An Interpretive Guide for the Expanded Matrix Map

blue avocado

Practical, provocative, food for thought for nonprofits

With the expansion of the Matrix Map to include a values axis, 8 distinct areas are created within the map via a combination of scores for profitability, mission alignment, and values alignment. The table below identifies each of these areas and details what the implications for a program may be based on its specific score combination.

For the following table, ROI (return on investment) represents profitability (x-axis), ROM (return on mission) represents mission impact (y-axis), and ROV (return on values) represents values alignment (z-axis). The plus and minus signs here indicate relative values, not necessarily positive and negative values. Some scores for mission or values alignment will simply be above the midpoint of whatever scale on which you choose to rank them (and what would negative mission alignment even be? Yikes).

Though not shown in the table, these scores may also come out to a net zero result, most likely in the case of ROI (values). A zero ROI breakeven scenario may be acceptable or preferred by some organizations and not by others. That is, it is up to you (and your organization) whether a net zero score for values alignment represents a potential problem (and therefore a weaker score).

ROI	ROM	ROV	Implication
+	+	+	Invest in and protect while monitoring to guard against significant increases in costs or loss of value alignment. Determine what from this highly successful program could inform other less successful programs.
+	+	–	Explore where the misalignment in value is originating and course correct. For example, if there is a negative environmental impact, can you switch out plastic program materials for natural materials?
+	–	+	Base your decision on the relative level of profitability versus the level of mission misalignment. Be aware that this may become an area of taxable unrelated business income.
+	–	–	Double misalignment with mission and values may mean these should be left behind. This is another area of potential taxable unrelated business income.
–	+	+	If costs are large, explore how they may be decreased if possible. Decide if increasing revenue is possible, though it may not be for something like a mission-aligned free program.
–	+	–	If mission alignment is strong, consider how you can better infuse your values. Hold discussions with stakeholders and explore improvements.
–	–	+	Consider closing or giving away these programs as they are not profitable and also do not align with your mission. If mission can be incorporated more strongly, these could become valuable.
–	–	–	Consider closing or giving away these programs. While they may be great ideas, your organization may not be where they will thrive.

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