



## Just One Thing 2016

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**Company/Organization:** Goodwill Industries of Northern New England

### **Challenge or Opportunity:**

With new iPhones and laptops out all the time, you'd think it would be easy to safely recycle your old electronic devices. Not so. Many cities don't accept electronics or charge money to get rid of them. It's not always clear that the devices will be ethically recycled and that people's information on the device will be safe. (Hello, identity theft.)

So at Goodwill we're fortunate to receive tons of computers each year. Some of them are older than you.

We recycle just about everything at Goodwill. The goal is to grow a more sustainable world while also helping people build sustainable lives through our workforce programs.

The easiest way to recycle computers is to sell them to an ethical recycler that scraps the computers. We do that and get a dime per pound for computers. Not bad, right? Makes sense for the 30-year-old junkers that weigh more than your Thanksgiving turkey. But a Macbook Pro would fetch you 44 cents.

At Goodwill we know if you donate your Macbook Pro to us, you expect we'll get more than 44 cents to go to our programs, helping get people into job training and careers.

It hurt putting those high-quality laptops into the send-off heap. And worse, we knew people who didn't have money for a new computer, but could use one for skill-building or applying for jobs or for homework. But you can't just hand a donated computer to someone who needs it - what if there are old tax forms on it?

So here we had people in need of computers and a ton of computers we were practically giving away. We needed a better solution.

#### Approach or Solution:

We hired a small staff and they started refurbishing these computers and selling them. We call it GoodTech. Now we have 12 GoodTech employees who work to refurbish iPhones, tablets and computers. They wipe all electronics to U.S. Department of Defense standards so you know your information will be wiped entirely off the harddrive before we add software back onto the device and get it in the hands of someone who needs it.

For low-income people or anyone with a disability, we give them a ready-to-go computer for about \$150 — although through some corporate donations, we've been able to give GoodTech computers to those in need for free. These computers help people connect to jobs, which makes for more sustainable lives, more sustainable communities and a more sustainable Earth.

#### Impact:

- 12 people employed
- Low-income and disabled people get access to computers for work and work training
- The public has a safe way to dispose of electronic waster
- We divert thousands upon thousands of pounds of potentially toxic material from the Earth