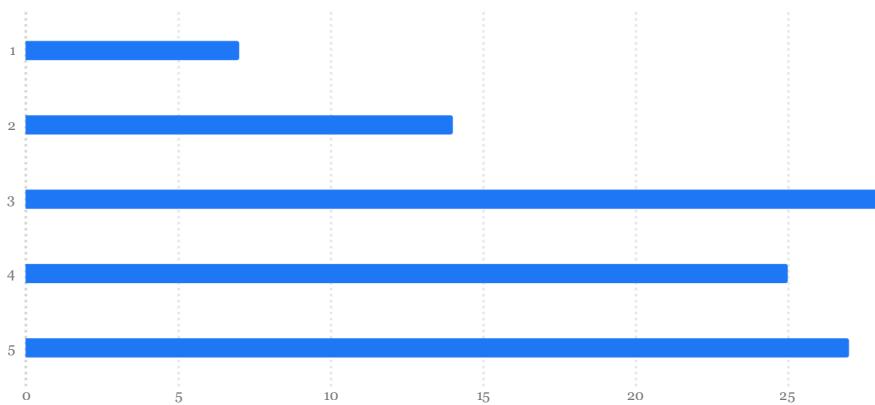
Q16 - Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware)	Count	Count
2	9%	9
3	16%	16
4	17%	17
5	24%	24

Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware) 103 ⓘ

Average (Q16 - Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware))	2.86
Minimum (Q16 - Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware))	1.00
Maximum (Q16 - Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware))	5.00
Standard Deviation (Q16 - Were you aware that Goodwill provides job training and employment services? Scale 1 (Not at all aware) to 5 (Very aware))	1.60
Count	103

APPENDIX A

How important is it that your purchases support environmental sustainability by keeping items out of landfills? Scale: 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important) 101 ①



APPENDIX A

How important is it that your purchases support environmental sustainability by keeping items out of landfills? Scale: 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important) 103 ⓘ

Q17 - How important is it that your purchases support environmental sustainability by keeping items out of landfills? Scale: 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important) 103 ⓘ

	Count	Count
1	7%	7
2	14%	14
3	28%	28
4	25%	25
5	27%	27

How important is it that your purchases support environmental sustainability by keeping items out of landfills? Scale: 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important) 103 ⓘ

Average (Q17 - How important is it that your purchases support environmental sustainability by keeping items out of landfills? Scale: 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important))

3.50

Minimum (Q17 - How important is it that your purchases support environmental sustainability by keeping items out of landfills? Scale: 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important))

1.00

Maximum (Q17 - How important is it that your purchases support environmental sustainability by keeping items out of landfills? Scale: 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important))

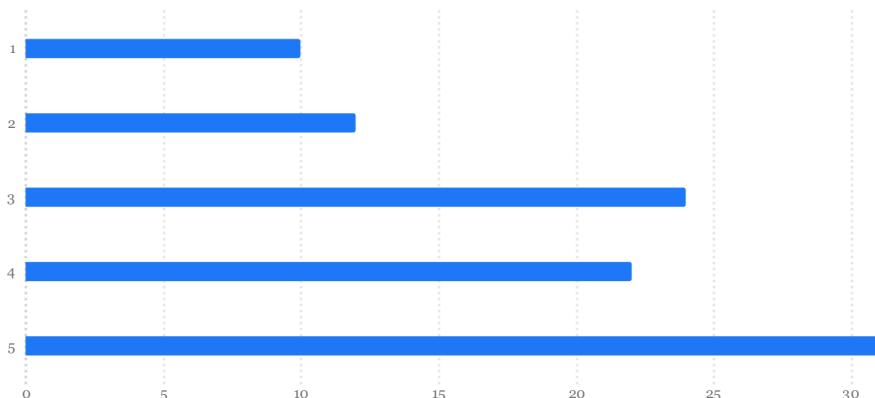
5.00

Standard Deviation (Q17 - How important is it that your purchases support environmental sustainability by keeping items out of landfills? Scale: 1 (Not at all important) to 5 (Extremely important))

1.22

APPENDIX A

How likely are you to donate items to Goodwill in the next 12 months? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely) 99 ①



How likely are you to donate items to Goodwill in the next 12 months? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely) 99 ①

