

Give for philanthropy. Give for business.

In 2004, MINI Richmond decided to step forward and help the local authorities battle street racing which had become a major problem, and headlined in a number of high profile media. MINI Richmond felt it needed to support the Richmond RCMP in their initiatives, and for the past 4 years, has donated a MINI Cooper S to help promote their Resist The Race (RTR) program.

By working in conjunction with car enthusiasts, RTR assists them in finding a safe place to pursue their love of motorsports. After the MINI's lease expired, MINI Richmond donated the vehicle to the Touchstone Family Association whose mission is to strengthen the social health and independence of families and children through effective intervention and support services in the Richmond area.

While not every company can provide such sizable donations, there are a variety of reasons why every organization should consider giving back to their community:

1—**The opportunity to give back.** Being part of the Auto West Group of leading automotive companies, MINI Richmond has always strived to give back to the community once it had evolved into a sustainable and profitable business after its launch in 2002. This is the main reason to seek out a charity to support. It allows you to share and pass on some of your good fortune and success.

2—**Community support and good will.** Being part of a community is vital for all businesses, large and small. It fosters a sense of belongingness for an organization and helps all team members feel integrated into their own community.

3—**Marketing opportunities.** When you donate time, products, services or money, charity and non-profit groups usually have some sort of recognition program. Having your business name included is good promotion. It is one of the reasons you see athletic teams with business names on their uniforms. People are more apt to support businesses they feel are part of their world.

4—**The opportunity to support causes you believe in.** Tie your business purpose to a particular charity, but if you cannot, pick a charity or community group that you are passionate about and support them. MINI Richmond chose to support Resist The Race because of its natural fit with their high performance products and target demographic. Afterwards, the Touchstone Family Association was chosen because its objectives fit well with MINI Richmond's family values.

5—**Giving time.** Contributions don't have to drain your company's finances. Many organizations have needs for time and services as well as cash. Contact the group you would like to help and ask them if there are volunteer opportunities available for you or your staff members.

6—**Networking.** As you get to know others and work with others for a cause that you believe in, you'll become a part of the group. You'll be involved and that can help you market your business in many ways—you'll know the needs of the community and be able to find ways to meet them. It's hard to buy that kind of market research anywhere, and especially challenging for smaller-sized businesses.

Supporting a charity or non-profit group can help your business grow, but most of all, it can be a great way to give back to your community and help support causes that need your help.