
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.**The Property Report
Easing Time-Share Donations**

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Owners looking to give away their time shares to charity and get the tax write-off now have some help.

A handful of charitable organizations accept donations of time-share units, but many avoid doing so because of the costs and risks associated with selling them. So Glenn Ostrowski, president of Go Timeshare LLC, a Bozeman, Mont.-based time-share resale firm, set up a nonprofit called Donate for a Cause, which will sell a time share for an owner and donate the proceeds to the owner's charity of choice.

"It's difficult and expensive for most owners to sell their time shares," due, in large part, to the costs of marketing their time shares, says Mr. Ostrowski. That, coupled with the fact that most time shares are worth substantially less than the original purchase price, "many sellers would be better off donating their time shares" than selling them, he says.

In most cases, time-share donors can get a \$4,900 write-off on their taxes, which is often twice as much as what the time share will sell for, says Suzanne Crowson, a spokeswoman for the new nonprofit. If a time share is worth more than that, donors can pay for an appraisal from a licensed appraiser to get a higher write-off.

Also prompting the nonprofit was Mr. Ostrowski's desire to do something for a friend who was left paralyzed earlier this year from a trampoline accident. "I thought this would be a good way to raise money for the foundation his family set up for him," he says.

Mr. Ostrowski estimates that Donate for a Cause will raise between \$75,000 to \$100,000 a month for charities by selling time shares for donors.

The Shorewood, Wisc.-based nonprofit will take a 5% fee for its intermediary service and will pay brokers a 20% commission on a time-share sale, says Ms. Crowson.

So far, Donate for a Cause has received one time-share donation through its Web site, which began running earlier this week.

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