Q21 - How likely are you to donate items to Goodwill in the next 12 months? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely)		Count	Count
1		10%	10
2		12%	12
3		24%	24
4		22%	22
5		31%	31

APPENDIX A

How likely are you to donate items to Goodwill in the next 12 months? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely) 103 ⓘ

Average (Q21 - How likely are you to donate items to Goodwill in the next 12 months? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely))

3.53

Minimum (Q21 - How likely are you to donate items to Goodwill in the next 12 months? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely))

1.00

Maximum (Q21 - How likely are you to donate items to Goodwill in the next 12 months? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely))

5.00

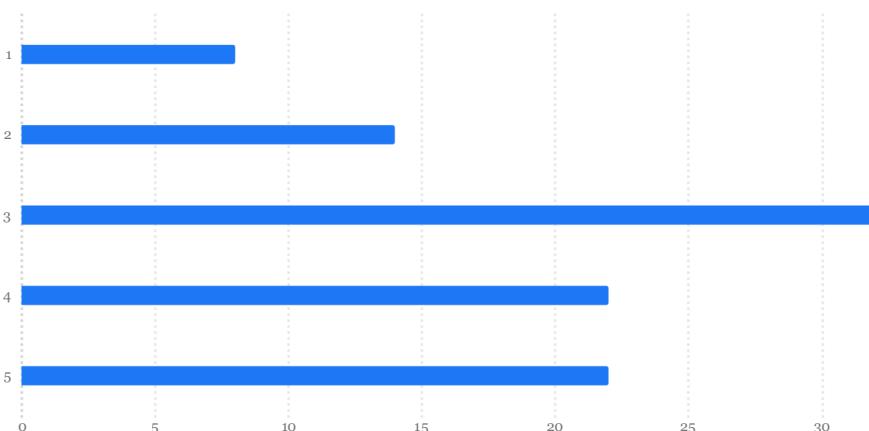
Standard Deviation (Q21 - How likely are you to donate items to Goodwill in the next 12 months? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely))

1.31

Count

103

How likely are you to recommend Goodwill to others? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely) 98 ⓘ



APPENDIX A

How likely are you to recommend Goodwill to others? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely) 98 ⓘ

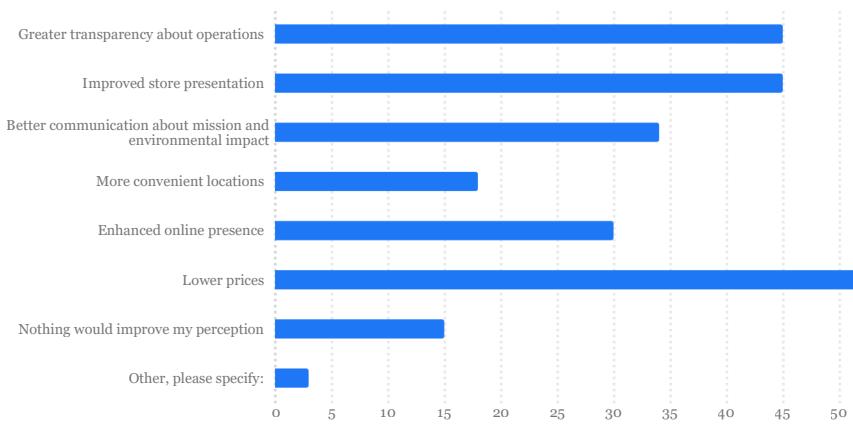
Q22 - How likely are you to recommend Goodwill to others? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely)	C ount	C ount
1	8%	8
2	14%	14
3	33%	32
4	22%	22
5	22%	22

How likely are you to recommend Goodwill to others? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely) 103 ⓘ

Average (Q22 - How likely are you to recommend Goodwill to others? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely))	3.37
Minimum (Q22 - How likely are you to recommend Goodwill to others? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely))	1.00
Maximum (Q22 - How likely are you to recommend Goodwill to others? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely))	5.00
Standard Deviation (Q22 - How likely are you to recommend Goodwill to others? Scale: 1 (Very unlikely) to 5 (Very likely))	1.21
Count	103

APPENDIX A

What would most improve your perception of Goodwill? (Select all that apply... 98 ⓘ)



