

Cystic Fibrosis Research, Inc. Discovers Multiple Benefits with Blackbaud Products



Founded in 1975, Cystic Fibrosis Research, Inc. (CFRI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that exists to fund research, provide educational and personal support, and spread awareness of this life-threatening genetic disease. CFRI envisions informing, engaging, and empowering the CF community to help all with this challenging disease attain the highest possible quality of life. Led by its Board of Directors, staff and committed volunteers, CFRI provides the community with a wide range of resources and services.

Challenge

Cystic Fibrosis Research, Inc. had an old, antiquated database. Even after re-designing the application in 2000, it still lacked the flexibility needed by the organization. For example, the database would only allow for one phone number and email address per record. This made tracking constituent data cumbersome and difficult. Without any in-house expertise to continuously re-program its Access database, CFRI determined that the tool no longer met its needs.

The organization also had information stored in several different and often incompatible formats. This led to inefficient and manual processes that were time-consuming and increased data entry error.

Finally, part of CFRI's mission is to educate its constituents about the disease, drug trials, research updates, and programs for those affected by Cystic Fibrosis. Email is one of the primary methods by which CFRI shares this information. The organization averages approximately 2-3 emails per week. At this rate, Outlook was no longer a viable option. The process was completely manual and would take at least 10 hours every week. The email list had to be broken into multiple groups to be sent. Additionally, no reporting was available. This left CFRI wondering how many emails were being opened or blocked, and whether or not the information was reaching those it needed.



Solution

The **Raiser's Edge(i)™**, because it is hosted, not only eliminates the hassle of software updates and server maintenance from CFRI, it also combines the robust database of Raiser's Edge with online event management functionality, email capabilities and **The Giving Score™**, a score to identify

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giving likelihood and capacity. All these elements combine to deliver a complete fundraising and CRM system conveniently from one company. For CFRI, this meant that it could reduce the time and headaches that typically arise when dealing with multiple vendors.

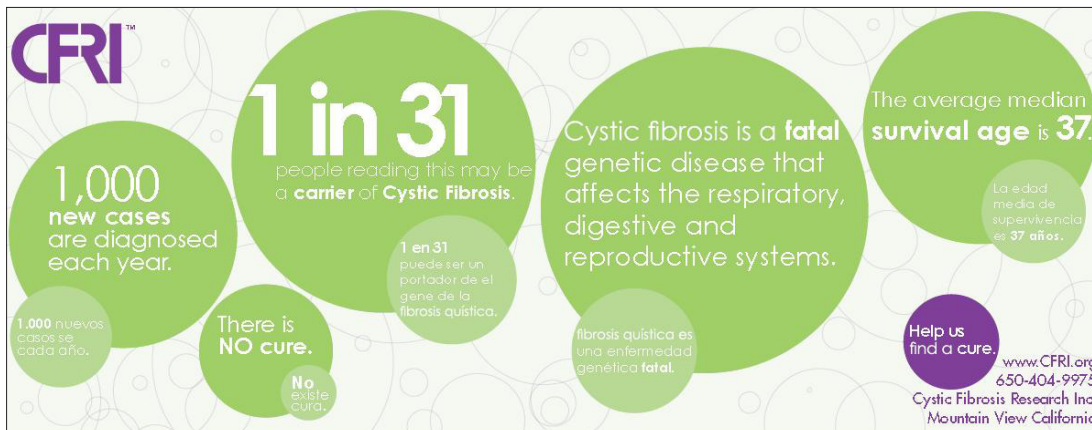
“We only have four paid staff members and a consultant for our IT,” mentioned JoAnn Davis, development manager for Cystic Fibrosis Research, Inc., “So the hosted version was the best option for us. We looked at what everyone was offering and liked what came in the Raiser’s Edge(i). It came hosted and bundled with all the things we wanted, including email.”

For Davis, the fact that email was included, and not an add-on like it is with other vendors, was a plus. The greatest benefit, however, was that it was all on one system ensuring that CFRI would be able to gather better data, store it and track it while streamlining processes and reducing both manual data entry and the chance of error.

CFRI hosts a number of fundraisers and educational programs throughout the year and wanted to streamline the manual processes that it used to manage the registration and payment for these events. The internet functionality in Raiser’s Edge(i) gives the organization the ability to develop an online registration form that gathers from registrants the necessary information for its annual conference and other events, such as its golf tournament.

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Shortly after implementing Raiser’s Edge(i), CFRI added Sphere **Friends Asking Friends**® to its product suite. One of the organization’s most successful fundraisers, its annual Mothers’ Day Tea fundraiser, was requiring a lot of staff time and the organization was finding it difficult to acquire new participants. CFRI felt that Friends Asking Friends would help it broaden its reach to encourage greater participation and support.

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Also, prior to Raiser's Edge(i), CFRI was using another vendor for online donation processing. This vendor cost the organization a flat fee of approximately \$50 a month and then an additional percentage of each donation based on donation amount. With a flat rate transaction fee, no monthly charge, and the seamless integration with Raiser's Edge(i), CFRI switched to **Blackbaud Merchant Services™** for donation processing.

Results

CFRI has experienced a number of benefits since implementing Raiser's Edge(i), Friends Asking Friends and Blackbaud Merchant Services. In addition to streamlining processes, and reducing manual data entry and error, the organization has:

- Reduced the cost for online payment processing by eliminating the monthly fee of \$50. The flat rate transaction fee through Blackbaud Merchant Services also saves CFRI money on each transaction. These savings increase the higher the donation amount.
- Raised 65 percent more than the cost of Friends Asking Friends in the first two months of using it for its Mothers' Day Tea fundraiser.
- Broaden its reach by providing more useful and efficient options for supporters participating in the Mothers' Day Tea.
- Made its email process easier and more efficient. CFRI can now determine how many emails were opened, who opened them, and what they clicked. This level of reporting enables CFRI to better manage its database and modify communication with constituents accordingly.
- Been able to schedule emails for future distribution, saving valuable time.
- Seen 90 percent of conference attendees register online using the internet and event functionality in Raiser's Edge(i). This ability has saved staff a significant amount of time by eliminating the manual process that was used before.

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