

Gift Giving Guide

Gifts That Give Back

(NAPSA)—If you're having trouble choosing a gift for someone on your list, try getting something for someone else instead.

That's the idea behind charitable giving—or making a gift to charity in someone else's name. It's become an increasingly popular way to celebrate occasions or to just show you care, year-round.

While the idea may not seem new—individual donors have given gifts of charity in the name of a loved one for years—what is new is the variety of online and catalog charitable gifts there are to choose from.

Why the trend? Why now? It could be timing. "These days, there's a lot of bad news out there," said Meredith Landis, marketing associate for Global Giving.com. "With one global emergency after the next, people have a greater desire to do something about it. It may sound like a cliché, but alternative gifts make the world better. They empower people to make a difference and share that feeling with someone else."

The trend is getting so much attention that the Case Foundation—created by AOL co-founder Steve Case and his wife Jean in 1997—devoted an entire section of its Web site to the topic, at www.casefoundation.org/holiday. The foundation lists a number of resources that make giving easy and fun, including:

- GlobalGiving.com, which has a "donation wizard" that finds the right gift depending on your preferences;



New Web sites offer charitable gifts that help support people around the world.

- Heifer International, at www.heifer.org, which uses low-dollar donations to send llamas, sheep and other livestock to people around the world;

- Alternative Gifts International (www.alternativegifts.org), a catalog that offers a range of gifts that support people around the world;

- UniversalGiving.org, which has a selection of gift packages you can send in someone else's name; and

- NetworkforGood.org, a leading online charitable donation site.

The idea has proliferated among retail stores and online charitable shopping sites, such as GreaterGood.com and iGive.com, as well. These and other sites give consumers a chance to do their everyday shopping while getting that warm and fuzzy philanthropic feeling.

One gift may not change the world overnight. But it's a start.