APPENDIX A

What would most improve your perception of Goodwill? (Select all that apply... 98 ⓘ)

Q23 - What would most improve your perception of Goodwill? (Select all that apply) - Selected Choice	COUNT	COUNT
Greater transparency about operations	46%	45
Improved store presentation	46%	45
Better communication about mission and environmental impact	35%	34
More convenient locations	18%	18
Enhanced online presence	31%	30
Lower prices	53%	52
Nothing would improve my perception	15%	15
Other, please specify:	3%	3

What would most improve your perception of Goodwill? (Select all that apply...: Other, please specify: - Text 103 ⓘ)

Other, please specify:

Don't say someone stole when they have a receipt for the item in hand

Improve the store smell

Its fine the way it is

APPENDIX B

Introduction

1. My name is _____ and I will be your moderator today.
2. The purpose of this discussion is to talk about Goodwill and the concept of thrift stores. I'll be asking your opinions and your experiences.
3. I am a Grand Valley State University student conducting research for a client in my CAP 495 class.

Ground Rules

1. This session will last about 45 minutes
2. This session will be audio recorded.
3. I will not be taking notes the whole time, but there may be times when I am.
4. Everything you share today will remain confidential. Your comments will be used solely for research purposes and may be included in reports; however, your name and other identifying details will not be disclosed.
5. There are no wrong answers; please answer these questions to the best of your ability. We are looking for different viewpoints, and we want to know your opinions.
6. You may discuss your views with other participants (if there are any others); not all questions have to be addressed to me.
7. Please be respectful of all opinions, even ones you disagree with.
8. Please talk in a clear voice and stay on track, avoiding any unnecessary side comments.
9. Does anyone have any questions before we start?
10. This is a non-smoking session.
11. Please turn off all cell phones and personal devices.

Background

1. Please take a moment to introduce yourself to the moderator.
2. Please tell the moderator about your hobbies, interests, schooling, or anything else that you feel comfortable sharing.
3. Please tell the moderator one word that describes how you feel about thrifting/buying second-hand.

Previous Experience - General

1. How often are you shopping at secondhand stores?
2. What stores have you shopped at for your second-hand items? (Salvation Army, Goodwill, Plato's Closet, Poshmark, Depop, etc.).
3. What has made you choose that option over competitors?
4. Are you familiar with the overall mission statement of that company?
5. If so, how did you learn about their mission beyond their stores?
6. How long have you been shopping at second-hand stores?

APPENDIX B

Previous Experience- Specific

1. How knowledgeable do you consider yourself when it comes to Goodwill, specifically? What types of products do they offer? Anything unique or different?
2. In your opinion what kind of reputation does Goodwill have in the community? Who are some of their competitors? What image and reputation do they have?
3. What do you value most about being a Goodwill customer?
4. If you have never shopped at a Goodwill before, then what do you value most about being a customer at your favorite store or other thrift stores?
5. Generally speaking, how satisfied are you with the service you receive at Goodwill stores?
6. If you have never been serviced at a Goodwill, then how often are your needs satisfied at your favorite store or other thrift stores?
7. Would you recommend Goodwill to others? If not, what could they do to make you more loyal? Birthday rewards? Refer a friend?

Communication

1. If you have shopped at Goodwill, where do you find most of your information?
 - a. **IF THEY HAVE NOT SHOPPED AT GOODWILL:** Where do you usually find most of your information about second-hand or thrift stores?
2. How well would you say Goodwill communicates with you?
 - a. **IF THEY HAVE NOT SHOPPED AT GOODWILL:** Have you come across any information or promotions from second-hand or thrift stores? If so, where?
3. What would be the best way for Goodwill to communicate with you and others?
 - a. **IF THEY HAVE NOT SHOPPED AT GOODWILL:** What would be the most effective way for these organizations to reach you and other people?

Advertising/PR

1. What recent advertising or public relations efforts have you seen from second-hand or thrift organizations, if any?
 - a. **If they answer none: What kind of advertising would you like to see from second-hand or thrift stores? Then go to question 3**
2. **(Proceed to this question only if they responded yes to previous question)** What did you find appealing about this ad or messaging? Was it effective in getting their message across? Or was it ineffective? If so, please explain.

