

OLD PHONES RAISE MONEY, HELP CITIZENS IN NEED



With cellular service providers offering customers a new phone every couple of years, it's not uncommon for people to have a stash of old phones they no longer use. Rather than let such phones gather dust or take up space in a drawer, Avnet employees put them to better use by donating them to people in need.

Employees in San Diego began collecting phones in Sept. 2006 for an organization called Phones for Life (www.phones4life.org) that supplies old and used cell phones to senior citizens for 911 access. To date, employees have brought in 30 phones.

"Our phone drive is so easy and helps such a great cause," says Pam Hober, the Avnet Electronics Marketing sales and marketing representative who coordinates the ongoing project. "When I have gathered enough phones to fill a box, I contact a toll-free number and they send out Federal Express to pick them up."

In the past, Avnet employees in Phoenix collected phones for victims of domestic violence who needed to call 911. But for its most recent drive, it collected phones and used inkjet and laser cartridges on behalf of Make A Difference. By donating 143 phones to an organization called Funding Factory (www.fundingfactory.com), employees earned \$400 for Make A Difference to use for its programs.

"We were able to help two causes – recycling and a nonprofit organization – and all we had to do was collect the phones in boxes Funding Factory supplied and send them via Funding Factory's prepaid shipping," says Karen Zalesky, sales process manager at Avnet Technology Solutions. "We were able to select a charity to use the funds and keep our planet green; just think if every Avnet location did this on a yearly basis!"