

STORY BY PEGGY HAILSTONE  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF DONORTEC

# donor **tec**

**Is your organisation in need of updated software? Are you keen for new or additional hardware? Is your budget limited?**

Then look no further than DonorTec, a program linking non-profits and charities with commercial technology companies supplying discounted or donated products. The DonorTec program is delivered by Connecting Up Australia (CUA), a South-Australian based, national nonprofit organisation.

And according to Doug Jacquier, CUA Chief Executive Officer, as long as your organisation is a bona fide non-profit and holds Income Tax Exemption, it's as easy as 1, 2, 3.

Step 1. Register your organisation online at [www.donortec.com.au/user/register](http://www.donortec.com.au/user/register). Registration allows DonorTec to check your organisation's eligibility for donations from current donor and discounter companies. By providing DonorTec with information on your organisation's activities, aims, and turnover, they can begin the process of matching your organisation's technology needs to one or more of their program partners. These program partners are big-name players like Microsoft, Cisco, Symantec, and Sophos. As Jacquier explains, "the program is about getting technology into the hands of non-profits and charities so they can do what they need to do better than they were doing it yesterday".

The way it works is that each of the donor technology companies has a slightly different set of organisations they are prepared to give to. 'Some are very broad and some are very narrow,' Jacquier clarifies. "Cisco, for example, tends to prefer to focus its donations in the area of disability, youth programs and unemployment programs, whereas Microsoft is much broader and someone like Symantec goes even broader again." Some donors will also limit eligibility on organisation budget, while others try and stay away from organisations involved in areas that might be controversial for them (e.g., religion, politics, advocacy).

As DonorTec ends its third year of operation, to date it has brokered around 5,000 donations with savings to the NFP industry of around \$50 million. Not surprisingly, in 2008 this won Jacquier (and DonorTec) a Significant Innovation Award in the Equity Trustees Not-for-Profit CEO Awards. While proud of DonorTec's achievements in a relatively short timeframe, Jacquier is humble about his own role and simply wants to do more. More networking, more negotiations, more relationships, and delivery of more software and hardware products and services to more Australian non-profits, he informs.

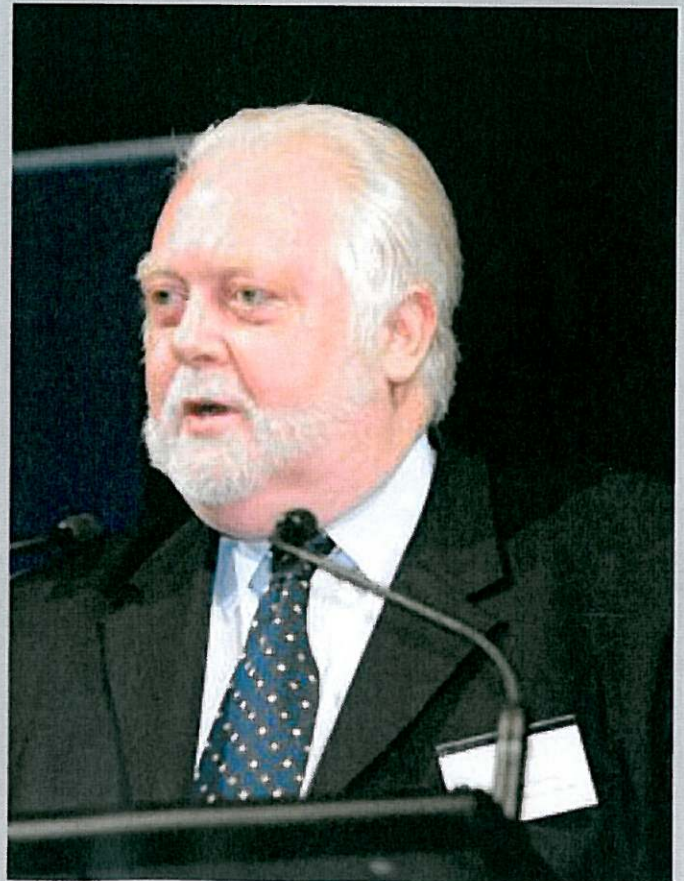
**Step 2. Ordering and Payment.** This step of the DonorTec process involves online ordering of the goods and products for your organisation. "Once you are recognised as legitimate you are eligible to place orders for particular donors or discounters," Jacquier says. "In some cases goods are discounted up to 96% [of the retail price] but in other cases companies say 'we're not prepared to donate, but what we will do is knock 20% off the normal retail price'." The result, Jacquier confirms, is a unique price not available anywhere else.