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3. Where did this ad reach you from? (ex: social media, commercials, etc)

- (Only use this question if they responded no to question 1) Where would you like ads from these stores to reach you? (ex: social media, commercials, etc)

Close

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration with each question. This open discussion has provided us with insight into overall views of Goodwill and secondhand stores.

APPENDIX C

Introduction

Goodwill Industries is one of the most well-known nonprofit organizations in the United States, recognized for its network of thrift stores and donation centers that support job training and community employment programs. While the organization is widely recognized, public understanding of its mission and operations is often inconsistent. Many people know Goodwill as a place to donate or shop for secondhand items, but fewer are aware of how those activities contribute to its larger social purpose.

In recent years, public conversations about Goodwill have become more complex. Some individuals view the organization positively for promoting sustainability and affordable shopping, while others question its pricing, management, and transparency. These mixed perceptions raise questions about how effectively Goodwill communicates its mission and whether consumers, particularly younger generations, see the organization as genuinely doing good.

This study explores how people perceive Goodwill as both a brand and a social enterprise. It focuses on how different audiences understand Goodwill's mission, what motivates them to donate or shop there, and how factors such as trust, transparency, and sustainability shape their opinions. Using both survey and interview data, this research examines how participants define "goodwill" in practice, whether as a charitable value, a shopping convenience, or a combination of both. The findings aim to reveal what drives public connection or disconnection with Goodwill's brand and to identify opportunities for stronger communication, clearer messaging, and greater alignment between Goodwill's name and its perceived impact.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative survey research and qualitative individual interviews to explore how the public perceives Goodwill as a brand. This includes looking into their reputation, mission awareness, and alignment with their customers values, such as sustainability and pricing.

Participants and Sampling

Survey Participants

A total of 102 participants completed an online survey using the platform Qualtrics. It was distributed using convenience sampling on social media platforms as well as to different university class groups. Participants were represented by different generations, including Generation Z (71%), Millennials (18%), Generation X (6%), and Baby Boomers (6%). Gender distribution included 74% female, 24% male, and 2% other or preferred not to say.

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Interview Participants

Three individual interviews were conducted with college students across varying majors: film, marketing, and environmental science. Participants were selected based on their thrifting habits as well as their familiarity with Goodwill and similar stores.

Data Collection Instruments

Survey

The Goodwill Brand Perception Survey contained 23 questions, including multiple choice, Likert scale, ranking, and open ended responses on most questions. The questions assess the participants familiarity with Goodwill, brand awareness, motivations for thrifting, perception of Goodwill's nonprofit status, and awareness of their job training program.

Interview

The individual interviews were conducted via Zoom. The interview guide included 10 open-ended questions that looked into the participants' perceptions of Goodwill's mission, motivations for thrifting, experiences in store, and their preferred communication channels for advertisements. These interviews lasted around 20 to 25 minutes and were audio recorded and transcribed.

Data Analysis

Survey data was analyzed using mean scoring and frequency in responses to determine trends in familiarity and perception. Interview transcripts were analyzed thematic coding. Both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed using metathemes and supported with direct quotes and quantitative evidence.

Results

Quantitative Results (Survey)

Brand Familiarity and Perception

Participants reported being relatively familiar with Goodwill, with the overall average being a 4.25 on a 5 point scale. However, awareness of Goodwill's employment and job-training services was lower, with the average being a 2.85 on a 5 point scale. The mean overall impression of Goodwill was 3.44/5, which shows that consumers have a moderately positive view of Goodwill. Only 38% of respondents correctly identified Goodwill as a nonprofit organization, while another 31% believe it was a for-profit organization, and the last 32% were unsure.

Motivations and Behaviors

Most respondents engaged with Goodwill for practical reasons. 88% cited affordability, 57% mentioned sustainability, and 53% reported being likely to donate again within the next year. Intent to shop again was similar, around 54%.

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Perceptions and Criticisms

Concerns revolved around pricing (45%), executive pay (31%), and use of profits/donations (31%). 34% of respondents encountered negative information about goodwill, saying "sometimes," and 25% "occasionally".

Communication Channels

Respondents primarily relied on social media and official websites for information, but rated social media influence as moderate, about a 2.66 on a 5 point scale. TikTok and Instagram were named as the most influential platforms for shaping their perception.

