

# Cowboy Casual



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**It was weird** enough having a Cattle Baron's Ball in the middle of the Silicon Valley. Then the invitations to the American Cancer Society Fund-raiser arrived, saying that attire would be "Cowboy Casual."

Cowboy Casual? Versace doesn't make Cowboy Casual. Nor does Gucci. Natch Hugo Boss.

**Now I'm a stylish guy.** But I was really clueless about Cowboy Casual. Still, I put away my tuxedo and shiny shoes in favor of an outfit complete with boots and a bandana.

Suffice it to say that I looked ridiculous. Most of us did.

But silly clothes and pseudo-Southwest décor didn't slow the giving spirit, as high tech leaders, many of whom are hard core competitors by day, spent the evening raising millions for charity.

This wasn't an unusual occurrence. Okay, perhaps Cowboy Casual was. But philanthropy is a major part of life here in Techie-land. Like the industry around us, giving to charity is big, fast, independent. And sometimes a little silly.

**The myth has been** that Silicon Valley is the land of the "cyber-stingy," a region where young techies in \$5 million homes drive their Ferraris past homeless shelters without turning their heads.

But that's the myth.

The truth is, we're not competing to die with the most toys. We're competing to make the world better – with our ideas, our products, and as we

earn it, with our money. (Editor's Note: Ariba donates a charity ad to every issue of *Ariba* magazine.)

A recent Community Foundation Silicon Valley study of local giving found that we Silicon Valley-ites are remarkably generous. Eighty-three percent of the households in this area give to charity, compared to just 69 percent nationally. Among our high net worth households the figure is a whopping 94 percent.

And despite our 24 hour, nine day-a-week work schedules, we still find time to volunteer at about the same rate as does the population nationally.

**So there we were**, out in force at the Cattle Baron's Ball. The evening included an auction, featuring among other things, dinner at the Los Gatos home of a restaurant owner – the bid started at \$6,000. A few people got the fever, engaged in a battle of egos, and in the end, it went for a whopping \$225,000.

So what if it was a battle of egos. Guess who won in the end?

The same needy people who are winning throughout the world as Ariba and its partners in technology thrive with intelligence, compassion and style.

Yes, we Aribians do have some style. And in case you haven't noticed, it's paying off. Browse a magazine rack these days and you'll find Ariba mentioned everywhere. *Business Week*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, you name it.

Well, okay, we're not in *GQ* yet. I'm making that my goal. Ariba in *GQ*. ... Something about Cowboy Casual. 