

Communities Benefit from Home-Grown Businesses:

McShane's "Buy Local, Give Local" campaign demonstrates one firm's long-standing commitment to give back to their community while stressing the importance of buying locally.

When you're the third generation of a family-owned and operated business that has been a part of the local community for nearly a century, one thing is certain – you have to provide exceptional service.

Service to McShane's goes a step further than the outstanding service they provide their business clients. It extends to the community through their ongoing support of local charities.

"Like my father and my grandfather before him who started this business in downtown Hammond 91 years ago, my brother Niall and I feel the importance of being a part of the community," president and CEO of McShane's Inc. Brian McShane said. "The local nonprofits have always depended on businesses like us for support. When the recession really took hold in '08, we saw it as an opportunity for us to all come together and support one another."

McShane's "Buy Local, Give Local" initiative increases awareness for the need to offer support to local charities. By highlighting the efforts of one, two or three different nonprofits each month through their website and marketing materials, McShane's encourages and welcomes clients to join them in "giving back" as they donate a portion of sales to each charity.

"Everyone at McShane's is truly grateful for the opportunity to service our clients' office needs and in turn support different nonprofit organizations each month," Brian McShane said. "Our goal is to create awareness for all the hard work these local organizations do in assisting members of the community. Along with sharing their story and promoting their events, some of these organizations are able to acquire matching grants for our monetary donations which can often double the donation. In the last year, we assisted 16 different organizations."



To date, McShane's has donated over \$100,000 with their "Buy Local, Give Local" campaign. Further demonstrating the importance of buying locally to the sustainability of a community, McShane's recognizes the need to set an example by supporting local businesses as well.

"According to the Andersonville study (a fact-finding mission commissioned by Chicago's Andersonville Chamber of Commerce and the Andersonville Development Corp.) which studied the impact of local businesses against chain businesses in the area, locally-owned businesses reinvest in the local economy at a 60% higher rate than chains and non-local internet retailers," McShane's vice president J. Niall McShane said. "Along with supporting nonprofits, local businesses also patronize other locally-owned entities like banks, law firms, tax preparers and printers."

Buying locally and giving locally has also enabled McShane's to become more in-tune with their clients needs, allowing them to offer a wider range of products and services to meet their needs.

"Consider this example from our industry that demonstrates the impact buying local has on a community," Niall McShane added. "Not including home offices, there are more than 6,000 businesses and organizations in northwest Indiana that consume office products. If all of these businesses were to buy their products from a national chain based on price alone, they would most likely be supporting another area's economy, and quite possibly another country's."

Along with proven savings and a tried-and-true selection of the most desirable office supplies, equipment and state-of-the-art technology – from Acco to Zipnotes and everything in-between – McShane’s is leading the way with expert guidance on space planning, computer networking and promotional product/customized apparel marketing.

For more than a decade, McShane’s has provided clients with the technical know-how they need to keep their business running smoothly day-in and day-out. Special partnerships with medical, dental, industrial, retail, financial, education and construction clients allow them to address unique needs on a case-by-case basis.

“The technology division of McShane’s was established in 2001,” senior computer hardware/network engineer Stephen Tepper, a Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert (MSCE) and Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA), who has been leading the technology team at McShane’s from the very beginning, said. “Now more than ever, our clients are very dependent on technology. Take doctors, and especially dentists who work independently. Their offices rely on digital imaging, online appointment management systems and file storage. They also require support with security and back up. That’s what we’re here for, and we’re always available to our clients. We’ll drop everything when they need us.”

According to Tepper, McShane’s technology division has been growing every year, and with the proliferation of local home offices, the demand for services such as efficient in-store technical support for both laptops and desktop computers, makes keeping up with the latest advancements a priority.

Similarly, the company’s focus on promotions has been growing over the past four years since Ed Thompson joined McShane’s to head up the McShane’s Total Graphic Solutions, Inc. division as vice president of sales.

Whether the goal is to reach out to new prospects or reward employees and loyal customers, promotional products are proven powerful tools when it comes to reinforcing the relevance and dependability of your brand, according to Thompson, who has over 24 years of experience in the industry.

“There are literally more than 20,000 different vendors out there who can add your business name and logo to about a million different products,” he said. “We just choose to work with a select group of about 600 vendors who we know will provide a high quality product that’s worth your investment. But, more importantly, it’s our job to help you determine the best possible product or products to make your business or event shine.”

While many people think their order will be too small or don’t realize they can get an order overnight if necessary, Thompson makes it a goal to never say no to a client.

“First and foremost, we keep your budget in mind,” he explained. “So many businesses are realizing that the right products will pay huge dividends, and they choose to sit down with me to formulate a plan. We’ll always come up with something, even if it’s plan B or plan C. This is a fun business, and we’re here to meet your needs. We can even create custom online stores that give your employees easy access to the branded supplies and apparel items you select in support of your ongoing efforts.”

Whether it’s delivering office supplies and furniture to the precise location where you’ll be using them the very next day, providing service that’s equivalent to having your very own in-houses technical support team or producing promotional products on target for your needs, McShane’s dedication to service combined with their long-time commitment to the community demonstrates why it’s important to shop local.