Qualitative Results (Interviews)

Mission Understanding and Trust

All three participants recognized Goodwill's community reputation but could not describe their mission clearly. Phrases such as "mission feels unclear" and "not sure where the money goes" shows an indication that there is a trust gap regarding financial transparency.

Affordability and Accessibility.

Affordability was a unanimous motivator. Participants emphasized "finding affordable stuff" and appreciated Goodwill's role as a donation center and a place where they can shop.

Sustainability and Identity

Participants described thrifting as part of their creative identity and also align with where they stand ethical, connecting it to sustainability and individuality. One participant said "I love fashion and sustainability, so thrifting is kind of my thing".

Digital Engagement

Participants agreed Goodwill's digital presence was lacking. They wanted to see authenticity, storytelling, short-form videos, and also behind the scenes donation content on platforms like TikTok and Instagram.

Store Experience

Experiences vary by location of the Goodwill they have attended before. Some stores were described as "disorganized," while others were "well-managed." This shows that there is an inconsistency of how stores are being run as well as how professional they are being.

Integrated findings

Combining the data from both qualitative and quantitative analysis, it revealed four consistent metathemes. First is the mixed to moderate brand perception. Participants trust Goodwill as a thrifting brand, but question their ethics and transparency as a nonprofit. Second is the value they place on items, which drives brand loyalty. Goodwill's strength is in their affordability and convenience rather than their emotional or social engagements with their audience.

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Third is sustainability expectations. Environmental values influence younger consumers, who want clearer messaging when it comes to sustainability. Finally, communication gaps. The weak digital storytelling and limited transparency have an impact on how their audience understands Goodwill's true mission.

Discussion of Results

Across both quantitative and qualitative analyses, participants valued Goodwill's affordability and accessibility but lacked clear views about their social mission and impact. The organization has a reputation of "doing good," yet many of the respondents perceive the brand as a low-cost retailer rather than a community organization that wants to do good. These findings suggest that Goodwill's functions in the space of affordability and being a convenient donation center is intact, it is the lack of clarity on their ethics and purpose that is driving younger audiences away from Goodwill and having them question the brand entirely. Improving their digital engagement on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, and having more transparency when it comes to communication about their job training programs and environmental outcomes could help rebuild trust and modernize the brand's image.

Conclusion

The research shown in this study applied mixed method findings that show Goodwill's strongest qualities lie in its accessibility and sustainable appeal, but these strengths are buried by the overwhelming confusion about its mission and inconsistent communication. To show the genuine "goodwill," that the organization has, they must clarify its nonprofit identity and showcase how proceeds directly fund community programs, invest in digital authentic storytelling, especially short-form content that humanizes its mission, highlight sustainability contributions to align with Gen Z's ethical and environmental priorities, and ensure store consistency to reinforce professionalism and trust. Ultimately, Goodwill's relevance will continue, depending on how they prove that it not only sells affordable goods, but also does good in real ways beyond clothing donations.

APPENDIX D

Situation Analysis

Goodwill of Greater Detroit, after a decade-long hiatus, has reopened stores in Madison Heights and Southfield, marking a critical expansion which presents opportunities for growth that can be maximized with a strategic communications approach. The organization must drive consistent store and donation traffic, bridging a persistent awareness gap about Goodwill's wider mission, proactively addressing community skepticism about nonprofit practices, and building authentic connections with younger audiences who prize sustainability and value-based consumption.

Public Perception and Awareness

Analysis of Goodwill organizational profiles demonstrates a pronounced disconnect between consumer recognition of Goodwill thrift stores and their larger social impact/mission (Goodwill Industries International Inc., 2025). Survey evidence and donor feedback show that frequent shoppers are more attuned to Goodwill's mission-driven activities, while many casual visitors and potential donors remain focused exclusively on price and convenience (Gibbons & Hazy, 2015; Welch, 2010). Reframing Goodwill's narrative to emphasize not just affordability but also tangible community outcomes such as workforce development and fashion sustainability provides a significant opportunity for reputation growth and consumer activation (Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit, 2025; ThredUp, 2025).

