

*"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently."
— Warren Buffett*



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Give to Prove Your Mettle

Edward Estipona increased his business by giving back to the community


Adam Stone

Edward Estipona, president of a six-person Nevada-based communications agency, found himself in 2003 at an area hospital conference room, surrounded by the region's heavy hitters in business, politics, and education. It was a gathering of potential backers for a new fundraiser, and the vice president for marketing at a local medical center who was heading up the effort also happened to be a client of the Estipona Group.



The committee chairwoman asked Estipona's Reno-based firm to donate \$10,000 in marketing services to the first annual "Rhythm and Rawhide" fundraiser, which solicits donations for the local rodeo and philharmonic. If there were any doubts in Estipona's mind that it would boost business, those thoughts were vanquished when he arrived at the meeting and found it full of of businesspeople and community

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leaders. "We do what we advise our clients to do: support this community with passionate giving," says the 36-year-old Estipona, who believes that by donating services instead of cash, a small business can give back while also proving to the marketplace that its got what it takes to handle major projects.

Supporting the community paid off : After the May 2003 event, the Washoe Medical Center increased the business it was doing with Estipona. And the rewards just keep on coming. After last May's event, which raised \$227,000 for the Reno Philharmonic Orchestra Foundation and the Reno Rodeo Foundation, Washoe County was so impressed with Estipona's marketing skills and with the firm's connections in the community that it signed on as a client.

"If you don't play well in the community," says Estipona, "you're going to get shut out."

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