

Motivations for Donating Used Technology to ACCESS Tech

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SUSTAIN 4S06 student researchers with donated items-
From left to right: Mehakpreet Sandhu, Devanshi Patel,
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Overview

The pandemic required us to move online, and access to information technology became, and remains, even more of a necessity. However, many people lack access to adequate technology, creating barriers to education, work, healthcare, and more.^{1,2} ACCESS Tech is a collaborative initiative that collects electronic donations from the McMaster community for refurbishment and donation to Hamiltonians in need through partnership with Empowerment Squared.³ The ability to donate technology to those in need is directly related to the amount of donations ACCESS Tech receives. Thus, the goal of our project was to increase donations by leveraging donor motivations.

Objectives

1. Interview those who donate to ACCESS Tech
2. Transcribe, analyze, and code interviews to understand donor motivations
3. Recommend strategies to increase donations and access to technology

Reporting

To achieve our first objective, we attended the McMaster ACCESS Tech Donation Event on October 27th, 2022. We interviewed 20 McMaster students and staff members about their motivations to donate.

Our second objective was completed by analyzing interview data and identifying reoccurring themes. We identified two key themes -- motivators and facilitators -- and four sub-themes. With respect to motivators, donors experience a benefit to themselves as well as altruism for others and the environment. For example, donors donated to declutter their personal space and to leverage the opportunity for free and reliable hard drive sanitization, and they also donated to help someone in need as well as to protect the environment through recycling and reuse. With respect to facilitators, the aspect that made donations easy for the donors included their awareness of the event and the incentives. For example, a donor mentioned receiving a direct email, so they knew about the event and were incentivized to donate because of the free donuts.

To conclude our project, we presented our findings and recommendations to McMaster's ACCESS Tech working group. We received supportive and encouraging feedback, and our recommendations were incorporated into the ACCESS Tech donation drive as part of Earth Day on April 21st, 2023, which included a [Daily News story](#) summarizing and satisfying our recommendations.

Collaborators

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