Misinformation and Trust

Persistent myths surrounding executive compensation, organizational transparency, and wage practices impact public perception and trust. GuideStar profiles reveal that Goodwill maintains robust financial transparency standards and channels resources directly into local communities (GuideStar: Goodwill Industries International Inc., 2025; Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit, 2025). Building comprehensive, proactive digital communication strategies that promptly debunk misinformation in real time, particularly on platforms favored by Gen Z, will be critical to restoring and maintaining trust (Gibbons & Hazy, 2015; Welch, 2010).

Audience Engagement and Motivation

Younger adult generations such as Gen Z and Millennials increasingly consider sustainability and mission alignment, as well as authentic storytelling, rather than mere price advantage. These demographics are especially likely to engage with brands whose environmental impact is transparent and measurable (ThredUp, 2025). Goodwill stands to benefit from further amplification of their preexisting social and environmental impact across digital channels, positioning itself as a leader in circular economy principles (Welch, 2010; ThredUp, 2025).

Environmental and Social Impact

Goodwill's contribution to sustainability is a significant asset that is being underleveraged in their communication strategy. Each year, its national operations divert millions of pounds of usable materials away

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from landfills, reinforcing its value proposition in a rapidly growing secondhand apparel market (ThredUp, 2025; Goodwill Industries International Inc., 2025). Furthermore, detailed stories of outcomes from workforce development and job placement programs, such as increased household earnings and reduced dependency on social assistance programs, serve as powerful advocacy tools demonstrating the individual autonomy the company is helping marginalized individuals gain, as well as powerful engagement tools for various publics (Gibbons & Hazy, 2015; Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit, 2025).

Competitive Positioning

Goodwill faces significant competition in the resale market; competitors include the Salvation Army, local thrift stores/chains, consignment stores (e.g., Plato's Closet, Buffalo Exchange), and online resale platforms (Depop, Grailed, Facebook Marketplace, Poshmark). Many competitors, most notably other thrift store chains (e.g., Salvation Army), lean heavily into targeting value-conscious consumers. Distinguishing Goodwill depends heavily on communicating mission-driven differentiators, scalable social enterprise operations, and the authentic stories of individuals whose lives have been transformed by Goodwill services (Welch, 2010; ThredUp, 2025). Integration of mission messaging in both physical and digital spaces is necessary for building lasting customer and donor loyalty.

Digital and Social Media Strategy

Analysis of current best practices and market trends highlights TikTok, Instagram, and other rapidly expanding digital channels as critical arenas for engagement. Social listening data and platform analytics confirm that influencer partnerships and user-generated content particular to thrift culture reach audiences with greater authenticity and resonance (ThredUp, 2025; Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit, 2025). Partnering with fashion influencers to curate sections of clothing merchandise could be a fun way to engage Gen Z.

Strategic Recommendations

Goodwill should prioritize ongoing narrative-based campaigns which emphasize community transformation and the environmental impact of clothing resale in comparison to fast fashion practices. The campaigns must be platform-specific, leveraging short-form video, interactive features, and influencer collaborations on platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels. Environmental impact metrics should be clearly integrated into communication while being backed by transparent and up-to-date third-party industry data, such as those provided by ThredUp and GuideStar (Gibbons & Hazy, 2015; Goodwill Industries International Inc., 2025).

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A dynamic myth busting resource on the organization's website, complemented by regular, transparent disclosures on executive pay and nonprofit status, will elevate reputation management from reactive to proactive, addressing skepticism head-on (Welch, 2010; Goodwill Industries International Inc., 2025). Partnerships with local universities, corporations, and social groups present opportunities to expand reach and encourage new/increased traffic/donations.

Conclusion

Goodwill of Greater Detroit, as a locally centered nonprofit in a large metropolitan area, faces profound messaging challenges and transformative opportunities for growth through the leveraging of current social initiatives and mission. Meeting these challenges requires evidence-based, data-driven communication grounded in the current realities of secondhand retail and nonprofit advocacy. Careful attention to brand positioning, supported by a proactive approach to myth busting and collaboration, will allow Goodwill not just to sustain but to amplify its positive impact in the greater Detroit area (Gibbons & Hazy, 2015; Goodwill Industries International Inc., 2025; Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit, 2025; ThredUp, 2025; Welch, 2010).

