

Sharity and Synlab Join Forces on Impact Marketing

The Sharity mobile app, a Hungarian Top100 innovation that seeks to change the culture of giving by connecting people and good causes to promote transparency and trust, has announced a significant new partnership with the country's largest private healthcare provider, Synlab Hungary Kft.



Richard Lévai (left), managing director of Synlab Hungary Kft. and Farkas Bársony, CEO of Sharity, sign their partnership agreement.

BBJ ROBIN MARSHALL

Sharity says it looks to motivate inactive people, those who do not have the means or might be suspicious of good causes, to support charities. The app provides an opportunity for people to donate through the traditional means of a credit card. However, what marks it out is that it also offers an opportunity for people to make a “donation” without spending any money at all, simply by watching an ad from partners such as Synlab.

As Sharity’s English-language YouTube video puts it, the app connects good causes with those willing to help. “It does not matter if you are only a time millionaire,” the video explains. “Besides financial support, you can also do good by watching an ad. Every view counts. This way, you can donate several times a day.”

The app provides users with a quarterly summary of how donations for each charity campaign were used. The content for this is uploaded to the app by the organizations and is analyzed by software developed explicitly for the purpose.

The team of contracted ambassadors behind Sharity includes former Olympic gymnast, journalist and presenter Zsuzsa Csisztu, Paralympic swimmers Fanni Illés and Zsanett Adámi, actor András Csonka, broadcaster and TV presenter Levente Harsányi, reporter and TV presenter Éva Barabás and Jázmin Hollósi, a star of TikTok and YouTube (and a student at MOME, the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design). The chief ambassador and PR director is Antónia Bálint (Miss Hungary ’91 and a former TV presenter).

The CEO, and Sharity’s CSR Ambassador, is probably somewhat better known to readers of the *Budapest Business Journal*. Farkas Bársony is a former president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hungary and was previously a partner at PwC Hungary and prior to that managing director of GE Hungary.

“I am very proud that our team finally got to this point after years of investing our time, energy and money into this innovative idea and solution,” Bársony tells the *BBJ*. “We are even more confident today that we can start reforming the culture of giving by creating this new standard in transparency and providing opportunities to donate in simple, innovative ways,” he explains.

Export the Idea

“I have received great feedback from fellow CEOs and marketing, CSR, and HR leaders who are open to new, innovative ideas and ready to move away from the traditional thinking and approaches. There is already some international interest too; therefore, we are looking to export the idea.”

While variations of the model of support through watching ads are not unknown globally, Sharity says this is the first such mobile app in Hungary, and the company is the pioneer of what it calls “impact marketing,” where the aim is to reach an immediate positive social impact with marketing or advertising activities.

“We are not aware of any other solutions or applications in the world with the transparency standards that are built into Sharity. We do not deduct any commission from donations made with the help of the platform. All known websites raising funds for good causes work on a commission basis,” Bársony says.

Sharity ads up the viewing time of “donors” and then forwards the amount of support offered by Synlab and other advertisers to the non-profit organization selected by the viewer. The company says registered foundations and associations can significantly increase their revenue.

“As a listed company, Synlab considers it extremely important to organize its social programs through transparent systems, which is why we chose Sharity,” said Richard Lévai, managing director of Synlab Hungary Kft. at the announcement of the link-up. He added that, by enlisting the help of Sharity, Synlab had effectively delegated the right to decide which social initiatives are worthy of significant support to the public and its employees.

Sharity does not only offer its users a “feel good” factor, however. They can also get discounts on services. Synlab, for example, offers coupons for “Good to Live” packages that grant a free general health check to promote and raise awareness of prevention programs.

Bársony says he has been working on Sharity (the name is a portmanteau of charity and sharing and will soon change to Sharity Impact) for approximately five years.

He says he was responsible for significant donation activities in his previous leadership roles and saw the problems caused by a lack of transparency and trust. It was also difficult for smaller charity organizations to access big companies.

Do Something About It

“I became an ambassador in a charity some years ago where we organize sports events for kids recovering from serious cancer diseases to help them reintegrate and was faced with these difficulties again. Along with some of my friends,

we just decided at one point, we should do something about it,” he explains.

He estimates the company founders have spent approximately HUF 100 million of their own money to develop the app with the help of a Big 4 firm.

“The software and the algorithms built in are very complex, but we could not compromise because of the transparency standards we are introducing. Our business model is based on the advertising fees paid by the companies as we do not deduct anything from the donations.”

Bársony describes the operation as “Profit for the interest of non-profit. There should not be a conflict here. We found a business model based on impact marketing in which we make the companies more interested in charity activities in the most innovative ways.”

Although he says there is a five-year business plan with concrete numbers, for now, the focus is on populating Sharity with charity organizations that agree to its transparency standards, growing the number of users with the help of the ambassadors and marketing activities, and seeking cooperating partners like Synlab.

Although the app only recently launched, Bársony says it already features 25-plus organizations with charity campaigns, with more being added day by day. He puts the number of users at more than 2,000 currently and growing.

“Sharity is now working on a wallet function, where users can collect a “charity margin” from invoices issued by companies who build a charity element into their prices. Users can collect this “charity margin” from their both online and off-line purchases. They will be able to donate this to any of the campaigns from this wallet.”

The app is available for both iPhones and Android mobiles.