

CECP Best Practices

In-Kind Donations: Everybody Wins!

by Frank Scruggs, Executive Vice President, Human Resources, Office Depot



Pictured left to right: John Vance, Office Depot District Manager; Carl Edwards, driver of the Office Depot No. 99 Ford, NASCAR; Mary Pettyjohn, President of the Board of Directors, Kent Community Action Agency; Jerry Labeyrie, Office Depot Store Manager in Dover; Kim Butler, Assistant Executive Director, Kent Community Action Agency.

Every day, companies around the world face the question of what to do with products that are out-of-date, overstocked or otherwise no longer needed. Rather than just throwing these items away, many firms donate them to nonprofit organizations that, in turn, place them in the hands of people in need.

As a company with a deep commitment to “Caring and Making a Difference” and “Taking Care of Kids,” Office Depot provides extensive product donations to Gifts In Kind International, the world’s leading charity in product philanthropy. We also give goods and services to numerous other nonprofit organizations.

Office Depot believes that in-kind donations are a “win-win-win” situation. Not only do we generate a significant return on financial investments, but we also provide intangible benefits to the communities in which our associates and our customers live and work and where we conduct business.

In addition, these donations present an important opportunity to support values that are becoming increasingly important to many of our customers. According to the 2004 Cone Corporate Citizenship Survey, 86 percent of Americans say they are “very/somewhat likely to switch from one brand to another that is about the same in price and quality, if the other brand is associated with a cause.” The study also found that 85 percent of the respondents acknowledged the importance of a company’s commitment to a social issue when deciding which companies they would like to see doing business in their community.

Our donations of office supplies, furniture, technology products, computer software and accessories enable charities to stretch their budgets and maximize their resources for the delivery of critical community services. In addition, school supplies donated by Office Depot help to ensure that children from low-income families have the resources to reach their full potential.

Our donations of office supplies, furniture, technology products, computer software and accessories enable charities to stretch their budgets and maximize their resources for the delivery of critical community services.

Through in-kind donations, Office Depot makes a vital difference to hundreds of nonprofit organizations serving thousands of people in communities large and small. For these reasons, among many others, we were recognized for an unprecedented second consecutive year by being named to the Companies That Care Honor Roll. Such recognition reinforces the sense of gratification that our associates receive from working in a company that demonstrates its generosity through philanthropy and excellent customer service.



This year Office Depot will donate 300,000 backpacks, containing basic school supplies, to children across the country. The company began its National Backpack Program in 2001; since its inception (and including this year’s program), Office Depot will have placed more than 880,000 backpacks in the hands of children.

According to the 2004 Cone Corporate Citizenship Survey, 86 percent of Americans say they are very/somewhat likely to switch from one brand to another that is about the same in price and quality, if the other brand is associated with a cause.



Each year throughout the country Office Depot hosts “Backpack Donation Day” at its retail stores where non-profit organizations and schools are provided with backpacks for distribution to children. Pictured: Event at Office Depot’s store in Atlanta.



Office Depot recently presented over \$125,000 in school/office supplies to Title I Chicagoland Area schools through Feed the Children, a national non-profit organizations, which assists Title I schools across the country.