APPENDIX E

SHOP LOCAL

MADISON HEIGHTS

Supporting Our Community, One Visit at a Time



When you shop local, you support jobs, sustainability, and community growth. Goodwill of Metro Detroit is proud to partner with Madison Heights businesses to build pathways to independence through the power of work.

Your Local Partners



Local Café Name

Coffee & Bakery



Salon Name

Hair & Beauty



Bookstore Name

Books & Gifts



Fitness Studio

Wellness



Boutique Name

Fashion & Home



Goodwill Metro Detroit

Thrift & Training

THE GOODWILL DIFFERENCE



17,000+

Individuals served annually (job training, career services, and employment programs)



Millions

Pounds diverted from landfills



Supports community employment



Reduces environmental impact



Keeps dollars in Metro Detroit



Funds job training programs



Builds stronger neighborhoods

EXCLUSIVE SHOP LOCAL REWARDS!

Visit any partner location and mention this flyer for **exclusive local discounts**

Show your partner receipt at Goodwill for **15% off your purchase... and vice versa!**

THE SHOP LOCAL CHALLENGE

Visit 5 different partners, get your card stamped, earn **20% off** at ANY location!

Pick up your punch card at any participating business



Goodwill
of Greater Detroit

goodwilldetroit.org | 313.964.3900

Follow us: @GoodwillDetroit

#ShopLocalMadisonHeights



Did you know? Goodwill is a nonprofit. Your purchases fund job training programs for Metro Detroit residents.

Goodwill Community Connections

Building Partnerships. Strengthening Communities

Community Partnership Highlight

Our Community Partnership Highlight newsletter shares stories about collaboration between Goodwill of Greater Detroit and local partners. Each feature showcases joint projects, volunteer efforts, and how these partnerships make a lasting impact in our communities.

Shop Local Initiatives

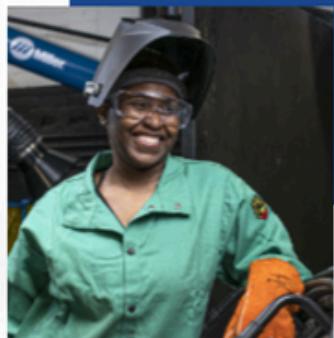
Through our "Shop Local Madison Heights" and "Shop Local Southfield" networks, we have teamed up with local cafés, boutiques, salons, bookstores, and fitness studios to:

- Exchange flyers and other promotional materials
- Feature one another in newsletters and social media
- Encourage residents to shop small and give back locally.

Partner Spotlight

Each issue will highlight a local business or organization that shares Goodwill's mission. Partners help amplify our message and message and mission.

Businesses and nonprofits interested in partnering with Goodwill can connect with us by emailing us at info@goodwilldetroit.org



APPENDIX G

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 17, 2025

GOODWILL OF METRO DETROIT EXPANDS PRESENCE WITH NEW STORE OPENINGS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Madison Heights and Southfield, MI – Goodwill of Metro Detroit has announced the opening of its Madison Heights and Southfield stores, alongside new community partnerships that reinforce the organization's commitment to transparency and its mission of changing lives through the power of work.

The newly reopened stores allow Goodwill to serve more local residents while providing clearer in-store communication about how donations and purchases support job training and employment programs across Metro Detroit. Updated signage, interactive impact displays, and QR-code resources will help shoppers and donors easily understand how their contributions create opportunities for job seekers and support workforce development programs. In addition to the physical store expansions, Goodwill is strengthening connections with local nonprofits, schools, and small businesses. These partnerships aim to raise awareness of Goodwill's mission, foster volunteer opportunities, and create a stronger network of community support. "We are thrilled to expand our presence in the Detroit area and deepen our collaboration with local organizations," said a Goodwill representative. "These efforts reflect our commitment to openness, community engagement, and ensuring that every individual can clearly see the impact of their support."

Through these expanded locations and partnerships, Goodwill seeks to build trust, elevate its local impact, and ensure that every shopper and donor can experience firsthand the meaningful outcomes of their contributions.

About Goodwill of Metro Detroit:
Goodwill of Metro Detroit is a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing lives through the power of work. By providing job training, employment services, and community-based programs, Goodwill helps individuals gain skills and find sustainable employment while reinvesting proceeds from retail operations back into the community.

-End-

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GOODWILL INDUSTRIES INC.