



To Profit or Not to Profit: The Commercial Transformation of the Nonprofit Sector

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Nonprofit organizations are changing dramatically in the ways they are financed. They are becoming increasingly commercial, operating more like private firms. Far more is involved than the generation of revenue. As donations decline in importance and user fees and money-raising ancillary activities come to dominate, they bring side-effects on the social missions that justify public support. This book examines these little-recognized relationships for the overall nonprofit charitable sector and then focuses on each of six industries; important differences are found among hospitals, universities, social service providers, zoos, museums, and public broadcasting.

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To Profit or Not to Profit: The Commercial Transformation of the Nonprofit Sector From Brand: Cambridge University Press Bibliography

- Rank: #2305209 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Cambridge University Press
- Published on: 2000-05-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.98" h x .79" w x 5.98" l, 1.15 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 356 pages

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Review

"Perhaps the most disturbing current policy issue posed by the substantial nonprofit sector of the economy is the growing tendency of such enterprises to rely on self-financing through sale of their services more than on philanthropic support. Such commercialization, it is suspected, can distort their mission and undermine the arguments for tax exemption and other privileges. This very valuable book provides the data that both laymen and specialists need to evaluate the issues effectively." William J. Baumol, C.V. Starr Center for Applied Economics, NYU

"Nonprofits are increasingly becoming competitors and collaborators with private firms and government agencies. In this useful book Burton Weisbrod has brought together important original research that helps us define and understand these important new relationships." Susan Rose-Ackerman, Yale Law School

"...a book with a coherence and consistency of approach rare in edited collections." Margaret Harris, The Times Higher

"Few scholars have contributed more to our understanding of nonprofits over a longer period of time than Burt Weisbrod." Philanthropy Monthly

"...a timely and rich asset. Weisbrod has done a great service to the nonprofit sector through this work." Russell A. Cargo, George Mason University

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