Backed by TechSoup Global—a program that commenced in the United States in the late eighties—there are now 35 partners around the world servicing 32 countries. Each of these countries has a non-profit entity similar to DonorTec who acts as the local TechSoup partner.

The scope and range offered through this global network, combined with the support of big-name

companies like Microsoft and Cisco, has really enabled spread of the locally based programs in the last few years. 'It's having that partner with a global reach,' Jacquier says. "We can be talking with our colleagues in Hungary, Africa, the United States or the United Kingdom and we can share problems, ideas, results and clever things to do." The result is better deals and cheaper technology solutions for non-profit organisations.

To cover DonorTec's costs a fee of 4-8% of the retail value is charged on all deals. Jacquier says the amount varies between the different donors depending on how many steps are involved in fulfilling orders. "For a product like Cisco—which is a hardware product in the Internet sphere—there are a number of extra steps we have to do for them both here and in the United States in relation to security." DonorTec's fee, apart from sustaining the service, also means that donor and discounter companies can be confident they are giving to appropriate organisations.



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Step 3: Delivery, the final, fun and fulfilling stage. Imagine the excitement as you unpack those boxes and install that smart new program. In the New Year, if you need tech support for the hook-up or installation, DonorTec will be able to assist through its soon-to-be-released Tech Checker; an online database which will assist non-profits to find technology support in their local area.

DonorTec operator, Connecting Up Australia, also runs the biennial NFP national technology survey. Commenced in 2006, the results of this extensive survey are shared openly and at no cost by CUA (2008 survey results can be found at [www.connectingup.org/NFPtechnologysurvey2008](http://www.connectingup.org/NFPtechnologysurvey2008)). With a response rate of around 1,000 in both 2006 and 2008, it's a great achievement.

"It's a very long survey, so people obviously feel committed to it," Jacquier says. He believes that because it's an NFP survey undertaken by an NFP organisation, and because results are used to lobby on behalf of the industry, people seem to pay attention. Survey results over the past four years have also recently fuelled another CUA service, Are We There Yet? This free online benchmarking tool can be found at [www.db-insights.net/](http://www.db-insights.net/). It enables non-profit organisations to assess their technology capacity against almost 1,000 other Australian non-profits. Expect to see this tool grow

and become even more valuable as more NFPs enter their benchmarking data and participate in the biennial survey.

For someone who is a self-confirmed 'non tech head', there's little doubt Jacquier is dedicated to spreading inexpensive, effective and capacity producing technologies to the non-profit sector. To date, some of DonorTec's happy customers include the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, the Police Citizen's Youth Club, Assistance Dogs Australia, the Association for the Blind of Western Australia, The Independent Living Centre of Tasmania, the Southern Women's Group (Bega NSW), and the Uniting Care Casino Transport Team.

Some of the many products available include anti-spam software, firewall hardware, wireless networking equipment, accounting and fundraising software, multimedia and graphics software, email security software, and routers.

Jacquier agrees that DonorTec is ultimately about linkages. "My view is that the better connected and the better equipped non-profits are, and the more money they can save on technology, the more money they can deliver to their mainstream services."

*For more information go to [www.donortec.com.au](http://www.donortec.com.au)*

